Coleridge Samuel Taylor

# Specimens of the Table Talk of Samuel Taylor Coleridge

Samuel Coleridge

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# Содержание

PREFACE 7
TABLE TALK 14
December 29, 1822 14
January 1. 1823 16
January 3. 1823 18
January 4. 1828 19
January 6. 1823 21
April 27. 1823 23
April 28. 1823 25
April 29. 1823 26
April 30. 1823 27
May 1. 1823 28
May 8. 1824 32
June 2. 1824 33
June 5. 1824 34
June 7. 1824 35
June 10. 1824 36
February 24. 1827 37
March 10. 1827 38
March 12. 1827 39
March 13. 1827 40
March 18. 1827 41
June 15. 1827 42
June 24. 1827 43
July 8. 1827 47
July 9. 1827 48
July 12. 1827 49
July 20. 1827 51
July 21. 1827 52
July 23. 1827 53
August 29. 1827 54
August 30. 1827 55
April 13. 1830 56
April 14, 1830 57
April 17. 1830 58
April 18. 1830 59
April 19. 1830 60
April 30. 1830 61
May 1. 1830 63
May 2. 1830 64
May 3. 1830 65
May 4. 1830 66
May 5. 1830 67
May 7, 1830 68
May 8. 1830 70
May 9. 1830 71

May 11. 1830 72
May 12. 1830 73
May 14. 1830 74
May 15. 1830 75
May 16. 1830 76
May 17. 1830 77
May 18. 1830 78
May 20. 1830 79
May 21. 1830 82
May 23. 1830 83
May 25. 1830 84
May 27. 1830 85
May 28. 1830 86
May 29. 1830 87
May 30. 1830 88
May 31. 1830 89
June 1. 1830 91
June 4. 1830 92
June 6. 1830 94
June 7. 1830 95
Конец ознакомительного фрагмента. 96

# Samuel Taylor Coleridge
# Specimens of the Table Talk of Samuel Taylor Coleridge

**TO**

**JAMES GILLMAN, ESQUIRE,**

**OF THE GROVE, HIGHGATE, AND TO**

**MRS. GILLMAN,**

**This Volume IS GRATEFULLY INSCRIBED**

# PREFACE

* * * * *

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

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

was accustomed to regard God and the World,—I shall look upon the publication as fortunate, and consider myself abundantly rewarded for whatever trouble it has cost me.

A cursory inspection will show that this volume lays no claim to be ranked with those of Boswell in point of dramatic interest. Coleridge differed not more from Johnson in every characteristic of intellect, than in the habits and circumstances of his life, during the greatest part of the time in which I was intimately conversant with him. He was naturally very fond of society, and continued to be so to the last; but the almost unceasing ill health with which he was afflicted, after fifty, confined him for many months in every year to his own room, and, most commonly, to his bed. He was then rarely seen except by single visiters; and few of them would feel any disposition upon such occasions to interrupt him, whatever might have been the length or mood of his discourse. And indeed, although I have been present in mixed company, where Mr. Coleridge has been questioned and opposed, and the scene has been amusing for the moment—I own that it was always much more delightful to me to let the river wander at its own sweet will, unruffled by aught but a certain breeze of emotion which the stream itself produced. If the course it took was not the shortest, it was generally the most beautiful; and what you saw by the way was as worthy of note as the ultimate object to which you were journeying. It is possible, indeed, that Coleridge did not, in fact, possess the precise gladiatorial power of Johnson; yet he understood a sword-play of his own; and I have, upon several occasions, seen him exhibit brilliant proofs of its effectiveness upon disputants of considerable pretensions in their particular lines. But he had a genuine dislike of the practice in himself or others, and no slight provocation could move him to any such exertion. He was, indeed, to my observation, more distinguished from other great men of letters by his moral thirst after the Truth—the ideal truth—in his own mind, than by his merely intellectual qualifications. To leave the everyday circle of society, in which the literary and scientific rarely— the rest never—break through the spell of personality;—where Anecdote reigns everlastingly paramount and exclusive, and the mildest attempt to generalize the Babel of facts, and to control temporary and individual phenomena by the application of eternal and overruling principles, is unintelligible to many, and disagreeable to more;—to leave this species of converse—if converse it deserves to be called—and pass an entire day with Coleridge, was a marvellous change indeed. It was a Sabbath past expression deep, and tranquil, and serene. You came to a man who had travelled in many countries and in critical times; who had seen and felt the world in most of its ranks and in many of its vicissitudes and weaknesses; one to whom all literature and genial art were absolutely subject, and to whom, with a reasonable allowance as to technical details, all science was in a most extraordinary degree familiar. Throughout a long-drawn summer's day would this man talk to you in low, equable, but clear and musical, tones, concerning things human and divine; marshalling all history, harmonizing all experiment, probing the depths of your consciousness, and revealing visions of glory and of terror to the imagination; but pouring withal such floods of light upon the mind, that you might, for a season, like Paul, become blind in the very act of conversion. And this he would do, without so much as one allusion to himself, without a word of reflection on others, save when any given act fell naturally in the way of his discourse,—without one anecdote that was not proof and illustration of a previous position;—gratifying no passion, indulging no caprice, but, with a calm mastery over your soul, leading you onward and onward for ever through a thousand windings, yet with no pause, to some magnificent point in which, as in a focus, all the party-coloured rays of his discourse should converge in light. In all this he was, in truth, your teacher and guide; but in a little while you might forget that he was other than a fellow student and the companion of your way,—so playful was his manner, so simple his language, so affectionate the glance of his pleasant eye!

There were, indeed, some whom Coleridge tired, and some whom he sent asleep. It would occasionally so happen, when the abstruser mood was strong upon him, and the visiter was narrow and ungenial. I have seen him at times when you could not incarnate him,—when he shook aside your petty questions or doubts, and burst with some impatience through the obstacles of common conversation. Then, escaped from the flesh, he would soar upwards into an atmosphere almost too

rare to breathe, but which seemed proper to *him*, and there he would float at ease. Like enough, what Coleridge then said, his subtlest listener would not understand as a man understands a newspaper; but upon such a listener there would steal an influence, and an impression, and a sympathy; there would be a gradual attempering of his body and spirit, till his total being vibrated with one pulse alone, and thought became merged in contemplation;—

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

But it would be a great mistake to suppose that the general character of Mr. Coleridge's conversation was abstruse or rhapsodical. The contents of the following pages may, I think, be taken as pretty strong presumptive evidence that his ordinary manner was plain and direct enough; and even when, as sometimes happened, he seemed to ramble from the road, and to lose himself in a wilderness of digressions, the truth was, that at that very time he was working out his fore-known conclusion through an almost miraculous logic, the difficulty of which consisted precisely in the very fact of its minuteness and universality. He took so large a scope, that, if he was interrupted before he got to the end, he appeared to have been talking without an object; although, perhaps, a few steps more would have brought you to a point, a retrospect from which would show you the pertinence of all he had been saying. I have heard persons complain that they could get no answer to a question from Coleridge. The truth is, he answered, or meant to answer, so fully that the querist should have no second question to ask. In nine cases out of ten he saw the question was short or misdirected; and knew that a mere *yes* or *no* answer could not embrace the truth—that is, the whole truth—and might, very probably, by implication, convey error. Hence that exhaustive, cyclical mode of discoursing in which he frequently indulged; unfit, indeed, for a dinner- table, and too long-breathed for the patience of a chance visiter, —but which, to those who knew for what they came, was the object of their profoundest admiration, as it was the source of their most valuable instruction. Mr. Coleridge's affectionate disciples learned their lessons of philosophy and criticism from his own mouth. He was to them as an old master of the Academy or Lyceum. The more time he took, the better pleased were such visiters; for they came expressly to listen, and had ample proof how truly he had declared, that whatever difficulties he might feel, with pen in hand, in the expression of his meaning, he never found the smallest hitch or impediment in the utterance of his most subtle reasonings by word of mouth. How many a time and oft have I felt his abtrusest thoughts steal rhythmically on my soul, when chanted forth by him! Nay, how often have I fancied I heard rise up in answer to his gentle touch, an interpreting music of my own, as from the passive strings of some wind-smitten lyre!

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

They continued to admire the separate beauty of the thoughts, but did not see their relations to the dominant theme. * * * * However, I can assert, upon my long and intimate knowledge of Coleridge's mind, that logic the most severe was as inalienable from his modes of thinking, as grammar from his language." [Footnote: Tait's Mag. Sept. 1834, p. 514.] True: his mind was a logic-vice; let him fasten it on the tiniest flourish of an error, he never slacked his hold, till he had crushed body and tail to dust. He was *always* ratiocinating in his own mind, and therefore sometimes seemed incoherent to the partial observer. It happened to him as to Pindar, who in modern days has been called a rambling rhapsodist, because the connections of his parts, though never arbitrary, are so fine that the vulgar reader sees them not at all. But they are there nevertheless, and may all be so distinctly shown, that no one can doubt their existence; and a little study will also prove that the points of contact are those which the true genius of lyric verse naturally evolved, and that the entire Pindaric ode, instead of being the loose and lawless out-burst which so many have fancied, is, without any exception, the most artificial and highly wrought composition which Time has spared to us from the wreck of the Greek Muse. So I can well remember occasions, in which, after listening to Mr. Coleridge for several delightful hours, I have gone away with divers splendid masses of reasoning in my head, the separate beauty and coherency of which I deeply felt, but how they had produced, or how they bore upon, each other, I could not then perceive. In such cases I have mused sometimes even for days afterwards upon the words, till at length, spontaneously as it seemed, "the fire would kindle," and the association, which had escaped my utmost efforts of comprehension before, flash itself all at once upon my mind with the clearness of noon-day light.

It may well be imagined that a style of conversation so continuous and diffused as that which I have just attempted to describe, presented remarkable difficulties to a mere reporter by memory. It is easy to preserve the pithy remark, the brilliant retort, or the pointed anecdote; these stick of themselves, and their retention requires no effort of mind. But where the salient angles are comparatively few, and the object of attention is a long-drawn subtle discoursing, you can never recollect, except by yourself thinking the argument over again. In so doing, the order and the characteristic expressions will for the most part spontaneously arise; and it is scarcely credible with what degree of accuracy language may thus be preserved, where practice has given some dexterity, and long familiarity with the speaker has enabled, or almost forced, you to catch the outlines of his manner. Yet with all this, so peculiar were the flow and breadth of Mr. Coleridge's conversation, that I am very sensible how much those who can best judge will have to complain of my representation of it. The following specimens will, I fear, seem too fragmentary, and therefore deficient in one of the most distinguishing properties of that which they are designed to represent; and this is true. Yet the reader will in most instances have little difficulty in understanding the course which the conversation took, although my recollections of it are thrown into separate paragraphs for the sake of superior precision. As I never attempted to give dialogue—indeed, there was seldom much dialogue to give —the great point with me was to condense what I could remember on each particular topic into intelligible *wholes* with as little injury to the living manner and diction as was possible. With this explanation, I must leave it to those who still have the tones of "that old man eloquent" ringing in their ears, to say how far I have succeeded in this delicate enterprise of stamping his winged words with perpetuity.

In reviewing the contents of the following pages, I can clearly see that I have admitted some passages which will be pronounced illiberal by those who, in the present day, emphatically call themselves liberal—*the* liberal. I allude of course to Mr. Coleridge's remarks on the Reform Bill and the Malthusian economists. The omission of such passages would probably have rendered this publication more generally agreeable, and my disposition does not lead me to give gratuitous offence to any one. But the opinions of Mr. Coleridge on these subjects, however imperfectly expressed by me, were deliberately entertained by him; and to have omitted, in so miscellaneous a collection as this, what he was well known to have said, would have argued in me a disapprobation or a fear, which I disclaim. A few words, however, may be pertinently employed here in explaining the true bearing

of Coleridge's mind on the politics of our modern days. He was neither a Whig nor a Tory, as those designations are usually understood; well enough knowing that, for the most part, half-truths only are involved in the Parliamentary tenets of one party or the other. In the common struggles of a session, therefore, he took little interest; and as to mere personal sympathies, the friend of Frere and of Poole, the respected guest of Canning and of Lord Lansdowne, could have nothing to choose. But he threw the weight of his opinion—and it was considerable—into the Tory or Conservative scale, for these two reasons:—First, generally, because he had a deep conviction that the cause of freedom and of truth is now seriously menaced by a democratical spirit, growing more and more rabid every day, and giving no doubtful promise of the tyranny to come; and secondly, in particular, because the national Church was to him the ark of the covenant of his beloved country, and he saw the Whigs about to coalesce with those whose avowed principles lead them to lay the hand of spoliation upon it. Add to these two grounds, some relics of the indignation which the efforts of the Whigs to thwart the generous exertions of England in the great Spanish war had formerly roused within him; and all the constituents of any active feeling in Mr. Coleridge's mind upon matters of state are, I believe, fairly laid before the reader. The Reform question in itself gave him little concern, except as he foresaw the present attack on the Church to be the immediate consequence of the passing of the Bill; "for let the form of the House of Commons," said he, "be what it may, it will be, for better or for worse, pretty much what the country at large is; but once invade that truly national and essentially popular institution, the Church, and divert its funds to the relief or aid of individual charity or public taxation —how specious soever that pretext may be—and you will never thereafter recover the lost means of perpetual cultivation. Give back to the Church what the nation originally consecrated to its use, and it ought then to be charged with the education of the people; but half of the original revenue has been already taken by force from her, or lost to her through desuetude, legal decision, or public opinion; and are those whose very houses and parks are part and parcel of what the nation designed for the general purposes of the Clergy, to be heard, when they argue for making the Church support, out of her diminished revenues, institutions, the intended means for maintaining which they themselves hold under the sanction of legal robbery?" Upon this subject Mr. Coleridge did indeed feel very warmly, and was accustomed to express himself accordingly. It weighed upon his mind night and day, and he spoke upon it with an emotion, which I never saw him betray upon any topic of common politics, however decided his opinion might be. In this, therefore, he was *felix opportunitate mortis; non enim vidit*——; and the just and honest of all parties will heartily admit over his grave, that as his principles and opinions were untainted by any sordid interest, so he maintained them in the purest spirit of a reflective patriotism, without spleen, or bitterness, or breach of social union.

It would require a rare pen to do justice to the constitution of Coleridge's mind. It was too deep, subtle, and peculiar, to be fathomed by a morning visiter. Few persons knew much of it in any thing below the surface; scarcely three or four ever got to understand it in all its marvellous completeness. Mere personal familiarity with this extraordinary man did not put you in possession of him; his pursuits and aspirations, though in their mighty range presenting points of contact and sympathy for all, transcended in their ultimate reach the extremest limits of most men's imaginations. For the last thirty years of his life, at least, Coleridge was really and truly a philosopher of the antique cast. He had his esoteric views; and all his prose works from the "Friend" to the "Church and State" were little more than feelers, pioneers, disciplinants for the last and complete exposition of them. Of the art of making hooks he knew little, and cared less; but had he been as much an adept in it as a modern novelist, he never could have succeeded in rendering popular or even tolerable, at first, his attempt to push Locke and Paley from their common throne in England. A little more working in the trenches might have brought him closer to the walls with less personal damage; but it is better for Christian philosophy as it is, though the assailant was sacrificed in the bold and artless attack. Mr. Coleridge's prose works had so very limited a sale, that although published in a technical sense, they could scarcely be said to have ever become *publici juris*. He did not think them such himself,

with the exception, perhaps, of the "Aids to Reflection," and generally made a particular remark if he met any person who professed or showed that he had read the "Friend" or any of his other books. And I have no doubt that had he lived to complete his great work on "Philosophy reconciled with Christian Religion," he would without scruple have used in that work any part or parts of his preliminary treatises, as their intrinsic fitness required. Hence in every one of his prose writings there are repetitions, either literal or substantial, of passages to be found in some others of those writings; and there are several particular positions and reasonings, which he considered of vital importance, reiterated in the "Friend," the "Literary Life," the "Lay Sermons," the "Aids to Reflection," and the "Church and State." He was always deepening and widening the foundation, and cared not how often he used the same stone. In thinking passionately of the principle, he forgot the authorship—and sowed beside many waters, if peradventure some chance seedling might take root and bear fruit to the glory of God and the spiritualization of Man.

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

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

* * * * *

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

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

[Greek: –]

**H. N. C.**

# TABLE TALK

## December 29, 1822

### CHARACTER OF OTHELLO—SCHILLER'S ROBBERS-SHAKSPEARE —SCOTCH NOVELS—LORD BYRON—JOHN KEMMBLE—MATHEWS

Othello must not be conceived as a negro, but a high and chivalrous Moorish chief. Shakspeare learned the sprit of the character from the Spanish poetry, which was prevalent in England in his time.[1]

Jelousy does not strike me as the point in his passion; I take it to be rather an agony that the creature, whom he had believed angelic, with whom he had garnered up his heart, and whom he could not help still loving, should be proved impure and worthless. It was the struggle *not* to love her. It was a moral indignation and regret that virture should so fall:—"But yet the *pity* of it, Iago!—O Iago! the *pity* of it, Iago!" In addition to this, his hourour was concerned: Iago would not have succeeded but by hinting that this honour was compromised. There is no ferocity in Othello; his mind is majestic and composed. He deliberately determines to die; and speaks his last speech with a view of showing his attachment to the Venetian state, though it had superseded him.

* * * * *

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

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

I think Old Mortality and Guy Mannering the best of the Scotch novels.

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

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

---

[1] Caballaeros Granadinos,Aunque Moros, hijos d'algo—ED.

[2] This expression—"material sublime"—like a hundred others which have slipped into general use, came originally from Mr. Coleridege, and was by him, in the first instatnce, applied to Schiller's Robbers— See Act iv, sc. 5.—ED.

* * * * *

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

* * * * *

It is not easy to put me out of countenance, or interrupt the feeling of the time by mere external noise or circumstance; yet once I was thoroughly *done up*, as you would say. I was reciting, at a particular house, the "Remorse;" and was in the midst of Alhadra's description of the death of her husband,[3] when a scrubby boy, with a shining face set in dirt, burst open the door and cried out, —"Please, ma'am, master says, Will you ha'; or will you *not* ha', the pin-round?"

[3] "ALHADRA. This night your chieftain arm'd himself,And hurried from me. But I follow'd himAt distance, till I saw him enter there!NAOMI. The cavern?ALHADRA. Yes, the mouth of yonder cavern.After a while I saw the son of ValdezRush by with flaring torch: he likewise enter'd.There was another and a longer pause;And once, methought, I heard the clash of swords!And soon the son of Valdez re-appear'd:He flung his torch towards the moon in sport,And seem'd as he were mirthful! I stood listening,Impatient for the footsteps of my husband.NAOMI. Thou calledst him?ALHADRA. I crept into the cavern—'Twas dark and very silent. What saidst thou?No! No! I did not dare call Isidore,Lest I should hear no answer! A brief while,Belike, I lost all thought and memoryOf that for which I came! After that pause,O Heaven! I heard a groan, and follow'd it;And yet another groan, which guided meInto a strange recess—and there was light,A hideous light! his torch lay on the ground;Its flame burnt dimly o'er a chasm's brink:I spake; and whilst I spake, a feeble groanCame from that chasm! it was his last—his death-groan!NAOMI. Comfort her, Allah!ALHADRA. I stood in unimaginable tranceAnd agony that cannot be remember'd,Listening with horrid hope to hear a groan!But I had heard his last;—my husband's death-groan!NAOMI. Haste! let us onward!ALHADRA. I look'd far down the pit—My sight was bounded by a jutting fragment;And it was stain'd with blood. Then first I shriek'd;My eyeballs burnt, my brain grew hot as fire,And all the hanging drops of the wet roofTurn'd into blood—I saw them turn to blood!And I was leaping wildly down the chasm,When on the further brink I saw his sword,And it said, Vengeance!—Curses on my tongue!The moon hath moved in heaven, and I am here,And he hath not had vengeance!—Isidore!Spirit of Isidore, thy murderer lives!Away, away!"—Act iv. sc. 3.

# *January* 1. 1823

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

Privilege is a substitution for Law, where, from the nature of the circumstances, a law cannot act without clashing with greater and more general principles. The House of Commons must, of course, have the power of taking cognizance of offences against its own rights. Sir Francis Burdett might have been properly sent to the Tower for the speech he made in the House[4]; but when afterwards he published it in Cobbett, and they took cognizance of it as a breach of privilege, they violated the plain distinction between privilege and law.

As a speech in the House, the House could alone animadvert upon it, consistently with the effective preservation of its most necessary prerogative of freedom of debate; but when that speech became a book, then the law was to look to it; and there being a law of libel, commensurate with every possible object of attack in the state, privilege, which acts, or ought to act, only as a substitute for other laws, could have nothing to do with it. I have heard that one distinguished individual said, —"That he, for one, would not shrink from affirming, that if the House of Commons chose to *burn* one of their own members in Palace Yard, it had an inherent power and right by the constitution to do so." This was said, if at all, by a moderate-minded man; and may show to what atrocious tyranny some persons may advance in theory, under shadow of this word privilege.

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There are two principles in every European and Christian state: Permanency and Progression.[5]

In the civil wars of the seventeenth century in England, which are as new and fresh now as they were a hundred and sixty years ago, and will be so for ever to us, these two principles came to a struggle. It was natural that the great and the good of the nation should he found in the ranks of either side. In the Mohammedan states, there is no principle of permanence; and, therefore, they sink directly. They existed, and could only exist, in their efforts at progression; when they ceased to conquer, they fell in pieces. Turkey would long since have fallen, had it not been supported by the rival and conflicting interests of Christian Europe. The Turks have no church; religion and state are one; hence there is no counterpoise, no mutual support. This is the very essence of their Unitarianism.

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

[5] See this position stated and illustrated in detail in Mr. Coleridge's work, "On the Constitution of the Church and State, according to the Idea of each," p. 21. 2d edit. 1830. Well acquainted as I am with the fact f the comparatively small acceptation which Mr. Coleridge's prose works have ever found in the literary world, and with the reasons, and, what is more, with the causes, of it, I still wonder that this particular treatise has not been more noticed: first, because it is a little book; secondly, because it is, or at least nineteen-twentieths of it are, written in a popular style; and thirdly, because it is the only work, that I know or have ever heard mentioned, that even attempts a solution of the difficulty in which an ingenious enemy of the church of England may easily involve most of its modern defenders in Parliament, or through the press, upon their own principles and admissions. Mr. Coleridge himself prized this little work highly, although he admitted its incompleteness as a composition:—"But I don't care a rush about it," he said to me, "as an author. The saving distinctions are plainly stated in it, and I am sure nothing is wanted to make them *tell*, but that some kind friend should steal them from their obscure hiding-place, and just tumble them down before the public as *his own*."—ED.

They have no past; they are not an historical people; they exist only in the present. China is an instance of a permanency without progression. The Persians are a superior race: they have a history and a literature; they were always considered by the Greeks as quite distinct from the other barbarians. The Afghans are a remarkable people. They have a sort of republic. Europeans and Orientalists may be well represented by two figures standing back to back: the latter looking to the east, that is, backwards; the former looking westward, or forwards.

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

# *January* 3. 1823

## MATERIALISM.—GHOSTS

Either we have an immortal soul, or we have not. If we have not, we are beasts; the first and wisest of beasts, it may be; but still true beasts.[6] We shall only differ in degree, and not in kind; just as the elephant differs from the slug. But by the concession of all the materialists of all the schools, or almost all, we are not of the same kind as beasts—and this also we say from our own consciousness. Therefore, methinks, it must be the possession of a soul within us that makes the difference.

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

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Define a vulgar ghost with reference to all that is called ghost-like. It is visibility without tangibility; which is also the definition of a shadow. Therefore, a vulgar ghost and a shadow would be the same; because two different things cannot properly have the same definition. A *visible substance* without susceptibility of impact, I maintain to be an absurdity.

Unless there be an external substance, the bodily eye *cannot* see it; therefore, in all such cases, that which is supposed to be seen is, in fact, *not* seen, but is an image of the brain. External objects naturally produce sensation; but here, in truth, sensation produces, as it were, the external object. In certain states of the nerves, however, I do believe that the eye, although not consciously so directed, may, by a slight convulsion, see a portion of the body, as if opposite to it. The part actually seen will by common association seem the whole; and the whole body will then constitute an external object, which explains many stories of persons seeing themselves lying dead. Bishop Berkeley once experienced this. He had the presence of mind to ring the bell, and feel his pulse; keeping his eye still fixed on his own figure right opposite to him. He was in a high fever, and the brain image died away as the door opened. I observed something very like it once at Grasmere; and was so conscious of the cause, that I told a person what I was experiencing, whilst the image still remained.

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

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

# January 4. 1828

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

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

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Negatively, there may be more of the philosophy of Socrates in the Memorabilia of Xenophon than in Plato: that is, there is less of what does not belong to Socrates; but the general spirit of, and impression left by, Plato, are more Socratic.[7]

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

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

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I confess I doubt the Homeric genuineness of [Greek: dakruoen gelaschsa].[8] It sounds to me much more like a prettiness of Bion or Moschus.

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[7] See p. 26. Mr. Coleridge meant in both these passages, that Xenophon had preserved the most of the *man* Socrates; that he was the best Boswell; and that Socrates, as a *persona dialogi*, was little more than a poetical phantom in Plato's hands. On the other hand, he says that Plato is more *Socratic*, that is, more of a philosopher in the Socratic *mode* of reasoning (Cicero calls the Platonic writings generally, *Socratici libri*); and Mr. C. also says, that in the metaphysical disquisitions Plato is Pythagorean, meaning, that he worked on the supposed ideal or transcendental principles of the extraordinary founder of the Italian school.

[8] Greek: hos eipon, alochoio thilaes en chersin ethaeke paid eon hae d ara min chaeodei dexato cholpo, dachruoen gelasasa.]—Illiad. Z. vi. 482

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

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Goldsmith did every thing happily.

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

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A rogue is a roundabout fool; a fool *in circumbendibus*.

* * * * *

*Omne ignotum pro magnifico*. A dunghill at a distance sometimes smells like musk, and a dead dog like elder-flowers.

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Plagiarists are always suspicious of being stolen from,—as pickpockets are observed commonly to walk with their hands in their breeches' pockets.

# *January 6*. 1823

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

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

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

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

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Whatever may be thought of the genuineness or authority of any part of the book of Daniel, it makes no difference in my belief in Christianity; for Christianity is within a man, even as he is a being gifted with reason; it is associated with your mother's chair, and with the first-remembered tones of her blessed voice.

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

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The first three Gospels show the history, that is, the fulfilment of the prophecies in the facts. St. John declares explicitly the doctrine, oracularly, and without comment, because, being pure reason,

it can only be proved by itself. For Christianity proves itself, as the sun is seen by its own light. Its evidence is involved in its existence. St. Paul writes more particularly for the dialectic understanding; and proves those doctrines, which were capable of such proof, by common logic.

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

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Our translators, unfortunately, as I think, render the clause [Greek: pros ton Theos] "*with* God;" that would be right, if the Greek were [Greek: syn to Theo].[9]

By the preposition [Greek: pros] in this place, is meant the utmost possible *proximity*, without *confusion*; likeness, without sameness. The Jewish Church understood the Messiah to be a divine person. Philo expressly cautions against any one's supposing the Logos to be a mere personification, or symbol. He says, the Logos is a substantial, self- existent Being. The Gnostics, as they were afterwards called, were a kind of Arians; and thought the Logos was an after-birth. They placed [Greek: Abyssos] and [Greek: Sigae] (the Abyss and Silence) before him. Therefore it was that St. John said, with emphasis, [Greek: en archae aen ho Logos]– "In the *beginning* was the Word." He was begotten in the first simultaneous burst of Godhead, if such an expression may be pardoned, in speaking of eternal existence.

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The Understanding suggests the materials of reasoning: the Reason decides upon them. The first can only say,—This *is*, or *ought* to be so. The last says,—It *must* be so.[10]

[9] John, ch. i. v. 1, 2.

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

# *April* 27. 1823

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

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

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Sir James Mackintosh is the king of the men of talent. He is a most elegant converger. How well I remember his giving breakfast to me and Sir Humphry Davy, at that time an unknown young man, and our having a very spirited talk about Locke and Newton, and so forth! When Davy was gone, Mackintosh said to me, "That's a very extraordinary young man; but he is gone wrong on some points." But Davy was, at that time at least, a man of genius; and I doubt if Mackintosh ever heartily appreciated an eminently original man. He is uncommonly powerful in his own line; but it is not the line of a first- rate man. After all his fluency and brilliant erudition, you can rarely carry off any thing worth preserving. You might not improperly write on his forehead, "Warehouse to let!" He always dealt too much in generalities for a lawyer. He is deficient in power in applying his principles to the points in debate. I remember Robert Smith had much more logical ability; but Smith aimed at conquest by any gladiatorial shift; whereas Mackintosh was uniformly candid in argument. I am speaking now from old recollections.

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

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

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Poor-laws are the inevitable accompaniments of an extensive commerce and a manufacturing system. In Scotland, they did without them, till Glasgow and Paisley became great manufacturing places, and then people said, "We must subscribe for the poor, or else we shall have poor-laws." That is to say, they enacted for themselves a poor-law in order to avoid having a poor-law enacted for them. It is absurd to talk of Queen Elizabeth's act as creating the poor-laws of this country. The poor-rates are the consideration paid by, or on behalf of, capitalists for having labour at demand. It is the price, and nothing else. The hardship consists in the agricultural interest having to pay an undue proportion of the rates; for although, perhaps, in the end, the land becomes more valuable, yet, at the first, the landowners have to bear all the brunt. I think there ought to be a fixed revolving period for the equalization of rates.

# *April* 28. 1823

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

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

I have the honour of being slightly known to my lord Darnley. In 1808-9, I met him accidentally, when, after a few words of salutation, he said to me, "Are you mad, Mr. Coleridge?"—"Not that I know, my lord," I replied; "what have I done which argues any derangement of mind?"—"Why, I mean," said he, "those letters of yours in the Courier, 'On the Hopes and Fears of a People invaded by foreign Armies.' The Spaniards are absolutely conquered; it is absurd to talk of their chance of resisting."—"Very well, my lord," I said, "we shall see. But will your lordship permit me, in the course of a year or two, to retort your question upon you, if I should have grounds for so doing?"—"Certainly!" said he; "that is fair!" Two years afterwards, when affairs were altered in Spain, I met Lord Darnley again, and, after some conversation, ventured to say to him, "Does your lordship recollect giving me leave to retort a certain question upon you about the Spaniards? Who is mad now?"—"Very true, very true, Mr. Coleridge," cried he: "you are right. It is very extraordinary. It was a very happy and hold guess." Upon which I remarked, "I think '*guess*' is hardly a fair term. For, has any thing happened that has happened, from any other causes, or under any other conditions, than such as I laid down Beforehand?" Lord Darnley, who was always very courteous to me, took this with a pleasant nod of his head.

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

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# *April* 29. 1823

## CHURCH OF ROME

The present adherents of the church of Rome are not, in my judgment, Catholics. We are the Catholics. We can prove that we hold the doctrines of the primitive church for the first three hundred years. The council of Trent made the Papists what they are.[11] A foreign Romish bishop has declared, that the Protestants of his acquaintance were more like what he conceived the enlightened Catholics to have been before the council of Trent, than the best of the latter in his days. Perhaps you will say, this bishop was not a *good Catholic*.[12] I cannot answer for that. The course of Christianity and the Christian church may not unaptly be likened to a mighty river, which filled a wide channel, and bore along with its waters mud, and gravel, and weeds, till it met a great rock in the middle of its stream. By some means or other, the water flows purely, and separated from the filth, in a deeper and narrower course on one side of the rock, and the refuse of the dirt and troubled water goes off on the other in a broader current, and then cries out, "*We* are the river!"

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

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It is common to hear it said, that, if the legal disabilities are removed, the Romish church will lose ground in this country. I think the reverse: the Romish religion is, or, in certain hands, is capable of being made, so flattering to the passions and self-delusion of men, that it is impossible to say how far it would spread, amongst the higher orders of society especially, if the secular disadvantages now attending its profession were removed.[13]

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[11] See Aids to Reflection, p. 180. note.

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

[13] Here, at least, the prophecy has been fulfilled. The wisdom of our ancestors, in the reign of King William III., would have been jealous of the daily increase in the numbers of the Romish church in England, of which every attentive observer must be aware. See *Sancti Dominici Pallium*, in vol. ii. p. 80. of Mr. Coleridge's Poems.-Ed.

# April 30. 1823

## ZENDAVESTA.—PANTHEISM AND IDOLATRY

The Zendavesta must, I think, have been copied in parts from the writings of Moses. In the description of the creation, the first chapter of Genesis is taken almost literally, except that the sun is created *before* the light, and then the herbs and the plants after the sun; which are precisely the two points they did not understand, and therefore altered as errors.[14]

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

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Pantheism and idolatry naturally end in each other; for all extremes meet.

The Judaic religion is the exact medium, the true compromise.

[14] The Zend, or Zendavesta, is the sacred book ascribed to Zoroaster, or Zerdusht, the founder or reformer of the Magian religion. The modern edition or paraphrase of this work, called the Sadda, written in the Persian of the day, was, I believe, composed about three hundred years ago —Ed.

# *May* 1. 1823

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

There is a great difference in the credibility to be attached to stories of dreams and stories of ghosts. Dreams have nothing in them which are absurd and nonsensical; and, though most of the coincidences may be readily explained by the diseased system of the dreamer, and the great and surprising power of association, yet it is impossible to say whether an inner sense does not really exist in the mind, seldom developed, indeed, but which may have a power of presentiment.[15]

All the external senses have their correspondents in the mind; the eye can see an object before it is distinctly apprehended;—why may there not be a corresponding power in the soul? The power of prophecy might have been merely a spiritual excitation of this dormant faculty. Hence you will observe that the Hebrew seers sometimes seem to have required music, as in the instance of Elisha before Jehoram:—"But now bring me a minstrel. And it came to pass, when the minstrel played, that the hand of the Lord came upon him."[16] Every thing in nature has a tendency to move in cycles; and it would be a miracle if, out of such myriads of cycles moving concurrently, some coincidences did not take place. No doubt, many such take place in the daytime; but then our senses drive out the remembrance of them, and render the impression hardly felt; but when we sleep, the mind acts without interruption. Terror and the heated imagination will, even in the daytime, create all sorts of features, shapes, and colours out of a simple object possessing none of them in reality.

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

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

[16] 2 Kings, iii. 15., and see 1 Sam. x. 5.—ED.

away, I'll shoot you." He waited the time, deliberately levelled the pistol, fired, and, with a scream at the immobility of the figure, became convulsed, and afterwards died. The very instant he believed it *to be* a ghost, his human nature fell before it.

* * * * *

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

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

"We fell upon ghosts, and he exposed many of the stories physically and metaphysically. He seemed to think it impossible that you should really see with the bodily eye what was impalpable, unless it were a shadow; and if what you fancied you saw with the bodily eye was in fact only an impression on the imagination, then you were seeing something *out of your senses*, and your testimony was full of uncertainty. He observed how uniformly, in all the best-attested stories of spectres, the appearance might be accounted for from the disturbed state of the mind or body of the seer, as in the instances of Dion and Brutus. Upon some one's saying that he *wished* to believe these stories true, thinking that they constituted a useful subsidiary testimony of another state of existence, Mr. C. differed, and said, he thought it a dangerous testimony, and one not wanted: it was Saul, with the Scriptures and the Prophet before him, calling upon the witch of Endor to certify him of the truth! He explained very ingeniously, yet very naturally, what has often startled people in ghost stories—such as Lord Lyttelton's—namely, that when a real person has appeared, habited like the phantom, the ghost-seer has immediately seen two, the real man and the phantom. He said that such must be the case. The man under the morbid delusion sees with the eye of the imagination, and sees with the bodily eye too; if no one were really present, he would see the spectre with one, and the bed-curtains with the other. When, therefore, a real person comes, he sees the real man as he would have seen any one else in the same place, and he sees the spectre not a whit the less: being perceptible by different powers of vision, so to say, the appearances do not interfere with each other.

"He told us the following story of the Phantom Portrait[17]:—

"A stranger came recommended to a merchant's house at Lubeck. He was hospitably received; but, the house being full, he was lodged at night in an apartment handsomely furnished, but not often used. There was nothing that struck him particularly in the room when left alone, till he happened to cast his eyes on a picture, which immediately arrested his attention. It was a single head; but there was something so uncommon, so frightful and unearthly, in its expression, though by no means ugly, that he found himself irresistibly attracted to look at it. In fact, he could not tear himself from the fascination of this portrait, till his imagination was filled by it, and his rest broken. He retired to bed, dreamed, and awoke from time to time with the head glaring on him. In the morning, his host saw

[17] This is the story which Mr. Washington Irving has dressed up very prettily in the first volume of his "Tales of a Traveller," pp. 84-119.; professing in his preface that he could not remember whence he had derived the anecdote.—ED.

by his looks that he had slept ill, and inquired the cause, which was told. The master of the house was much vexed, and said that the picture ought to have been removed, that it was an oversight, and that it always was removed when the chamber was used. The picture, he said, was, indeed, terrible to every one; but it was so fine, and had come into the family in so curious a way, that he could not make up his mind to part with it, or to destroy it. The story of it was this:—'My father,' said he, 'was at Hamburgh on business, and, whilst dining at a coffee-house, he observed a young man of a remarkable appearance enter, seat himself alone in a corner, and commence a solitary meal. His countenance bespoke the extreme of mental distress, and every now and then he turned his head quickly round, as if he heard something, then shudder, grow pale, and go on with his meal after an effort as before. My father saw this same man at the same place for two or three successive days; and at length became so much interested about him, that he spoke to him. The address was not repulsed, and the stranger seemed to find some comfort in the tone of sympathy and kindness which my father used. He was an Italian, well informed, poor but not destitute, and living economically upon the profits of his art as a painter. Their intimacy increased; and at length the Italian, seeing my father's involuntary emotion at his convulsive turnings and shuddering, which continued as formerly, interrupting their conversation from time to time, told him his story. He was a native of Rome, and had lived in some familiarity with, and been much patronized by, a young nobleman; but upon some slight occasion they had fallen out, and his patron, besides using many reproachful expressions, had struck him. The painter brooded over the disgrace of the blow. He could not challenge the nobleman, on account of his rank; he therefore watched for an opportunity, and assassinated him. Of course he fled from his country, and finally had reached Hamburgh. He had not, however, passed many weeks from the night of the murder, before, one day, in the crowded street, he heard his name called by a voice familiar to him: he turned short round, and saw the face of his victim looking at him with a fixed eye. From that moment he had no peace: at all hours, in all places, and amidst all companies, however engaged he might be, he heard the voice, and could never help looking round; and, whenever he so looked round, he always encountered the same face staring close upon him. At last, in a mood of desperation, he had fixed himself face to face, and eye to eye, and deliberately drawn the phantom visage as it glared upon him; and *this* was the picture so drawn. The Italian said he had struggled long, but life was a burden which he could now no longer bear; and he was resolved, when he had made money enough to return to Rome, to surrender himself to justice, and expiate his crime on the scaffold. He gave the finished picture to my father, in return for the kindness which he had shown to him.'"

* * * * *

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

* * * * *

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

# *May* 8. 1824

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

Plato's works are logical exercises for the mind. Little that is positive is advanced in them. Socrates may be fairly represented by Plato in the more moral parts; but in all the metaphysical disquisitions it is Pythagoras. Xenophon's representation of his master is quite different.[18]

* * * * *

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

* * * * *

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

* * * * *

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

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

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

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[18] See p. 9. n.—ED.

# *June* 2. 1824

## CRANVILLE PENN AND THE DELUGE.—RAINBOW

I confess I have small patience with Mr. Granville Penn's book against Professor Buckland. Science will be superseded, if every phenomenon is to be referred in this manner to an actual miracle. I think it absurd to attribute so much to the Deluge. An inundation, which left an olive-tree standing, and bore up the ark peacefully on its bosom, could scarcely have been the sole cause of the rents and dislocations observable on the face of the earth. How could the tropical animals, which have been discovered in England and in Russia in a perfectly natural state, have been transported thither by such a flood? Those animals must evidently have been natives of the countries in which they have been found. The climates must have been altered. Assume a sudden evaporation upon the retiring of the Deluge to have caused an intense cold, the solar heat might not be sufficient afterwards to overcome it. I do not think that the polar cold is adequately explained by mere comparative distance from the sun.

* * * * *

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

* * * * *

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

# *June* 5. 1824

## ENGLISH AND GREEK DANCING.—GREEK ACOUSTICS

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

* * * * *

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

* * * * *

# *June* 7. 1824

## LORD BYRON'S VERSIFICATION, AND DON JUAN

How lamentably the *art* of versification is neglected by most of the poets of the present day!—by Lord Byron, as it strikes me, in particular, among those of eminence for other qualities. Upon the whole, I think the part of Don Juan in which Lambro's return to his home, and Lambro himself, are described, is the best, that is, the most individual, thing in all I know of Lord B.'s works. The festal abandonment puts one in mind of Nicholas Poussin's pictures.[19]

[19] Mr. Coleridge particularly noticed, for its classical air, the 32d stanza of this Canto (the third):—"A band of children, round a snow-white ram,There wreathe his venerable horns with flowers,While, peaceful as if still an unwean'd lamb,The patriarch of the flock all gently cowersHis sober head, majestically tame,Or eats from out the palm, or playful lowersHis brow, as if in act to butt, and thenYielding to their small hands, draws back again."But Mr. C. said that *then*, and *again*, made no rhyme to his ear. Why should not the old form *agen* be lawful in verse? We wilfully abridge ourselves of the liberty which our great poets achieved and sanctioned for us in innumerable instances.—ED.

# *June* 10. 1824

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

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

* * * * *

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

* * * * *

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

# *February* 24. 1827

## BLUMENBACH AND KANT'S RACES.—<br>IAPETIC AND SEMITIC.—HEBREW.—SOLOMON

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

1. Caucasian or European.
2. Malay ================= 2. American
3. Negro ========================== 3. Mongolian, Asiatic

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

* * * * *

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

# *March* 10. 1827

## JEWISH HISTORY.—SPINOZISTIC AND HEBREW SCHEMES

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

* * * * *

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

* * * * *

You may state the Pantheism of Spinosa, in contrast with the Hebrew or Christian scheme, shortly, as thus:—

Spinosism.

W-G = 0; *i.e.* the World without God is an impossible idea.
G-W = 0; *i.e.* God without the World is so likewise.

Hebrew or Christian scheme.

W-G = 0; *i.e.* The same as Spinosa's premiss.
But G-W = G; *i.e.* God without the World is God the self-subsistent.

* * * * *

# *March* 12. 1827

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

I have no doubt that the real object closest to the hearts of the leading Irish Romanists is the destruction of the Irish Protestant church, and the re-establishment of their own. I think more is involved in the manner than the matter of legislating upon the civil disabilities of the members of the church of Rome; and, for one, I should he willing to vote for a removal of those disabilities, with two or three exceptions, upon a solemn declaration being made legislatively in parliament, that at no time, nor under any circumstances, could or should a branch of the Romish hierarchy, as at present constituted, become an estate of this realm.[20]

* * * * *

Internal or mental energy and external or corporeal modificability are in inverse proportions. In man, internal energy is greater than in any other animal; and you will see that he is less changed by climate than any animal. For the highest and lowest specimens of man are not one half as much apart from each other as the different kinds even of dogs, animals of great internal energy themselves.

* * * * *

For an instance of Shakspeare's power *in minimis*, I generally quote James Gurney's character in King John. How individual and comical he is with the four words allowed to his dramatic life![21] And pray look at Skelton's Richard Sparrow also!

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

* * * * *

The latest book of travels I know, written in the spirit of the old travellers, is Bartram's account of his tour in the Floridas. It is a work of high merit every way.[22]

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[20] See Church and State, second part, p. 189.

[21] "*Enter Lady FALCONBRIDGE and JAMES GURNEY.*BAST. O me! it is my mother:—How now, good lady?What brings you here to court so hastily?LADY F. Where is that slave, thy brother? where is he?That holds in chase mine honour up and down?BAST. My brother Robert? Old Sir Robert's son?Colbrand the giant, that same mighty man?Is it Sir Robert's son that you seek so?LADY F. Sir Robert's son! Ay, thou unreverend boy,Sir Robert's son: why scorn'st thou at Sir Robert?He is Sir Robert's son; and so art thou.BAST. James Gurney, wilt thou give us leave a while?GUR. Good leave, good Philip.BAST. Philip?—Sparrow! James,There's toys abroad; anon I'll tell thee more.[*Exit* GURNEY."The very *exit Gurney* is a stroke of James's character.—ED.]

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

# *March* 13. 1827

## THE UNDERSTANDING

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

* * * * *

# *March* 18. 1827

## PARTS OF SPEECH.—GRAMMAR

There are seven parts of speech, and they agree with the five grand and universal divisions into which all things finite, by which I mean to exclude the idea of God, will be found to fall; that is, as you will often see it stated in my writings, especially in the Aids to Reflection[23]:—

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

Conceive it thus:—

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

2. Thesis, the noun.

3. Antithesis, the verb.

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

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

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

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

6. The adnoun, or adjective.

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

7. The adverb.

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

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

The genitive case denotes dependence; the dative, transmission. It is absurd to talk of verbs governing. In Thucydides, I believe, every case has been found absolute.[24]

Dative:—[Greek: –]

Thuc.VIII. 24. This is the Latin usage.

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

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

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

[23] P. 170. 2d edition.

[24] Nominative absolute:—[Greek: theon de phozos ae anthropon nomos, oudeis apeirge, to men krinontes en homoio kai sezein kai mae—ton de hamartaematon.]—Thuc. II. 53.

# June 15. 1827

## MAGNETISM.—ELECTRICITY.—GALVANISM

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

# June 24. 1827

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

Spenser's Epithalamion is truly sublime; and pray mark the swan-like movement of his exquisite Prothalamion.[25] His attention to metre and rhythm is sometimes so extremely minute as to be painful even to my ear, and you know how highly I prize good versification.

* * * * *

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

* * * * *

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

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[25] How well I remember this Midsummer-day! I shall never pass such another. The sun was setting behind Caen Wood, and the calm of the evening was so exceedingly deep that it arrested Mr. Coleridge's attention. We were alone together in Mr. Gillman's drawing-room, and Mr. C. left off talking, and fell into an almost trance-like state for ten minutes whilst contemplating the beautiful prospect before us. His eyes swam in tears, his head inclined a little forward, and there was a slight uplifting of the fingers, which seemed to tell me that he was in prayer. I was awestricken, and remained absorbed in looking at the man, in forgetfulness of external nature, when he recovered himself, and after a word or two fell by some secret link of association upon Spenser's poetry. Upon my telling him that I did not very well recollect the Prothalamion: "Then I must read you a bit of it," said he; and, fetching the book from the next room, he recited the whole of it in his finest and most musical manner. I particularly bear in mind the sensible diversity of tone and rhythm with which he gave:—"Sweet Thames! run softly till I end my song,"the concluding line of each of the ten strophes of the poem.When I look upon the scanty memorial, which I have alone preserved of this afternoon's converse, I am tempted to burn these pages in despair. Mr. Coleridge talked a volume of criticism that day, which, printed verbatim as he spoke it, would have made the reputation of any other person but himself. He was, indeed, particularly brilliant and enchanting; and I left him at night so thoroughly *magnetized*, that I could not for two or three days afterwards reflect enough to put any thing on paper,—ED.

* * * * *

A Maxim is a conclusion upon observation of matters of fact, and is merely retrospective: an Idea, or, if you like, a Principle, carries knowledge within itself, and is prospective. Polonius is a man of maxims. Whilst he is descanting on matters of past experience, as in that excellent speech to Laertes before he sets out on his travels, he is admirable; but when he comes to advise or project, he is a mere dotard.[26] You see Hamlet, as the man of ideas, despises him.

* * * * *

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

* * * * *

In the scene with Ophelia, in the third act,[27] Hamlet is beginning with great and unfeigned tenderness; but, perceiving her reserve and coyness, fancies there are some listeners, and then, to sustain his part, breaks out into all that coarseness.

Love is the admiration and cherishing of the amiable qualities of the beloved person, upon the condition of yourself being the object of their action. The qualities of the sexes correspond. The man's courage is loved by the woman, whose fortitude again is coveted by the man. His vigorous intellect is answered by her infallible tact. Can it be true, what is so constantly affirmed, that there is no sex in souls?—I doubt it, I doubt it exceedingly.[28]

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

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[26] Act i. sc. 3

[27] Sc. 1.

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

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

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Monsieur Thomas and the little French Lawyer are great favourites of mine amongst Beaumont and Fletcher's plays. How those plays overflow with wit! And yet I scarcely know a more deeply tragic scene any where than that in Rollo, in which Edith pleads for her father's life, and then, when she cannot prevail, rises up and imprecates vengeance on his murderer.[29]

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Our version of the Bible is to be loved and prized for this, as for a thousand other things,—that it has preserved a purity of meaning to many terms of natural objects. Without this holdfast, our vitiated imaginations would refine away language to mere abstractions. Hence the French have lost their poetical language; and Mr. Blanco White says the same thing has happened to the Spanish.

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I have the perception of individual images very strong, but a dim one of the relation of place. I remember the man or the tree, but where I saw them I mostly forget.[30]

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

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[29] Act iii. sc. 1.:—"ROLLO. Hew off her hands!HAMOND. Lady, hold off!EDITH. No! hew 'em;Hew off my innocent hands, as he commands you!They'll hang the faster on for death's convulsion.—Thou seed of rocks, will nothing move thee, then?Are all my tears lost, all my righteous prayersDrown'd in thy drunken wrath? I stand up thus, then,Thou boldly bloody tyrant,And to thy face, in heav'n's high name defy thee!And may sweet mercy, when thy soul sighs for it,—When under thy black mischiefs thy flesh trembles,—When neither strength, nor youth, nor friends, nor gold,Can stay one hour; when thy most wretched conscience,Waked from her dream of death, like fire shall melt thee,—When all thy mother's tears, thy brother's wounds,Thy people's fears, and curses, and my loss,My aged father's loss, shall stand before thee—ROLLO. Save him, I say; run, save him, save her father;Fly and redeem his head! EDITH. May then that pity," &c.

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

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

* * * * *

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

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# *July* 8. 1827

## BULL AND WATERLAND.—THE TRINITY

Bull and Waterland are the classical writers on the Trinity.[31]

In the Trinity there is, 1. Ipseity. 2. Alterity. 3. Community. You may express the formula thus:—

God, the absolute Will or Identity, = Prothesis. The Father = Thesis. The Son = Antithesis. The Spirit = Synthesis.

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

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

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

# *July* 9. 1827

## SCALE OF ANIMAL BEING

In the very lowest link in the vast and mysterious chain of Being, there is an effort, although scarcely apparent, at individualization; but it is almost lost in the mere nature. A little higher up, the individual is apparent and separate, but subordinate to any thing in man. At length, the animal rises to be on a par with the lowest power of the human nature. There are some of our natural desires which only remain in our most perfect state on earth as means of the higher powers' acting.[32]

[32] These remarks seem to call for a citation of that wonderful passage, transcendant alike in eloquence and philosophic depth, which the readers of the Aids to Reflection have long since laid up in cedar:—"Every rank of creatures, as it ascends in the scale of creation, leaves death behind it or under it. The metal at its height of being seems a mute prophecy of the coming vegetation, into a mimic semblance of which it crystallizes. The blossom and flower, the acme of vegetable life, divides into correspondent organs with reciprocal functions, and by instinctive motions and approximations seems impatient of that fixture, by which it is differenced in kind from the flower-shaped Psyche that flutters with free wing above it. And wonderfully in the insect realm doth the irritability, the proper seat of instinct, while yet the nascent sensibility is subordinate thereto,—most wonderfully, I say, doth the muscular life in the insect, and the musculo-arterial in the bird, imitate and typically rehearse the adaptive understanding, yea, and the moral affections and charities of man. Let us carry ourselves back, in spirit, to the mysterious week, the teeming work-days of the Creator, as they rose in vision before the eye of the inspired historian "of the generations of the heaven and earth, in the days that the Lord God made the earth and the heavens." And who that hath watched their ways with an understanding heart, could, as the vision evolving still advanced towards him, contemplate the filial and loyal bee; the home building, wedded, and divorceless swallow; and, above all, the manifoldly intelligent ant tribes, with their commonwealth and confederacies, their warriors and miners, the husband-folk, that fold in their tiny flocks on the honied leaf, and the virgin sisters with the holy instincts of maternal love, detached and in selfless purity, and not say to himself, Behold the shadow of approaching Humanity, the sun rising from behind, in the kindling morn of creation! Thus all lower natures find their highest good in semblances and seekings of that which is higher and better. All things strive to ascend, and ascend in their striving. And shall man alone stoop? Shall his pursuits and desires, the reflections of his inward life, be like the reflected image of a tree on the edge of a pool, that grows downward, and seeks a mock heaven in the unstable element beneath it, in neighbourhood with the slim water-weeds and oozy bottom-grass that are yet better than itself and more noble, in as far as substances that appear as shadows are preferable to shadows mistaken for substance? No! it must be a higher good to make you happy. While you labour for any thing below your proper humanity, you seek a happy life in the region of death. Well saith the moral poet:—'Unless above himself he canErect himself, how mean a thing is man!'"P. 105. 2d ed.—ED.

# July 12. 1827

## POPEDOM.—SCANDERBEG.—THOMAS À BECKET.—PURE AGES OF GREEK, ITALIAN, AND ENGLISH.—LUTHER.—BAXTER.—ALGERNON SIDNEY'S STYLE.—ARIOSTO AND TASSO.– PROSE AND POETRY.—THE FATHERS.—RHENFERD.—JACOB BEHMEN

What a grand subject for a history the Popedom is! The Pope ought never to have affected temporal sway, but to have lived retired within St. Angelo, and to have trusted to the superstitious awe inspired by his character and office. He spoiled his chance when he meddled in the petty Italian politics.

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Scanderbeg would be a very fine subject for Walter Scott; and so would Thomas à Becket, if it is not rather too much for him. It involves in essence the conflict between arms, or force, and the men of letters.

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Observe the superior truth of language, in Greek, to Theocritus inclusively; in Latin, to the Augustan age exclusively; in Italian, to Tasso exclusively; and in English, to Taylor and Barrow inclusively.

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Luther is, in parts, the most evangelical writer I know, after the apostles and apostolic men.

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Pray read with great attention Baxter's Life of himself. It is an inestimable work.[33] I may not unfrequently doubt Baxter's memory, or even his competence, in consequence of his particular modes of thinking; but I could almost as soon doubt the Gospel verity as his veracity.

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I am not enough read in Puritan divinity to know the particular objections to the surplice, over and above the general prejudice against the *retenta* of Popery. Perhaps that was the only ground,—a foolish one enough.

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[33] This, a very thick folio of the old sort, was one of Mr. Coleridge's text books for English church history. He used to say that there was *no* substitute for it in a course of study for a clergyman or public man, and that the modern political Dissenters, who affected to glory in Baxter as a leader, would read a bitter lecture on themselves in every page of it. In a marginal note I find Mr. C. writing thus: "Alas! in how many respects does my lot resemble Baxter's! But how much less have my bodily evils been, and yet how very much greater an impediment have I suffered them to be! But verily Baxter's labours seem miracles of supporting grace."—ED.

In my judgment Bolingbroke's style is not in any respect equal to that of Cowley or Dryden. Read Algernon Sidney; his style reminds you as little of books as of blackguards. What a gentleman he was!

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Burke's Essay on the Sublime and Beautiful seems to me a poor thing; and what he says upon Taste is neither profound nor accurate.

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Well! I am for Ariosto against Tasso; though I would rather praise Aristo's poetry than his poem.

* * * * *

I wish our clever young poets would remember my homely definitions of prose and poetry; that is, prose = words in their best order;—poetry = the *best* words in the best order.

* * * * *

I conceive Origen, Jerome, and Augustine to be the three great fathers in respect of theology, and Basil, Gregory Nazianzen, and Chrysostom in respect of rhetoric.

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Rhenferd possessed the immense learning and robust sense of Selden, with the acuteness and wit of Jortin.

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Jacob Behmen remarked, that it was not wonderful that there were separate languages for England, France, Germany, &c.; but rather that there was not a different language for every degree of latitude. In confirmation of which, see the infinite variety of languages amongst the barbarous tribes of South America.

# *July* 20. 1827

## NON-PERCEPTION OF COLOURS

What is said of some persons not being able to distinguish colours, I believe. It may proceed from general weakness, which will render the differences imperceptible, just as the dusk or twilight makes all colours one. This defect is most usual in the blue ray, the negative pole.

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I conjecture that when finer experiments have been applied, the red, yellow, and orange rays will be found as capable of communicating magnetic action as the other rays, though, perhaps, under different circumstances. Remember this, if you are alive twenty years hence, and think of me.

# *July* 21. 1827

## RESTORATION.—REFORMATION

The elements had been well shaken together during the civil wars and interregnum under the Long Parliament and Protectorate; and nothing but the cowardliness and impolicy of the Nonconformists, at the Restoration, could have prevented a real reformation on a wider basis. But the truth is, by going over to Breda with their stiff flatteries to the hollow-hearted King, they put Sheldon and the bishops on the side of the constitution.

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The Reformation in the sixteenth century narrowed Reform. As soon as men began to call themselves names, all hope of further amendment was lost.

# *July* 23. 1827

## WILLIAM III.—BERKELEY.—SPINOSA.—GENIUS.—ENVY.—LOVE

William the Third was a greater and much honester man than any of his ministers. I believe every one of them, except Shrewsbury, has now been detected in correspondence with James.

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Berkeley can only be confuted, or answered, by one sentence. So it is with Spinosa. His premiss granted, the deduction is a chain of adamant.

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Genius may co-exist with wildness, idleness, folly, even with crime; but not long, believe me, with selfishness, and the indulgence of an envious disposition. Envy is *[Greek: kakistos kai dikaiotatos theos], as I once saw it expressed somewhere in a page of Stobaeus: it dwarfs and withers its worshippers.

* * * * *

The man's desire is for the woman; but the woman's desire is rarely other than for the desire of the man.[34]

[34] "A woman's friendship," I find written by Mr. C. on a page dyed red with an imprisoned rose-leaf, "a woman's friendship borders more closely on love than man's. Men affect each other in the reflection of noble or friendly acts; whilst women ask fewer proofs, and more signs and expressions of attachment."—ED.

# August 29. 1827

## JEREMY TAYLOR.—HOOKER.—IDEAS.—KNOWLEDGE

Jeremy Taylor is an excellent author for a young man to study, for the purpose of imbibing noble principles, and at the same time of learning to exercise caution and thought in detecting his numerous errors.

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I must acknowledge, with some hesitation, that I think Hooker has been a little over-credited for his judgment.

Take as an instance of an idea the continuity and coincident distinctness of nature; or this,—vegetable life is always striving to be something that it is not; animal life to be itself.[35] Hence, in a plant the parts, as the root, the stem, the branches, leaves, &c. remain after they have each produced or contributed to produce a different *status* of the whole plant: in an animal nothing of the previous states remains distinct, but is incorporated into, and constitutes progressively, the very self.

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To know any thing for certain is to have a clear insight into the inseparability of the predicate from the subject (the matter from the form), and *vice versâ*. This is a verbal definition,—a *real* definition of a thing absolutely known is impossible. I *know* a circle, when I perceive that the equality of all possible radii from the centre to the circumference is inseparable from the idea of a circle.

[35] The reader who has never studied Plato, Bacon, Kant, or Coleridge in their philosophic works, will need to be told that the word Idea is not used in this passage in the sense adopted by "Dr. Holofernes, who in a lecture on metaphysics, delivered at one of the Mechanics' Institutions, explodes all *ideas* but those of sensation; whilst his friend, deputy Costard, has no *idea* of a better-flavoured haunch of venison, than he dined off at the London Tavern last week. He admits (for the deputy has travelled) that the French have an excellent *idea* of cooking in general; but holds that their most accomplished *maîtres de cuisine* have no more *idea* of dressing a turtle, than the Parisian gourmands themselves have any *real idea* of the true *taste* and *colour* of the fat." Church and State, p. 78. No! what Mr. Coleridge meant by an idea in this place may be expressed in various ways out of his own works. I subjoin a sufficient definition from the Church and State, p. 6. "That which, contemplated *objectively*, (that is, as existing *externally* to the mind,) we call a law; the same contemplated *subjectively*, (that is, as existing in a subject or mind,) is an idea. Hence Plato often names Ideas, Laws; and Lord Bacon, the British Plato, describes the laws of the material universe as the ideas in nature. "Quod in natura *naturata* Lex, in natura *naturante* Idea dicitur." A more subtle limitation of the word may be found in the last paragraph of Essay (E) in the Appendix to the Statesman's Manual.—ED.

# *August* 30. 1827

## PAINTING

Painting is the intermediate somewhat between a thought and a thing.

# April 13. 1830

## PROPHECIES OF THE OLD TESTAMENT. —MESSIAH.—JEWS.—THE TRINITY

If the prophecies of the Old Testament are not rightly interpreted of Jesus our Christ, then there is no prediction whatever contained in it of that stupendous event—the rise and establishment of Christianity—in comparison with which all the preceding Jewish history is as nothing. With the exception of the book of Daniel, which the Jews themselves never classed among the prophecies, and an obscure text of Jeremiah, there is not a passage in all the Old Testament which favours the notion of a temporal Messiah. What moral object was there, for which such a Messiah should come? What could he have been but a sort of virtuous Sesostris or Buonaparte?

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I know that some excellent men—Israelites without guile—do not, in fact, expect the advent of any Messiah; but believe, or suggest, that it may possibly have been God's will and meaning, that the Jews should remain a quiet light among the nations for the purpose of pointing at the doctrine of the unity of God. To which I say, that this truth of the essential unity of God has been preserved, and gloriously preached, by Christianity alone. The Romans never shut up their temples, nor ceased to worship a hundred or a thousand gods and goddesses, at the bidding of the Jews; the Persians, the Hindus, the Chinese, learned nothing of this great truth from the Jews. But from Christians they did learn it in various degrees, and are still learning it. The religion of the Jews is, indeed, a light; but it is as the light of the glow-worm, which gives no heat, and illumines nothing but itself.

* * * * *

It has been objected to me, that the vulgar notions of the Trinity are at variance with this doctrine; and it was added, whether as flattery or sarcasm matters not, that few believers in the Trinity thought of it as I did. To which again humbly, yet confidently, I reply, that my superior light, if superior, consists in nothing more than this,—that I more clearly see that the doctrine of Trinal Unity is an absolute truth transcending my human means of understanding it, or demonstrating it. I may or may not be able to utter the formula of my faith in this mystery in more logical terms than some others; but this I say, Go and ask the most ordinary man, a professed believer in this doctrine, whether he believes in and worships a plurality of Gods, and he will start with horror at the bare suggestion. He may not be able to explain his creed in exact terms; but he will tell you that he *does* believe in one God, and in one God only,– reason about it as you may.

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What all the churches of the East and West, what Romanist and Protestant believe in common, that I call Christianity. In no proper sense of the word can I call Unitarians and Socinians believers in Christ; at least, not in the only Christ of whom I have read or know any thing.

# April 14, 1830

## CONVERSION OF THE JEWS.—JEWS IN POLAND

There is no hope of converting the Jews in the way and with the spirit unhappily adopted by our church; and, indeed, by all other modern churches. In the first age, the Jewish Christians undoubtedly considered themselves as the seed of Abraham, to whom the promise had been made; and, as such, a superior order. Witness the account of St. Peter's conduct in the Acts[36], and the Epistle to the Galatians.[37] St. Paul protested against this, so far as it went to make Jewish observances compulsory on Christians who were not of Jewish blood, and so far as it in any way led to bottom the religion on the Mosaic covenant of works; but he never denied the birthright of the chosen seed: on the contrary, he himself evidently believed that the Jews would ultimately be restored; and he says,—If the Gentiles have been so blest by the rejection of the Jews, how much rather shall they be blest by the conversion and restoration of Israel! Why do we expect the Jews to abandon their national customs and distinctions? The Abyssinian church said that they claimed a descent from Abraham; and that, in virtue of such ancestry, they observed circumcision: but declaring withal, that they rejected the covenant of works, and rested on the promise fulfilled in Jesus Christ. In consequence of this appeal, the Abyssinians were permitted to retain their customs.

If Rhenferd's Essays were translated—if the Jews were made acquainted with the real argument—if they were addressed kindly, and were not required to abandon their distinctive customs and national type, but were invited to become Christians *as of the seed of Abraham*—I believe there would be a Christian synagogue in a year's time. As it is, the Jews of the lower orders are the very lowest of mankind; they have not a principle of honesty in them; to grasp and be getting money for ever is their single and exclusive occupation. A learned Jew once said to me, upon this subject:—"O Sir! make the inhabitants of Hollywell Street and Duke's Place Israelites first, and then we may debate about making them Christians."[38]

In Poland, the Jews are great landholders, and are the worst of tyrants. They have no kind of sympathy with their labourers and dependants. They never meet them in common worship. Land, in the hand of a large number of Jews, instead of being, what it ought to be, the organ of permanence, would become the organ of rigidity, in a nation; by their intermarriages within their own pale, it would be in fact perpetually entailed. Then, again, if a popular tumult were to take place in Poland, who can doubt that the Jews would be the first objects of murder and spoliation?

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[36] Chap. xv.

[37] Chap. ii.

[38] Mr. Coleridge had a very friendly acquaintance with several learned Jews in this country, and he told me that, whenever he had fallen in with a Jew of thorough education and literary habits, he had always found him possessed of a strong natural capacity for metaphysical disquisitions. I may mention here the best known of his Jewish friends, one whom he deeply respected, Hyman Hurwitz. —ED.

# April 17. 1830

## MOSAIC MIRACLES.—PANTHEISM

In the miracles of Moses, there is a remarkable intermingling of acts, which we should now-a-days call simply providential, with such as we should still call miraculous. The passing of the Jordan, in the 3d chapter of the book of Joshua, is perhaps the purest and sheerest miracle recorded in the Bible; it seems to have been wrought for the miracle's sake, and so thereby to show to the Jews —the descendants of those who had come out of Egypt— that the *same* God who had appeared to their fathers, and who had by miracles, in many respects providential only, preserved them in the wilderness, was *their* God also. The manna and quails were ordinary provisions of Providence, rendered miraculous by certain laws and qualities annexed to them in the particular instance. The passage of the Red Sea was effected by a strong wind, which, we are told, drove hack the waters; and so on. But then, again, the death of the first-born was purely miraculous. Hence, then, both Jews and Egyptians might take occasion to learn, that it was *one and the same God* who interfered specially, and who governed all generally.

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Take away the first verse of the hook of Genesis, and then what immediately follows is an exact history or sketch of Pantheism. Pantheism was taught in the mysteries of Greece; of which the Samothracian or Cabeiric were probably the purest and the most ancient.

# *April* 18. 1830

## POETIC PROMISE

In the present age it is next to impossible to predict from specimens, however favourable, that a young man will turn out a great poet, or rather a poet at all. Poetic taste, dexterity in composition, and ingenious imitation, often produce poems that are very promising in appearance. But genius, or the power of doing something new, is another thing. Mr. Tennyson's sonnets, such as I have seen, have many of the characteristic excellencies of those of Wordsworth and Southey.

# April 19. 1830

It is a small thing that the patient knows of his own state; yet some things he *does* know better than his physician.

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I never had, and never could feel, any horror at death, simply as death.

*** * * * ***

Good and bad men are each less so than they seem.

# April 30. 1830

## NOMINALISTS AND REALISTS.—BRITISH SCHOOLMEN.—SPINOSA

The result of my system will be, to show, that, so far from the world being a goddess in petticoats, it is rather the Devil in a strait waistcoat.

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The controversy of the Nominalists and Realists was one of the greatest and most important that ever occupied the human mind. They were both right, and both wrong. They each maintained opposite poles of the same truth; which truth neither of them saw, for want of a higher premiss. Duns Scotus was the head of the Realists; Ockham,[39] his own disciple, of the Nominalists. Ockham, though certainly very prolix, is a most extraordinary writer.

* * * * *

It is remarkable, that two thirds of the eminent schoolmen were of British birth. It was the schoolmen who made the languages of Europe what they now are. We laugh at the quiddities of those writers now, but, in truth, these quiddities are just the parts of their language which we have rejected; whilst we never think of the mass which we have adopted, and have in daily use.

* * * * *

One of the scholastic definitions of God is this,—*Deus est, cui omne quod est est esse omne quod est:* as long a sentence made up of as few words, and those as oligosyllabic, as any I remember. By the by, that *oligosyllabic* is a word happily illustrative of its own meaning, *ex opposito*.

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[39] John Duns Scotus was born in 1274, at Dunstone in the parish of Emildune, near Alnwick. He was a fellow of Merton College, and Professor of Divinity at Oxford. After acquiring an uncommon reputation at his own university, he went to Paris, and thence to Cologne, and there died in 1308, at the early age of thirty-four years. He was called the Subtle Doctor, and found time to compose works which now fill twelve volumes in folio. See the Lyons edition, by Luke Wadding, in 1639.William Ockham was an Englishman, and died about 1347; but the place and year of his birth are not clearly ascertained. He was styled the Invincible Doctor, and wrote bitterly against Pope John XXII. We all remember Butler's account of these worthies:—"He knew what's what, and that's as highAs metaphysic wit can fly;In school divinity as ableAs he that hight Irrefragable,A second Thomas, or at onceTo name them all, another Dunse;Profound in all the NominalAnd Real ways beyond them all;For he a rope of sand could twistAs tough as learned Sorbonist."HUDIBRAS. Part I. Canto I. v. 149.The Irrefragable Doctor was Alexander Hales, a native of Gloucestershire, who died in 1245. Amongst his pupils at Paris, was Fidanza, better known by the name of Bonaventura, the Seraphic Doctor. The controversy of the Realists and the Nominalists cannot he explained in a note; but in substance the original point of dispute may be thus stated. The Realists held *generally* with Aristotle, that there were universal *ideas* or essences impressed upon matter, and covëal with, and inherent in, their objects. Plato held that these universal forms existed as exemplars in the divine mind previously to, and independently of, matter; but both maintained, under one shape or other, the real existence of universal forms. On the other hand, Zeno and the old Stoics denied the existence of these universals, and contended that they were no more than mere tenms and nominal representatives of their particular objects. The Nominalists were the followers of Zeno, and held that universal forms are merely modes of conception, and exist solely in and for the mind. It does not require much reflection to see how great an influence these different systems might have upon the enunciation of the higher doctrines of Christianity.—ED.

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Spinosa, at the very end of his life, seems to have gained a glimpse of the truth. In the last letter published in his works, it appears that he began to suspect his premiss. His *unica substantia* is, in fact, a mere notion, —a *subject* of the mind, and no *object* at all.

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Plato's works are preparatory exercises for the mind. He leads you to see, that propositions involving in themselves contradictory conceptions, are nevertheless true; and which, therefore, must belong to a higher logic— that of ideas. They are contradictory only in the Aristotelian logic, which is the instrument of the understanding. I have read most of the works of Plato several times with profound attention, but not all his writings. In fact, I soon found that I had read Plato by anticipation. He was a consummate genius.[40]

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My mind is in a state of philosophical doubt as to animal magnetism. Von Spix, the eminent naturalist, makes no doubt of the matter, and talks coolly of giving doses of it. The torpedo affects a third or external object, by an exertion of its own will: such a power is not properly electrical; for electricity acts invariably under the same circumstances. A steady gaze will make many persons of fair complexions blush deeply. Account for that.[41]

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[40] "This is the test and character of a truth so affirmed (—a truth of the reason, an Idea)—that in its own proper form it is *inconceivable*. For to *conceive*, is a function of the understanding, which can he exercised only on subjects subordinate thereto. And yet to the forms of the understanding all truth must be reduced, that is to be fixed as an object of reflection, and to be rendered *expressible*. And here we have a second test and sign of a truth so affirmed, that it can come forth out of the moulds of the understanding only in the disguise of two contradictory conceptions, each of which is partially true, and the conjunction of both conceptions becomes the representative or *expression* (—the *exponent*) of a truth beyond conception and inexpressible. Examples: *before* Abraham WAS, I AM. God is a circle, the centre of which is every where, and the circumference no where. The soul is all in every part." Aids to Reflection, n. 224.n. See also *Church and State*, p. 12.—ED.

[41] I find the following remarkable passage in p. 301. vol. i. of the richly annotated copy of Mr. Southey's Life of Wesley, which Mr. C. bequeathed as his "darling book and the favourite of his library" to its great and honoured author and donor:—"The coincidence throughout of all these Methodist cases with those of the Magnetists makes me wish for a solution that would apply to all. Now this sense or appearance of a sense of the distant, both in time and space, is common to almost all the *magnetic* patients in Denmark, Germany, France, and North Italy, to many of whom the same or a similar solution could not apply. Likewise, many cases have been recorded at the same time, in different countries, by men who had never heard of each other's names, and where the simultaneity of publication proves the independence of the testimony. And among the Magnetisers and Attesters are to be found names of men, whose competence in respect of integrity and incapability of intentional falsehood is fully equal to that of Wesley, and their competence in respect of physio- and psychological insight and attainments incomparably greater. Who would dream, indeed, of comparing Wesley with a Cuvier, Hufeland, Blumenbach, Eschenmeyer, Reil, &c.? Were I asked, what *I* think, my answer would be,—that the evidence enforces scepticism and a *non liquet*;—too strong and consentaneous for a candid mind to be satisfied of its falsehood, or its solvibility on the supposition of imposture or casual coincidence;—too fugacious and unfixable to support any theory that supposes the always potential, and, under certain conditions and circumstances, occasionally active, existence of a correspondent faculty in the human soul. And nothing less than such an hypothesis would be adequate to the *satisfactory* explanation of the facts;—though that of a *metastasis* of specific functions of the nervous energy, taken in conjunction with extreme nervous excitement, *plus* some delusion, *plus* some illusion, *plus* some imposition, *plus* some chance and accidental coincidence, might determine the direction in which the scepticism should vibrate. Nine years has the subject of Zoo-magnetism been before me. I have traced it historically, collected a mass of documents in French, German, Italian, and the Latinists of the sixteenth century, have never neglected an opportunity of questioning eye-witnesses, *ex. gr.* Tieck, Treviranus, De Prati, Meyer, and others of literary or medical celebrity, and I remain where I was, and where the first perusal of Klug's work had left me, without having moved an inch backward or forward. The reply of Treviranus, the famous botanist, to me, when he was in London, is worth recording:—'Ich habe gesehen was (ich weiss das) ich nicht würde geglaubt haben auf *ihren* erzählung,' &c. 'I have seen what I am certain I would not have believed on your telling; and in all reason, therefore, I can neither expect nor wish that you should believe on *mine*.'"—ED.

# *May* 1. 1830

## FALL OF MAN.—MADNESS.—BROWN AND DARWIN.—NITROUS OXIDE

A Fall of some sort or other—the creation, as it were, of the non- absolute—is the fundamental postulate of the moral history of man. Without this hypothesis, man is unintelligible; with it, every phenomenon is explicable. The mystery itself is too profound for human insight.

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Madness is not simply a bodily disease. It is the sleep of the spirit with certain conditions of wakefulness; that is to say, lucid intervals. During this sleep, or recession of the spirit, the lower or bestial states of life rise up into action and prominence. It is an awful thing to be eternally tempted by the perverted senses. The reason may resist—it does resist—for a long time; but too often, at length, it yields for a moment, and the man is mad for ever. An act of the will is, in many instances, precedent to complete insanity. I think it was Bishop Butler who said, that he was "all his life struggling against the devilish suggestions of his senses," which would have maddened him, if he had relaxed the stern wakefulness of his reason for a single moment.

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Brown's and Darwin's theories are both ingenious; but the first will not account for sleep, and the last will not account for death: considerable defects, you must allow.

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It is said that every excitation is followed by a commensurate exhaustion. That is not so. The excitation caused by inhaling nitrous oxide is an exception at least; it leaves no exhaustion on the bursting of the bubble. The operation of this gas is to prevent the decarbonating of the blood; and, consequently, if taken excessively, it would produce apoplexy. The blood becomes black as ink. The voluptuous sensation attending the inhalation is produced by the compression and resistance.

## *May* 2. 1830

### PLANTS.—INSECTS.—MEN.—DOG.—ANT AND BEE

Plants exist *in* themselves. Insects *by*, or by means of, themselves. Men, *for* themselves. The perfection of irrational animals is that which is best for *them*; the perfection of man is that which is absolutely best. There is growth only in plants; but there is irritability, or, a better word, instinctivity, in insects.

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You may understand by *insect*, life in sections—diffused generally over all the parts.

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The dog alone, of all brute animals, has a [*Greek: storgae], or affection *upwards* to man.

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The ant and the bee are, I think, much nearer man in the understanding or faculty of adapting means to proximate ends than the elephant.[42]

[42] I remember Mr. C. was accustomed to consider the ant, as the most intellectual, and the dog as the most affectionate, of the irrational creatures, so far as our present acquaintance with the facts of natural history enables us to judge.—ED.

# *May* 3. 1830

## BLACK COLONEL

What an excellent character is the black Colonel in Mrs. Bennett's "Beggar Girl!"[43]

If an inscription be put upon my tomb, it may be that I was an enthusiastic lover of the church; and as enthusiastic a hater of those who have betrayed it, be they who they may.[44]

[43] This character was frequently a subject of pleasant description and enlargement with Mr. Coleridge, and he generally passed from it to a high commendation of Miss Austen's novels, as being in their way perfectly genuine and individual productions.—ED.

[44] This was a strong way of expressing a deep-rooted feeling. A better and a truer character would be, that Coleridge was a lover of the church, and a defender of the faith! This last expression is the utterance of a conviction so profound that it can patiently wait for time to prove its truth.—ED.

# *May* 4. 1830

## HOLLAND AND THE DUTCH

Holland and the Netherlands ought to be seen once, because no other country is like them. Every thing is artificial. You will be struck with the combinations of vivid greenery, and water, and building; but every thing is so distinct and rememberable, that you would not improve your conception by visiting the country a hundred times over. It is interesting to see a country and a nature *made*, as it were, by man, and to compare it with God's nature.[45]

If you go, remark, (indeed you will be forced to do so in spite of yourself,) remark, I say, the identity (for it is more than proximity) of a disgusting dirtiness in all that concerns the dignity of, and reverence for, the human person; and a persecuting painted cleanliness in every thing connected with property. You must not walk in their gardens; nay, you must hardly look into them.

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The Dutch seem very happy and comfortable, certainly; but it is the happiness of *animals*. In vain do you look for the sweet breath of hope and advancement among them.[46] [1]In fact, as to their villas and gardens, they are not to be compared to an ordinary London merchant's box.

[45] In the summer of 1828, Mr. Coleridge made an excursion with Mr. Wordsworth in Holland, Flanders, and up the Rhine, as far as Bergen. He came back delighted, especially with his stay near Bonn, but with an abiding disgust at the filthy habits of the people. Upon Cologne, in particular, he avenged himself in two epigrams. See Poet. Works, vol. ii. p. 144.—ED.

[46] "For every gift of noble originIs breathed upon by Hope's perpetual breath."Wordsworth.

# May 5. 1830

## RELIGION GENTILIZES.—WOMEN AND MEN.—BIBLICAL COMMENTATORS.—WALKERITE CREED

You may depend upon it, religion is, in its essence, the most gentlemanly thing in the world. It will *alone* gentilize, if unmixed with cant; and I know nothing else that will, *alone*. Certainly not the army, which is thought to be the grand embellisher of manners.

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A woman's head is usually over ears in her heart. Man seems to have been designed for the superior being of the two; but as things are, I think women are generally better creatures than men. They have, taken universally, weaker appetites and weaker intellects, but they have much stronger affections. A man with a bad heart has been sometimes saved by a strong head; but a corrupt woman is lost for ever.

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I never could get much information out of the biblical commentators. Cocceius has told me the most; but he, and all of them, have a notable trick of passing *siccissimis pedibus* over the parts which puzzle a man of reflection.

The Walkerite creed, or doctrine of the New Church, as it is called, appears to be a miscellany of Calvinism and Quakerism; but it is hard to understand it.

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# *May* 7, 1830

## HORNE TOOKE.–DIVERSIONS OF PURLEY.– GENDER OF THE SUN IN GERMAN

Horne Tooke was pre-eminently a ready-witted man. He had that clearness which is founded on shallowness. He doubted nothing; and, therefore, gave you all that he himself knew, or meant, with great completeness. His voice was very fine, and his tones exquisitely discriminating. His mind had no progression or developement. All that is worth any thing (and that is but little) in the Diversions of Purley is contained in a short pamphlet-letter which he addressed to Mr. Dunning; then it was enlarged to an octavo, hut there was not a foot of progression beyond the pamphlet; at last, a quarto volume, 1 believe, came out; and yet, verily, excepting newspaper lampoons and political insinuations, there was no addition to the argument of the pamphlet, It shows a base and unpoetical mind to convert so beautiful, so divine, a subject as language into the vehicle or make-weight of political squibs. All that is true in Horne Tooke's book is taken from Lennep, who gave it for so much as it was worth, and never pretended to make a system of it. Tooke affects to explain the origin and whole philosophy of language by what is, in fact, only a mere accident of the history of one language, or one or two languages. His abuse of Harris is most shallow and unfair. Harris, in the Hermes, was dealing—not very profoundly, it is true,—with the philosophy of language, the moral, physical, and metaphysical causes and conditions of it, &c. Horne Tooke, in writing about the formation of words only, thought he was explaining the philosophy of language, which is a very different thing. In point of fact, he was very shallow in the Gothic dialects. I must say, all that *decantata fabula* about the genders of the sun and moon in German seems to me great stuff. Originally, I apprehend, in the *Platt-Deutsch* of the north of Germany there were only two definite articles—*die* for masculine and feminine, and *das* for neuter. Then it was *die sonne*, in a masculine sense, as we say with the same word as article, *the* sun. Luther, in constructing the *Hoch-Deutsch* (for really his miraculous and providential translation of the Bible was the fundamental act of construction of the literary German), took for his distinct masculine article the *der* of the *Ober-Deutsch*, and thus constituted the three articles of the present High German, *der, die, das*. Naturally, therefore, it would then have been, *der sonne*; but here the analogy of the Greek grammar prevailed, and as *sonne* had the arbitrary feminine termination of the Greek, it was left with its old article *die*, which, originally including masculine and feminine both, had grown to designate the feminine only. To the best of my recollection, the Minnesingers and all the old poets always use the sun as masculine; and, since Luther's time, the poets feel the awkwardness of the classical gender affixed to the sun so much, that they more commonly introduce Phoebus or some other synonyme instead. I must acknowledge my doubts, whether, upon more accurate investigation, it can be shown that there ever was a nation that considered the sun in itself, and apart from language, as the feminine power. The moon does not so clearly demand a feminine as the sun does a masculine sex: it might be considered negatively or neuter;—yet if the reception of its light from the sun were known, that would have been a good reason for making her feminine, as being the recipient body.

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As our *the* was the German *die*, so I believe our *that* stood for *das*, and was used as a neuter definite article.

The *Platt-Deutsch* was a compact language like the English, not admitting much agglutination. The *Ober-Deutsch* was fuller and fonder of agglutinating words together, although it was not so soft in its sounds.

# May 8. 1830

## HORNE TOOKE.—JACOBINS

Horne Tooke said that his friends might, if they pleased, go as far as Slough,—he should go no farther than Hounslow; but that was no reason why he should not keep them company so far as their roads were the same. The answer is easy. Suppose you know, or suspect, that a man is about to commit a robbery at Slough, though you do not mean to be his accomplice, have you a moral right to walk arm in arm with him to Hounslow, and, by thus giving him your countenance, prevent his being taken up? The history of all the world tells us, that immoral means will ever intercept good ends.

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Enlist the interests of stern morality and religious enthusiasm in the cause of political liberty, as in the time of the old Puritans, and it will be irresistible; but the Jacobins played the whole game of religion, and morals, and domestic happiness into the hands of the aristocrats. Thank God! that they did so. England was saved from civil war by their enormous, their providential, blundering.

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Can a politician, a statesman, slight the feelings and the convictions of the whole matronage of his country? The women are as influential upon such national interests as the men.

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Horne Tooke was always making a butt of Mr. Godwin; who, nevertheless, had that in him which Tooke could never have understood. I saw a good deal of Tooke at one time: he left upon me the impression of his being a keen, iron man.

# *May* 9. 1830

## PERSIAN AND ARABIC POETRY.—MILESIAN TALES

I must acknowledge I never could see much merit in the Persian poetry, which I have read in translation. There is not a ray of imagination in it, and but a glimmering of fancy. It is, in fact, so far as I know, deficient in truth. Poetry is certainly something more than good sense, but it must be good sense, at all events; just as a palace is more than a house, but it must be a house, at least. The Arabian Nights' Tales are a different thing —they are delightful, but I cannot help surmising that there is a good deal of Greek fancy in them. No doubt we have had a great loss in the Milesian Tales.[47] The book of Job is pure Arab poetry of the highest and most antique cast.

Think of the sublimity, I should rather say the profundity, of that passage in Ezekiel,[48] "Son of man, can these bones live? And I answered, O Lord God, thou knowest." I know nothing like it.

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[47] The Milesiacs were so called, because written or composed by Aristides of Miletus, and also because the scene of all or most of them was placed in that rich and luxurious city. Harpocration cites the sixth book of this collection. Nothing, I believe, is now known of the age or history of this Aristides, except what may be inferred from the fact that Lucius Cornelius Sisenna translated the tales into Latin, as we learn from Ovid:—Junxit Aristides Milesia crimina secum—and afterwards,Vertit Aristidem Sisenna, nec obfuit illiHistoriae turpes inseruisse jocos:—*Fasti*, ii. 412-445.and also from the incident mentioned in the *Plutarchian* life of Crassus, that after the defeat at Carrhae, a copy of the Milesiacs of Aristides was found in the baggage of a Roman officer, and that Surena (who, by the by, if history has not done him injustice, was not a man to be over scrupulous in such a case,) caused the book to be brought into the senate house of Seleucia, and a portion of it read aloud, for the purpose of insulting the Romans, who, even during war, he said, could not abstain from the perusal of such *infamous compositions*,—c. 32. The immoral character of these tales, therefore, may be considered pretty clearly established; they were the Decameron and Heptameron of antiquity.—ED.

[48] Chap. xxxvii. v. 3.

# *May* 11. 1830

## SIR T. MONRO.—SIR S. RAFFLES.—CANNING

Sir Thomas Monro and Sir Stamford Raffles were both great men; but I recognise more genius in the latter, though, I believe, the world says otherwise.

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I never found what I call an idea in any speech or writing of –'s. Those enormously prolix harangues are a proof of weakness in the higher intellectual grasp. Canning had a sense of the beautiful and the good; – rarely speaks but to abuse, detract, and degrade. I confine myself to institutions, of course, and do not mean personal detraction. In my judgment, no man can rightly apprehend an abuse till he has first mastered the idea of the use of an institution. How fine, for example, is the idea of the unhired magistracy of England, taking in and linking together the duke to the country gentleman in the primary distribution of justice, or in the preservation of order and execution of law at least throughout the country! Yet some men never seem to have thought of it for one moment, but as connected with brewers, and barristers, and tyrannical Squire Westerns! From what I saw of Homer, I thought him a superior man, in real intellectual greatness.

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Canning flashed such a light around the constitution, that it was difficult to see the ruins of the fabric through it.

# *May* 12. 1830

## SHAKSPEARE.—MILTON.—HOMER

Shakspeare is the Spinosistic deity—an omnipresent creativeness. Milton is the deity of prescience; he stands *ab extra*, and drives a fiery chariot and four, making the horses feel the iron curb which holds them in. Shakspeare's poetry is characterless; that is, it does not reflect the individual Shakspeare; but John Milton himself is in every line of the Paradise Lost. Shakspeare's rhymed verses are excessively condensed,– epigrams with the point every where; but in his blank dramatic verse he is diffused, with a linked sweetness long drawn out. No one can understand Shakspeare's superiority fully until he has ascertained, by comparison, all that which he possessed in common with several other great dramatists of his age, and has then calculated the surplus which is entirely Shakspeare's own. His rhythm is so perfect, that you may be almost sure that you do not understand the real force of a line, if it does not run well as you read it. The necessary mental pause after every hemistich or imperfect line is always equal to the time that would have been taken in reading the complete verse.

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I have no doubt whatever that Homer is a mere concrete name for the rhapsodies of the Iliad.[49] Of course there was *a* Homer, and twenty besides. I will engage to compile twelve books with characters just as distinct and consistent as those in the Iliad, from the metrical ballads, and other chronicles of England, about Arthur and the Knights of the Round Table. I say nothing about moral dignity, but the mere consistency of character. The different qualities were traditional. Tristram is always courteous, Lancelot invincible, and so on. The same might be done with the Spanish romances of the Cid. There is no subjectivity whatever in the Homeric poetry. There is a subjectivity of the poet, as of Milton, who is himself before himself in everything he writes; and there is a subjectivity of the *persona*, or dramatic character, as in all Shakspeare's great creations, Hamlet, Lear, &c.

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[49] Mr. Coleridge was a decided Wolfian in the Homeric question; but he had never read a word of the famous Prolegomena, and knew nothing of Wolf's reasoning, but what I told him of it in conversation. Mr. C. informed me, that he adopted the conclusion contained in the text upon the first perusal of Vico's Scienza Nuova; "not," he said, "that Vico has reasoned it out with such learning and accuracy as you report of Wolf, but Vico struck out all the leading hints, and I soon filled up the rest out of my own head."– ED.

# *May* 14. 1830

## REASON AND UNDERSTANDING.—WORDS AND NAMES OF THINGS

Until you have mastered the fundamental difference, in kind, between the reason and the understanding as faculties of the human mind, you cannot escape a thousand difficulties in philosophy. It is pre-eminently the *Gradus ad Philosophiam*.

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The general harmony between the operations of the mind and heart, and the words which express them in almost all languages, is wonderful; whilst the endless discrepancies between the names of *things* is very well deserving notice. There are nearly a hundred names in the different German dialects for the alder-tree. I believe many more remarkable instances are to be found in Arabic. Indeed, you may take a very pregnant and useful distinction between *words* and mere arbitrary *names of things*.

# May 15. 1830

## THE TRINITY.—IRVING

The Trinity is, 1. the Will; 2. the Reason, or Word; 3. the Love, or Life. As we distinguish these three, so we must unite them in one God. The union must be as transcendant as the distinction.

Mr. Irving's notion is tritheism,—nay, rather in terms, tri-daemonism. His opinion about the sinfulness of the humanity of our Lord is absurd, if considered in one point of view; for body is not carcass. How can there be a sinful carcass? But what he says is capable of a sounder interpretation. Irving caught many things from me; but he would never attend to any thing which he thought he could not use in the pulpit. I told him the certain consequence would be, that he would fall into grievous errors. Sometimes he has five or six pages together of the purest eloquence, and then an outbreak of almost madman's babble.[50]

[50] The admiration and sympathy which Mr. Coleridge felt and expressed towards the late Mr. Irving, at his first appearance in London, were great and sincere; and his grief at the deplorable change which followed was in proportion. But, long after the tongues shall have failed and been forgotten, Irving's name will live in the splendid eulogies of his friend. See *Church and State*, p. 180. n.—ED.

# May 16. 1830

## ABRAHAM.—ISAAC.—JACOB

How wonderfully beautiful is the delineation of the characters of the three patriarchs in Genesis! To be sure, if ever man could, without impropriety, be called, or supposed to be, "the friend of God," Abraham was that man. We are not surprised that Abimelech and Ephron seem to reverence him so profoundly. He was peaceful, because of his conscious relation to God; in other respects, he takes fire, like an Arah sheikh, at the injuries suffered by Lot, and goes to war with the combined kinglings immediately.

* * * * *

Isaac is, as it were, a faint shadow of his father Abraham. Born in possession of the power and wealth which his father had acquired, he is always peaceful and meditative; and it is curious to observe his timid and almost childish imitation of Abraham's stratagem about his wife.[51] Isaac does it before-hand, and without any apparent necessity.

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Jacob is a regular Jew, and practises all sorts of tricks and wiles, which, according to our modern notions of honour, we cannot approve. But you will observe that all these tricks are confined to matters of prudential arrangement, to worldly success and prosperity (for such, in fact, was the essence of the birthright); and I think we must not exact from men of an imperfectly civilized age the same conduct as to mere temporal and bodily abstinence which we have a right to demand from Christians. Jacob is always careful not to commit any violence; he shudders at bloodshed. See his demeanour after the vengeance taken on the Schechemites.[52] He is the exact compound of the timidity and gentleness of Isaac, and of the underhand craftiness of his mother Rebecca. No man could be a bad man who loved as he loved Rachel. I dare say Laban thought none the worse of Jacob for his plan of making the ewes bring forth ring-streaked lambs.

[51] Gen. xxvi. 6.
[52] Gen. xxxiv.

# May 17. 1830

## ORIGIN OF ACTS.—LOVE

If a man's conduct cannot be ascribed to the angelic, nor to the bestial within him, what is there left for us to refer to it, but the fiendish? Passion without any appetite is fiendish.

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The best way to bring a clever young man, who has become sceptical and unsettled, to reason, is to make him *feel* something in any way. Love, if sincere and unworldly, will, in nine instances out of ten, bring him to a sense and assurance of something real and actual; and that sense alone will make him *think* to a sound purpose, instead of dreaming that he is thinking.

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"Never marry but for love," says William Penn in his Reflexions and Maxims; "but see that thou lovest what is lovely."

# May 18. 1830

## LORD ELDON'S DOCTRINE AS TO GRAMMAR SCHOOLS.—DEMOCRACY

Lord Eldon's doctrine, that grammar schools, in the sense of the reign of Edward VI. and Queen Elizabeth, must necessarily mean schools for teaching Latin and Greek, is, I think, founded on an insufficient knowledge of the history and literature of the sixteenth century. Ben Jonson uses the term "grammar" without any reference to the learned languages.

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It is intolerable when men, who have no other knowledge, have not even a competent understanding of that world in which they are always living, and to which they refer every thing.

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Although contemporary events obscure past events in a living man's life, yet as soon as he is dead, and his whole life is a matter of history, one action stands out as conspicuously as another.

A democracy, according to the prescript of pure reason, would, in fact, be a church. There would he focal points in it, but no superior.

# May 20. 1830

## THE EUCHARIST.—ST. JOHN, xix. 11.—GENUINENESS OF BOOKS OF MOSES.– DIVINITY OF CHRIST.—MOSAIC PROPHECIES

No doubt, Chrysostom, and the other rhetorical fathers, contributed a good deal, by their rash use of figurative language, to advance the superstitious notion of the eucharist; but the beginning had been much earlier.[53] [1] In Clement, indeed, the mystery is treated as it was treated by Saint John and Saint Paul; but in Hermas we see the seeds of the error, and more clearly in Irenaeus; and so it went on till the idea was changed into an idol.

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The errors of the Sacramentaries, on the one hand, and of the Romanists on the other, are equally great. The first have volatilized the eucharist into a metaphor; the last have condensed it into an idol.

Jeremy Taylor, in his zeal against transubstantiation, contends that the latter part of the sixth chapter of St. John's Gospel has no reference to the eucharist. If so, St. John wholly passes over this sacred mystery; for he does not include it in his notice of the last supper. Would not a total silence of this great apostle and evangelist upon this mystery be strange? A mystery, I say; for it *is* a mystery; it is the only mystery in our religious worship. When many of the disciples left our Lord, and apparently on the very ground that this saying was hard, he does not attempt to detain them by any explanation, but simply adds the comment, that his words were spirit. If he had really meant that the eucharist should he a mere commemorative celebration of his death, is it conceivable that he would let these disciples go away from him upon such a gross misunderstanding? Would he not have said, "You need not make a difficulty; I only mean so and so?"

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Arnauld, and the other learned Romanists, are irresistible against the low sacramentary doctrine.

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The sacrament of baptism applies itself, and has reference to the faith or conviction, and is, therefore, only to be performed once;—it is the light of man. The sacrament of the eucharist is a symbol of *all* our religion;– it is the life of man. It is commensurate with our will, and we must, therefore, want it continually.

[53] Mr. Coleridge made these remarks upon my quoting Selden's well-known saying (Table Talk), "that transubstantiation was nothing but rhetoric turned into logic."—ED.

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The meaning of the expression, [Greek: ei m_e _en soi didomenon an_othen], "except it were given thee *from above*," in the 19th chapter of St. John, ver. 11., seems to me to have been generally and grossly mistaken. It is commonly understood as importing that Pilate could have no power to deliver Jesus to the Jews, unless it had been given him *by God*, which, no doubt, is true; but if that is the meaning, where is the force or connection of the following clause, [Greek: dia touto], "*therefore* he that delivered me unto thee hath the greater sin?" In what respect were the Jews more sinful in delivering Jesus up, *because* Pilate could do nothing except by God's leave? The explanation of Erasmus and Clarke, and some others, is very dry- footed. I conceive the meaning of our Lord to have been simply this, that Pilate would have had no power or jurisdiction—[Greek: exousian]—over him, if it had not been given by the Sanhedrin, the [Greek: an_o boul_e], and *therefore* it was that the Jews had the greater sin. There was also this further peculiar baseness and malignity in the conduct of the Jews. The mere assumption of Messiahship, as such, was no crime in the eyes of the Jews; they hated Jesus, because he would not be *their sort* of Messiah: on the other hand, the Romans cared not for his declaration that he was the Son of God; the crime in *their* eyes was his assuming to be a king. Now, here were the Jews accusing Jesus before the Roman governor of *that* which, in the first place, they knew that Jesus denied in the sense in which they urged it, and which, in the next place, had the charge been true, would have been so far from a crime in their eyes, that the very gospel history itself, as well as all the history to the destruction of Jerusalem, shows it would have been popular with the whole nation. They wished to destroy him, and for that purpose charge him falsely with a crime which yet was no crime in their own eyes, if it had been true; but only so as against the Roman domination, which they hated with all their souls, and against which they were themselves continually conspiring!

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Observe, I pray, the manner and sense in which the high-priest understands the plain declaration of our Lord, that he was the Son of God. [Footnote: Matt. xxvi. v. 63. Mark, xiv. 61.] "I adjure thee by the living God, that thou tell us whether thou be the Christ, the Son of God," or "the Son of the Blessed," as it is in Mark. Jesus said, "I am,—and hereafter ye shall see the Son of man (or me) sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven." Does Caiaphas take this explicit answer as if Jesus meant that he was full of God's spirit, or was doing his commands, or walking in his ways, in which sense Moses, the prophets, nay, all good men, were and are the sons of God? No, no! He tears his robes in sunder, and cries out, "He hath spoken blasphemy. What further need have we of witnesses? Behold, now ye have heard his blasphemy." What blasphemy, I should like to know, unless the assuming to be the "Son of God" was assuming to be of the *divine nature*?

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One striking proof of the genuineness of the Mosaic books is this,—they contain precise prohibitions—by way of predicting the consequences of disobedience—of all those things which David and Solomon actually did, and gloried in doing,—raising cavalry, making a treaty with Egypt, laying up treasure, and polygamising. Now, would such prohibitions have been fabricated in those kings' reigns, or afterwards? Impossible.

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The manner of the predictions of Moses is very remarkable. He is like a man standing on an eminence, and addressing people below him, and pointing to things which he can, and they cannot, see. He does not say, You will act in such and such a way, and the consequences will be so and so; but, So and so will take place, because you will act in such a way!

# May 21. 1830

## TALENT AND GENIUS.—MOTIVES AND IMPULSES

Talent, lying in the understanding, is often inherited; genius, being the action of reason and imagination, rarely or never.

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Motives imply weakness, and the existence of evil and temptation. The angelic nature would act from impulse alone. A due mean of motive and impulse is the only practicable object of our moral philosophy.

# *May* 23. 1830

## CONSTITUTIONAL AND FUNCTIONAL LIFE.—HYSTERIA.—HYDRO-CARBONIC GAS.– BITTERS AND TONICS.—SPECIFIC MEDICINES

It is a great error in physiology not to distinguish between what may be called the general or fundamental life—the *principium vitae*, and the functional life—the life in the functions. Organization must presuppose life as anterior to it: without life, there could not be or remain any organization; but then there is also *a* life in the organs, or functions, distinct from the other. Thus, a flute presupposes,—demands the existence of a musician as anterior to it, without whom no flute could ever have existed; and yet again, without the instrument there can be no music.

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It often happens that, on the one hand, the *principium vitae*, or constitutional life, may be affected without any, or the least imaginable, affection of the functions; as in inoculation, where one pustule only has appeared, and no other perceptible symptom, and yet this has so entered into the constitution, as to indispose it to infection under the most accumulated and intense contagion; and, on the other hand, hysteria, hydrophobia, and gout will disorder the functions to the most dreadful degree, and yet often leave the life untouched. In hydrophobia, the mind is quite sound; but the patient feels his muscular and cutaneous life forcibly removed from under the control of his will.

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Hysteria may be fitly called *mimosa*, from its counterfeiting so many diseases,—even death itself.

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Hydro-carbonic gas produces the most death-like exhaustion, without any previous excitement. I think this gas should be inhaled by way of experiment in cases of hydrophobia.

There is a great difference between bitters and tonics. Where weakness proceeds from excess of irritability, there bitters act beneficially; because all bitters are poisons, and operate by stilling, and depressing, and lethargizing the irritability. But where weakness proceeds from the opposite cause of relaxation, there tonics are good; because they brace up and tighten the loosened string. Bracing is a correct metaphor. Bark goes near to be a combination of a bitter and a tonic; but no perfect medical combination of the two properties is yet known.

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The study of specific medicines is too much disregarded now. No doubt the hunting after specifics is a mark of ignorance and weakness in medicine, yet the neglect of them is proof also of immaturity; for, in fact, all medicines will be found specific in the perfection of the science.

# *May* 25. 1830

## EPISTLES TO THE EPHESIANS AND COLOSSIANS.—OATHS

The Epistle to the Ephesians is evidently a catholic epistle, addressed to the whole of what might be called St. Paul's diocese. It is one of the divinest compositions of man. It embraces every doctrine of Christianity;– first, those doctrines peculiar to Christianity, and then those precepts common to it with natural religion. The Epistle to the Colossians is the overflowing, as it were, of St. Paul's mind upon the same subject.

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The present system of taking oaths is horrible. It is awfully absurd to make a man invoke God's wrath upon himself, if he speaks false; it is, in my judgment, a sin to do so. The Jews' oath is an adjuration by the judge to the witness: "In the name of God, I ask you." There is an express instance of it in the high-priest's adjuring or exorcising Christ by the living God, in the twenty-sixth chapter of Matthew, and you will observe that our Lord answered the appeal.[54]

You may depend upon it, the more oath-taking, the more lying, generally among the people.

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[54] See this instance cited, and the whole history and moral policy of the common system of judicial swearing examined with clearness and good feeling, in Mr. Tyler's late work on Oaths.—ED.

# May 27. 1830

## FLOGGING.—ELOQUENCE OF ABUSE

I had *one* just flogging. When I was about thirteen, I went to a shoemaker, and begged him to take me as his apprentice. He, being an honest man, immediately brought me to Bowyer, who got into a great rage, knocked me down, and even pushed Crispin rudely out of the room. Bowyer asked me why I had made myself such a fool? to which I answered, that I had a great desire to be a shoemaker, and that I hated the thought of being a clergyman. "Why so?" said he.—"Because, to tell you the truth, sir," said I, "I am an infidel!" For this, without more ado, Bowyer flogged me,– wisely, as I think,—soundly, as I know. Any whining or sermonizing would have gratified my vanity, and confirmed me in my absurdity; as it was, I was laughed at, and got heartily ashamed of my folly.

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How rich the Aristophanic Greek is in the eloquence of abuse!—

[Greek:
'O Bdelyre, kanaischunte, kai tolmaere su,
Kai miare, kai pammiare, kai miarotate.][55]

We are not behindhand in English. Fancy my calling you, upon a fitting occasion,—Fool, sot, silly, simpleton, dunce, blockhead, jolterhead, clumsy-pate, dullard, ninny, nincompoop, lackwit, numpskull, ass, owl, loggerhead, coxcomb, monkey, shallow-brain, addle-head, tony, zany, fop, fop-doodle; a maggot-pated, hare-brained, muddle-pated, muddle-headed, Jackan-apes! Why I could go on for a minute more!

[55] In The Frogs.—ED.

# *May* 28. 1830

## THE AMERICANS

I deeply regret the anti-American articles of some of the leading reviews. The Americans regard what is said of them in England a thousand times more than they do any thing said of them in any other country. The Americans are excessively pleased with any kind or favourable expressions, and never forgive or forget any slight or abuse. It would be better for them if they were a trifle thicker-skinned.

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The last American war was to us only something to talk or read about; but to the Americans it was the cause of misery in their own homes.

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I, for one, do not call the sod under my feet my country. But language, religion, laws, government, blood,—identity in these makes men of one country.

# *May* 29. 1830

## BOOK OF JOB

The Book of Job is an Arab poem, antecedent to the Mosaic dispensation. It represents the mind of a good man not enlightened by an actual revelation, but seeking about for one. In no other book is the desire and necessity for a Mediator so intensely expressed. The personality of God, the I AM of the Hebrews, is most vividly impressed on the book, in opposition to pantheism.

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I now think, after many doubts, that the passage, "I know that my Redeemer liveth," &c. may fairly be taken as a burst of determination, a *quasi* prophecy.[56] "I know not *how* this can be; but in spite of all my difficulties, this I *do* know, that I shall be recompensed."

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It should be observed, that all the imagery in the speeches of the men is taken from the East, and is no more than a mere representation of the forms of material nature. But when God speaks, the tone is exalted; and almost all the images are taken from Egypt, the crocodile, the war-horse, and so forth. Egypt was then the first monarchy that had a splendid court.

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Satan, in the prologue, does not mean the devil, our Diabolus. There is no calumny in his words. He is rather the *circuitor*, the accusing spirit, a dramatic attorney-general. But after the prologue, which was necessary to bring the imagination into a proper state for the dialogue, we hear no more of this Satan.

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Warburton's notion, that the Book of Job was of so late a date as Ezra, is wholly groundless. His only reason is this appearance of Satan.

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[56] Chap. xix. 25, 26.

# *May* 30. 1830

## TRANSLATION OF THE PSALMS

I wish the Psalms were translated afresh; or, rather, that the present version were revised. Scores of passages are utterly incoherent as they now stand. If the primary visual images had been oftener preserved, the connection and force of the sentences would have been better perceived.[57]

[57] Mr. Coleridge, like so many of the elder divines of the Christian church, had an *affectionate* reverence for the moral and evangelical portion of the Book of Psalms. He told me that, after having studied every page of the Bible with the deepest attention, he had found no other part of Scripture come home so closely to his inmost yearnings and necessities. During many of his latter years he used to read ten or twelve verses every evening, ascertaining (for his knowledge of Hebrew was enough for that) the exact visual image or first radical meaning of every noun substantive; and he repeatedly expressed to me his surprise and pleasure at finding that in nine cases out of ten the bare primary sense, if literally rendered, threw great additional light on the text. He was not disposed to allow the prophetic or allusive character so largely as is done by Horne and others; but he acknowledged it in some instances in the fullest manner. In particular, he rejected the local and temporary reference which has been given to the 110th Psalm, and declared his belief in its deep mystical import with regard to the Messiah. Mr. C. once gave me the following note upon the *22d* Psalm written by him, I believe, many years previously, but which, he said, he approved at that time. It will find as appropriate a niche here as any where else:—"I am much delighted and instructed by the hypothesis, which I think probable, that our Lord in repeating *Eli, Eli, lama sabacthani*, really recited the whole or a large part of the 22d Psalm. It is impossible to read that psalm without the liveliest feelings of love, gratitude, and sympathy. It is, indeed, a wonderful prophecy, whatever might or might not have been David's notion when he composed it. Whether Christ did audibly repeat the whole or not, it is certain. I think, that he did it mentally, and said aloud what was sufficient to enable his followers to do the same. Even at this day to repeat in the same manner but the first line of a common hymn would be understood as a reference to the whole. Above all, I am thankful for the thought which suggested itself to my mind, whilst I was reading this beautiful psalm, namely, that we should not exclusively think of Christ as the Logos united to human nature, but likewise as a perfect man united to the Logos. This distinction is most important in order to conceive, much more, appropriately to *feel*, the conduct and exertions of Jesus."—ED.

# *May* 31. 1830

## ANCIENT MARINER.—UNDINE.—MARTIN.—PILGRIM'S PROGRESS

Mrs. Barbauld once told me that she admired the Ancient Mariner very much, but that there were two faults in it,—it was improbable, and had no moral. As for the probability, I owned that that might admit some question; but as to the want of a moral, I told her that in my own judgment the poem had too much; and that the only, or chief fault, if I might say so, was the obtrusion of the moral sentiment so openly on the reader as a principle or cause of action in a work of such pure imagination. It ought to have had no more moral than the Arabian Nights' tale of the merchant's sitting down to eat dates by the side of a well, and throwing the shells aside, and lo! a genie starts up, and says he *must* kill the aforesaid merchant, *because* one of the date shells had, it seems, put out the eye of the genie's son.[58]

I took the thought of "*grinning for joy*," in that poem, from my companion's remark to me, when we had climbed to the top of Plinlimmon, and were nearly dead with thirst. We could not speak from the constriction, till we found a little puddle under a stone. He said to me,—"You grinned like an idiot!" He had done the same.

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Undine is a most exquisite work. It shows the general want of any sense for the fine and the subtle in the public taste, that this romance made no deep impression. Undine's character, before she receives a soul, is marvellously beautiful.[59]

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[58] "There he found, at the foot of a great walnut-tree, a fountain of a very clear running water, and alighting, tied his horse to a branch of a tree, and sitting clown by the fountain, took some biscuits and dates out of his portmanteau, and, as he ate his dates, threw the shells about on both sides of him. When he had done eating, being a good Mussulman, he washed his hands, his face, and his feet, and said his prayers. He had not made an end, but was still on his knees, when he saw a genie appear, all white with age, and of a monstrous bulk; who, advancing towards him with a cimetar in his hand, spoke to him in a terrible voice thus:—'Rise up, that I may kill thee with this cimetar as you have killed my son!' and accompanied these words with a frightful cry. The merchant being as much frightened at the hideous shape of the monster as at these threatening words, answered him trembling:—'Alas! my good lord, of what crime can I be guilty towards you that you should take away my life?'—'I will,' replies the genie, 'kill thee, as thou hast killed my son!'—'O heaven!' says the merchant, 'how should I kill your son? I did not know him, nor ever saw him.'—'Did not you sit down when you came hither?' replies the genie. 'Did not you take dates out of your portmanteau, and, as you ate them, did not you throw the shells about on both sides?'—'I did all that you say,' answers the merchant, 'I cannot deny it.'—'If it be so,' replied the genie, 'I tell thee that thou hast killed my son; and the way was thus: when you threw the nutshells about, my son was passing by, and you threw one of them into his eye, which killed him, *therefore* I must kill thee.'—'Ah! my good lord, pardon me!' cried the merchant. —'No pardon,' answers the genie, 'no mercy! Is it not just to kill him that has killed another?'—'I agree to it,' says the merchant, 'but certainly I never killed your son, and if I have, it was unknown to me, and I did it innocently; therefore I beg you to pardon me, and suffer me to live.'—'No, no,' says the genie, persisting in his resolution, 'I must kill thee, since thou hast killed my son;' and then taking the merchant by the arm, threw him with his face upon the ground, and lifted up his cimetar to cut off his head!"—The Merchant and the Genie. First night.—Ed.

[59] Mr. Coleridge's admiration of this little romance was unbounded. He read it several times in German, and once in the English translation, made in America, I believe; the latter he thought inadequately done. Mr. C. said that there was something in Undine even beyond Scott,—that Scott's best characters and conceptions were *composed*; by which I understood him to mean that Baillie Nicol Jarvie, for example, was made up of old particulars, and received its individuality from the author's power of fusion, being in the result an admirable product, as Corinthian brass was said to be the conflux of the spoils of a city. But Undine, he said, was one and single in projection, and had presented to his imagination, what Scott had never done, an absolutely new idea—ED.

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It seems to me, that Martin never looks at nature except through bits of stained glass. He is never satisfied with any appearance that is not prodigious. He should endeavour to school his imagination into the apprehension of the true idea of the Beautiful.[60]

The wood-cut of Slay-good[61] is admirable, to be sure; but this new edition of the Pilgrim's Progress is too fine a book for it. It should be much larger, and on sixpenny coarse paper.

The Pilgrim's Progress is composed in the lowest style of English, without slang or false grammar. If you were to polish it, you would at once destroy the reality of the vision. For works of imagination should be written in very plain language; the more purely imaginative they are the more necessary it is to be plain.

This wonderful work is one of the few books which may be read over repeatedly at different times, and each time with a new and a different pleasure. I read it once as a theologian—and let me assure you, that there is great theological acumen in the work—once with devotional feelings—and once as a poet. I could not have believed beforehand that Calvinism could be painted in such exquisitely delightful colours.[62]

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[60] Mr. Coleridge said this, after looking at the engravings of Mr. Martin's two pictures of the Valley of the Shadow of Death, and the Celestial City, published in the beautiful edition of the Pilgrim's Progress by Messrs. Murray and Major, in 1830. I wish Mr. Martin could have heard the poet's lecture: he would have been flattered, and at the same time, I believe, instructed; for in the philosophy of painting Coleridge was a master.—ED.

[61] P. 350., by S. Mosses from a design by Mr. W. Harvey. "When they came to the place where he was, they found him with one *Feeble-mind* in his hand, whom his servants had brought unto him, having taken him in the way. Now the giant was rifling him, with a purpose, after that, to pick his bones; for he was of the nature of flesh eaters."—ED.

[62] I find written on a blank leaf of my copy of this edition of the P.'s P. the following note by Mr. C.:—"I know of no book, the Bible excepted as above all comparison, which I, according to *my* judgment and experience, could so safely recommend as teaching and enforcing the whole saving truth according to the mind that was in Christ Jesus, as the Pilgrim's Progress. It is, in my conviction, incomparably the best *summa theologiae evangalicae* ever produced by a writer not miraculously inspired." June 14. 1830.—ED.

# *June* 1. 1830

## PRAYER.—CHURCH-SINGING.—HOOKER.—DREAMS

There are three sorts of prayer:—1. Public; 2. Domestic; 3. Solitary. Each has its peculiar uses and character. I think the church ought to publish and authorise a directory of forms for the latter two. Yet I fear the execution would be inadequate. There is a great decay of devotional unction in the numerous books of prayers put out now-a-days. I really think the hawker was very happy, who blundered New Form of Prayer into New *former* Prayers.[63]

I exceedingly regret that our church pays so little attention to the subject of congregational singing. See how it is! In that particular part of the public worship in which, more than in all the rest, the common people might, and ought to, join,—which, by its association with music, is meant to give a fitting vent and expression to the emotions,—in that part we all sing as Jews; or, at best, as mere men, in the abstract, without a Saviour. You know my veneration for the Book of Psalms, or most of it; but with some half dozen exceptions, the Psalms are surely not adequate vehicles of Christian thanksgiving and joy! Upon this deficiency in our service, Wesley and Whitfield seized; and you know it is the hearty congregational singing of Christian hymns which keeps the humbler Methodists together. Luther did as much for the Reformation by his hymns as by his translation of the Bible. In Germany, the hymns are known by heart by every peasant: they advise, they argue from the hymns, and every soul in the church praises God, like a Christian, with words which are natural and yet sacred to his mind. No doubt this defect in our service proceeded from the dread which the English Reformers had of being charged with introducing any thing into the worship of God but the text of Scripture.

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Hooker said,—That by looking for that in the Bible which it is impossible that *any book* can have, we lose the benefits which we might reap from its being the best of all books.

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You will observe, that even in dreams nothing is fancied without an antecedent *quasi* cause. It could not be otherwise.

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[63] "I will add, at the risk of appearing to dwell too long on religious topics, that on this my first introduction to Coleridge he reverted with strong compunction to a sentiment which he had expressed in earlier days upon prayer. In one of his youthful poems, speaking of God, he had said——'Of whose all-seeing eyeAught to demand were impotence of mind.'This sentiment he now so utterly condemned, that, on the contrary, he told me, as his own peculiar opinion, that the act of praying was the very highest energy of which the human heart was capable, praying, that is, with the total concentration of the faculties; and the great mass of worldly men and of learned men he pronounced absolutely incapable of prayer."—*Tait's Magazine*, September, 1834, p. 515.Mr. Coleridge within two years of his death very solemnly declared to me his conviction upon the same subject. I was sitting by his bedside one afternoon, and he fell, an unusual thing for him, into a long account of many passages of his past life, lamenting some things, condemning others, but complaining withal, though very gently, of the way in which many of his most innocent acts had been cruelly misrepresented. "But I have no difficulty," said he, "in forgiveness; indeed, I know not how to say with sincerity the clause in the Lord's Prayer, which asks forgiveness *as we forgive*. I feel nothing answering to it in my heart. Neither do I find, or reckon, the most solemn faith in God as a real object, the most arduous act of the reason and will. O no, my dear, it is *to pray, to pray* as God would have us; this is what at times makes me turn cold to my soul. Believe me, to pray with all your heart and strength, with the reason and the will, to believe vividly that God will listen to your voice through Christ, and verily do the thing he pleaseth thereupon—this is the last, the greatest achievement of the Christian's warfare upon earth. *Teach* us to pray, O Lord!" And then he burst into a flood of tears, and begged me to pray for him. O what a sight was there!—ED.

# *June* 4. 1830

## JEREMY TAYLOR.—ENGLISH REFORMATION

Taylor's was a great and lovely mind; yet how much and injuriously was it perverted by his being a favourite and follower of Laud, and by his intensely popish feelings of church authority.[64] His Liberty of Prophesying is a work of wonderful eloquence and skill; but if we believe the argument, what do we come to? Why to nothing more or less than this, that—so much can be said for every opinion and sect,—so impossible is it to settle any thing by reasoning or authority of Scripture,—we must appeal to some positive jurisdiction on earth, *ut sit finis controversiarum*. In fact, the whole book is the precise argument used by the Papists to induce men to admit the necessity of a supreme and infallible head of the church on earth. It is one of the works which preeminently gives countenance to the saying of Charles or James II., I forget which:—"When you of the Church of England contend with the Catholics, you use the arguments of the Puritans; when you contend with the Puritans, you immediately adopt all the weapons of the Catholics." Taylor never speaks with the slightest symptom of affection or respect of Luther, Calvin, or any other of the great reformers—at least, not in any of his learned works; but he *saints* every trumpery monk and friar, down to the very latest canonizations by the modern popes. I fear you will think me harsh, when I say that I believe Taylor was, perhaps unconsciously, half a Socinian in heart. Such a strange inconsistency would not be impossible. The Romish church has produced many such devout Socinians. The cross of Christ is dimly seen in Taylor's works. Compare him in this particular with Donne, and you will feel the difference in a moment. Why are not Donne's volumes of sermons reprinted at Oxford?[65]

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In the reign of Edward VI., the Reformers feared to admit almost any thing on human authority alone. They had seen and felt the abuses consequent on the popish theory of Christianity; and I doubt not they wished and intended to reconstruct the religion and the church, as far as was possible, upon the plan of the primitive ages? But the Puritans pushed this bias to an absolute bibliolatry. They would not put on a corn-plaster without scraping a text over it. Men of learning, however, soon felt that this was wrong in the other extreme, and indeed united itself to the very abuse it seemed to shun. They saw that a knowledge of the Fathers, and of early tradition, was absolutely necessary; and unhappily, in many instances, the excess of the Puritans drove the men of learning into the old popish extreme

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[64] Mr. Coleridge placed Jeremy Taylor amongst the four great geniuses of old English literature. I think he used to reckon Shakspeare and Bacon, Milton and Taylor, four-square, each against each. In mere eloquence, he thought the Bishop without any fellow. He called him Chrysostom. Further, he loved the man, and was anxious to find excuses for some weak parts in his character. But Mr. Coleridge's assent to Taylor's views of many of the fundamental positions of Christianity was very limited; and, indeed, he considered him as the least sound in point of doctrine of any of the old divines, comprehending, within that designation, the writers to the middle of Charles II.'s reign. He speaks of Taylor in "The Friend" in the following terms:—"Among the numerous examples with which I might enforce this warning, I refer, not without reluctance, to the most eloquent, and one of the most learned, of our divines; a rigorist, indeed, concerning the authority of the church, but a latitudinarian in the articles of its faith; who stretched the latter almost to the advanced posts of Socinianism, and strained the former to a hazardous conformity with the assumptions of the Roman hierarchy." Vol. ii. p. 108.—ED.

[65] Why not, indeed! It is really quite unaccountable that the sermons of this great divine of the English church should be so little known as they are, even to very literary clergymen of the present day. It might have been expected, that the sermons of the greatest preacher of his age, the admired of Ben Jonson, Selden, and all that splendid band of poets and scholars, would even as curiosities have been reprinted, when works, which are curious for nothing, are every year sent forth afresh under the most authoritative auspices. Dr. Donne was educated at both universities, at Hart Hall, Oxford, first, and afterwards at Cambridge, but at what college Walton does not mention—ED.

of denying the Scriptures to be capable of affording a rule of faith without the dogmas of the church. Taylor is a striking instance how far a Protestant might be driven in this direction.

# *June* 6. 1830

## CATHOLICITY.—GNOSIS.—TERTULLIAN.—ST. JOHN

In the first century, catholicity was the test of a book or epistle— whether it were of the Evangelicon or Apostolicon—being canonical. This catholic spirit was opposed to the gnostic or peculiar spirit,—the humour of fantastical interpretation of the old Scriptures into Christian meanings. It is this gnosis, or *knowingness,* which the Apostle says puffeth up,—not *knowledge*, as we translate it. The Epistle of Barnabas, of the genuineness of which I have no sort of doubt, is an example of this gnostic spirit. The Epistle to the Hebrews is the only instance of gnosis in the canon: it was written evidently by some apostolical man before the destruction of the Temple, and probably at Alexandria. For three hundred years, and more, it was not admitted into the canon, especially not by the Latin church, on account of this difference in it from the other Scriptures. But its merit was so great, and the gnosis in it is so kept within due bounds, that its admirers at last succeeded, especially by affixing St. Paul's name to it, to have it included in the canon; which was first done, I think, by the council of Laodicea in the middle of the fourth century. Fortunately for us it was so.

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I beg Tertullian's pardon; but amongst his many *bravuras*, he says something about St. Paul's autograph. Origen expressly declares the reverse.

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It is delightful to think, that the beloved apostle was born a Plato. To him was left the almost oracular utterance of the mysteries of the Christian religion while to St. Paul was committed the task of explanation, defence, and assertion of all the doctrines, and especially of those metaphysical ones touching the will and grace;[66] for which purpose his active mind, his learned education, and his Greek logic, made him pre-eminently fit.

[66] "The imperative and oracular form of the inspired Scripture is the form of reason itself, in all things purely rational and moral."—*Statesman's Manual*, p. 22.

# June 7. 1830

## PRINCIPLES OF A REVIEW.—PARTY-SPIRIT

Notwithstanding what you say, I am persuaded that a review would amply succeed even now, which should be started upon a published code of principles, critical, moral, political, and religious; which should announce what sort of books it would review, namely, works of literature as contradistinguished from all that offspring of the press, which in the present age supplies food for the craving caused by the extended ability of reading without any correspondent education of the mind, and which formerly was done by conversation, and which should really give a fair account of what the author intended to do, and in his own words, if possible, and in addition, afford one or two fair specimens of the execution,—itself never descending for one moment to any personality. It should also be provided before the commencement with a dozen powerful articles upon fundamental topics to appear in succession. You see the great reviewers are now ashamed of reviewing works in the old style, and have taken up essay writing instead. Hence arose such publications as the Literary Gazette and others, which are set up for the purpose—not a useless one—of advertizing new books of all sorts for the circulating libraries. A mean between the two extremes still remains to be taken.

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