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LETTERS, CONVERSATIONS,

AND

RECOLLECTIONS.


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LETTERS

CONVERSATIONS AND RECOLLECTIONS

OF

S. T. COLERIDGE.

Pliny writ his Letters for the Public; so did Seneca, so did Balzac, Voiture, &c. &c.; Tully did not: and therefore these give us more pleasure than any which have come down to us from antiquity. When we read them we pry into a secret which was intended to be kept from us. That is a pleasure. We see Cato and Brutus and Pompey and others, such as they really were, and not such as the gaping multitude of their own age took them to be, or as Historians and Poets have represented them to ours. That is another pleasure.—BOLINGBROKE TO SWIFT.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

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LETTERS, CONVERSATIONS,

AND

RECOLLECTIONS.

LETTER XX.

Sept. 15*th,* 1821.

My dear Friend,

I cannot rest until I have answered your last letter. I have contemplated your character, affectionately indeed, but through a clear medium. No film of passion, no glittering mist of outward advantages, has arisen between the sight and the object: I had no other prepossession than the esteem which my knowledge of your sentiments and conduct could not but secure for you. I soon

learnt to esteem you; and in esteeming, became attached to you. I began by loving the man on account of his conduct, but I ended in valuing the actions chiefly as so many looks and attitudes of the same person. "*Hast* thou any thing? Share it with me, and I will pay thee an equivalent. *Art* thou any thing? O then we will exchange souls."

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

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

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

the warmth and earnestness of my language are not warranted by the occasion; but they are barely proportionate to the present solicitude of,

Your faithful and affectionate friend,

S. T. Coleridge.

"The German writers have acquired a style and an elegance of thought and of mind, just as we have attained a style and smartness of composition (thus in my notes), so that if you were to read an ordinary German author as an English one, you would say,—'This man *has something in him*, this man thinks;' whereas it is *merely* a method acquired by them, as we have acquired a style."

"Dr. Young one day was speaking of John Hunter as being greatly over-rated, upon which I replied,—'Yes, to minds which, like birds entangled in the lime, scoff and sneer at those pinions of power that have emancipated themselves from the thrall which bound them, but are nevertheless

impeded in their upward progress by the shackles they have broken, but from the slime of which they are not freed.'

" The Doctor noticed my assimilating weight and gravity, *civilly* informing me that those who *understood* these matters considered them as different as fire and heat.

" I said, ' Yes, in that philosophy which, together with a great quantity of old clothes, I discarded thirty years ago, and which, by identifying cause and effect, destroys both.' "

A copy of the Lyrical Ballads was sent to Mr. Fox, who dissented from the conclusions of Mr. Wordsworth as to Ruth and the Brothers, but expressed his admiration of " We are Seven," and " The Linnet," and conveyed his regret that he knew not to whom he was to refer the most beautiful poem in the language, " Love," adding,—" I learn we are indebted to Mr. Coleridge for that exquisite poem, " The Nightingale."

It is right that I should here observe, that the

conversations, of which this is a *very small part*, possessed little that could be abstracted, and that, in preserving these personal traits, I was gratifying myself by retaining more vivid and distinct knowledge of the most prominent of my contemporaries. This will apply equally to many other recollections and memorandums, both before and after.

"Longmans offered me the copyright of the Lyrical Ballads, at the same time saying that, if I would write a few more, they would publish my contributions. When I expressed a hope that 3000 might be circulated, Wordsworth spurned at the idea, and said that twenty times that number must be sold. I was told by Longmans that the greater part of the Lyrical Ballads had been sold to seafaring men, who having heard of the Ancient Mariner, concluded that it was a naval song-book, or, at all events, that it had some relation to nautical matters *."

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* It is somewhat singular that the name of another and larger book of Mr. Wordsworth's should also owe its circulation to a misconception of the title. It has been my fortune

Spoke with interest of Irving. Regretted that he should have expressed his inability to preserve his original simplicity when addressing an audience of the highest classes. Thought this the feeling of a third or fourth-rate mind; that he might have been *perplexed* would not have derogated from his character, but to allow an audience to influence him further than the fitness of his discourse to his hearers was not to his advantage.

"The most happy marriage I can picture or image to myself would be the union of a deaf man to a blind * woman."

to have met with the EXCURSION at a great number of inns and boarding-houses in picturesque scenes — in places where parties go for *excursions;* and upon inquiring how it happened that so expensive a book was purchased, when an old Universal Magazine, an Athenian Oracle, or, at best, one of the Bridgewater Treatises, would do as well to send the guest to sleep, I was given to understand in three several places that they were left by parties who had finished their *material* excursion, but, alas! for their taste, had left their poetic excursion untouched; uncut, even, beyond the story of Margaret.

* Whilst these pages are passing through the press this most extraordinary conjunction has taken place at Barming, near Maidstone.

LETTER XXI.

Sept. 24th, 1821.

My dearest Friend,

I will begin with the beginning of your (to me most affecting) letter. Not exactly *obligation*, my entirely beloved and relied-on friend! The soiling hand of the world has dyed and sunk into the sense and import of the term too inseparably, for it to convey the kind and degree of what I feel towards you, on the one scale. I love you so truly, that in the first glance, as it were, and *welcome* of your anxious affection, it delights me for the very act's sake. I think only of it and you, or rather both are one and the same, and I live in you. Nor does the complacency suffer any abatement, but becomes more intense and lively. As a mother would talk of the soothing attentions, the sacrifices and devotion of a son, eager to supply every want and anticipate every wish, so I talk to

myself concerning you; and I am proud of you, and proud to be the object of what cannot but appear lovely to my judgment, and which the hard contrast in so many heart-withering instances, forced on me by the experience of my last twenty years, compels me to feel and value with an additional glow. Lastly, it is a source of strength and comfort to know, that the labours and aspirations and sympathies of the genuine and invisible Humanity exist in a social world of their own; that its attractions and assimilations are no Platonic fable, no dancing flames or luminous bubbles on the magic cauldron of my wishes; but that there are, even in this unkind life, spiritual parentages and filiations of the soul. Can there be a counterpoise to these? Not a counterpoise—but as weights in the counter-scale there will come the self-reproach, that spite of all inauspicious obstacles, not in my power to remove without loss of self-respect, I have not done all I could and might have done to prevent my present state of dependence. I am now able to hope that I shall be capable of setting apart such a portion of my *useable*

time to my greater work (in assertion of the ideal truths and *a priori* probability, and *a posteriori* internal and external evidence of the historic truth of the Christian religion), as to leave a sufficient portion for a not unprofitable series of articles for pecuniary supply. I entertain some hope, too, that my Logic, which I could begin printing immediately if I could find a publisher willing to undertake it on equitable terms, might prove an exception to the general fate of my publications. It is a long lane that has no turning, and while my own heart bears witness to the genial delight you would feel in assisting me, I know that you would have a more satisfactory gladness in my not needing it.

And now a few, a very few words on the latter portion of your letter. You know, my dearest Friend, how I acted myself, and that my example cannot be urged in confirmation of my judgment. I certainly strive hard to divest my mind of every prejudice, to look at the question sternly through the principle of Right separated from all mere Expedience, nay, from the question of earthly happiness *for its own sake.* But I cannot answer to myself

that the image of any serious obstacle to your peace of heart, that the Thought of your full development of soul being put a stop to, of a secret anxiety blighting your *utility* by cankering your happiness, I cannot be sure—I cannot be sure that this may not have made me *weigh* with a trembling and unsteady hand, and less than half the presumption of error, afforded by the shrinking and recoil of your moral sense or even feeling, would render it my duty and my impulse to bring my conclusion anew to the ordeal of my Reason and Conscience. But on your side, my dear Friend! try with me to contemplate the question as a problem in the *science* of Morals, in the first instance, and to recollect that there are false or intrusive weights possible in the other scale; that our very virtues may become, or be transformed into temptations to, or occasions of, *partial* judgment; that we may judge partially *against* ourselves from the very fear, perhaps contempt, of the contrary; that self may be moodily gratified by *self*-sacrifice, and that the Heart itself, in its perplexity, may acquiesce for a time in the decision as a more safe way;

and, lastly, that the question can only be fully answered, when Self and Neighbour, as equi-distant $\overset{G}{S\triangle N}$ from the conscience or God, are blended in the common term a *Human Being:* that we are *commanded* to love ourselves as our Neighbour in the Law that requires a Christian to love his Neighbour as himself.

But indeed I persuade myself that this dissonance is not real between us, and that it would not have seemed to exist, had I continued the subject into the possible particular cases; *ex gr.* suppose a case in which the misery, and so far the moral incapacitation, of both parties were certainly foreseen as the immediate consequence. A morality of Consequences I, you well know, reprobate; but to exclude the necessary *effect* of an action is to take away all meaning from the word action—*to strike Duty with blindness.* I repeat it, that I do not, cannot find it in myself to believe, that *on any one* case, made out in all its limbs, features, and circumstances, your heart and mine would prompt different verdicts.

But the thought of you personally and indi-

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

And your affectionate and faithful friend,

S. T. Coleridge.

The affectionate interest expressed in this and the preceding letters was at the time to me a solace and support, placed as I was with relation to my immediate worldly prospects in a position of much perplexity. There were many circumstances which, as they affected others, I could not communicate so fully,—convey so entirely as I desired to my respected friend; hence he altogether misapprehended the particular cause of my anxiety, or, as I doubt not, considered it irresolution and misgiving. In pursuance of the determination with which I set out, I have not hesitated thus to place on record, opinions, views, and suggestions, which,

had I considered myself at liberty to make a selection, I might have omitted, for a two-fold reason; one, that they concerned myself alone; the other, that I do not imagine they will interest general readers. I have adopted the plan of saying just what occurs to me at the time of writing and of giving the memorandums exactly as I find them, when I have no recollection of the circumstances; and the letters exactly as they are written (unless they contain repetitions or expressions of attachment common to all) with few omissions, and those of no importance.

I should consider it a misfortune for any one to have suggested alterations or omissions in this work, as such suggestions would have disturbed or have interfered with my original determination; a determination to let my dear friend be known in all his strength and all his weakness, as far as these letters and recollections convey any clear idea of either. I might have made this work better with some aids and with longer preparation, but then it would not *so well* have expressed what I sought to convey. It would not have so entirely expressed

my own or my late friend's opinions and convictions; and in *this sense*, though another might have made it *better*, no one but myself could have done it so well. In this view Charles Lamb coincided, though he, it seems, from the force of an early impression, never kept any letters, and therefore did not attach the importance which appears to me to belong to this department of autobiography.

When asked to accompany a recent deputation to remonstrate with the present ministers, I assented, stating to my friends that I should go to read their faces, for that nature never lies. So it proved in this case; their conduct being in harmony with the conclusions I drew and expressed at the time, but in strange discrepancy with *what they said*. So I hold that letters, which are the transcript of the writer's mind, give more of interest and more insight into character than volumes of disquisition or surmises.

"Read the Troilus and Cressida; dwelt much upon the fine distinction made by Shakspeare be-

tween the *affection* of Troilus and the passion of Cressida. This does not escape the notice of Ulysses, who thus depicts her on her first arrival in the Trojan camp :—

> ' ——— Fie ! fie upon her !
> There's language in her eye, her cheek, her lip,
> Nay, her foot speaks. Her wanton spirits look out
> At every joint of her body. Set such down
> For sluttish spoils of opportunity
> And daughters of the game.'

" The profound affection of Troilus alone deserves the name of love."

" Certainly the highest good is to live happily, and not through a life of mortification to expect a happy death. Should we attain felicity in life, death will be easy, as it will be natural and in due season. Whereas by the present system of *religious teaching,* men are enjoined to value chiefly happiness at the end of life ; which, if they were implicitly to follow, they would, by neglecting the first great

duty, that of innocent enjoyment during existence, effectually preclude themselves from attaining.

" There is no condition (evil as it may be in the eye of reason), which does not include, or seem to include when it has become familiar, some good, some redeeming or reconciling qualities. I agree, however, that marriage is not one of these. Marriage has, as you say, no *natural* relation to love. Marriage belongs to society; it is a social contract. It should not merely include the conditions of esteem and friendship, it should be the ratification of their manifestation. Still I do not know how it can be replaced; *that* belongs to the future, and it is a question which the future only can solve. I however quite agree that we can now, better than at any former time, say what *will not*, what *cannot* be."

" Truly, when I think of what has entered into ethics, what has been considered moral in the

early ages of the world, and even now by civilised nations in the east, I incline to believe that morality *is* conventional; but when I see the doctrines propounded under the name of political economy, I earnestly *hope* that it is so.—As illustrations of the opinions held by philosophers, which to us appear abominable or indecent, I refer to some of the rules of Zeno, some parts of the philosophy of Plato, the whole conduct of Phædon, and the practice of Cato the Censor."

"The Essenians for several ages subsisted by adoption: we shall see if the Shakers continue so long."

"We shun a birth, and make a public exhibition of an execution. The mystery observed at birth is a type of other mysteries. It is a matter of silence and secrecy, and wholly withheld from all but the customary officials."

" Pythagoras first asserted that the earth was a globe, and that there were antipodes. He also seems to have been acquainted with the properties of the atmosphere, at least its weight and pressure. He was the most wonderful of those men whom Greece, that treasure-house of intellect, produced to show her treasures, and to be the ornament and gaze of our nature during all time. In his doctrines, the Copernican system may clearly be traced.

" Pythagoras used the mysteries as one of the means to retain the doctrine of an unity while the multitude sunk into Polytheism.

" It is quite certain most of the ancient philosophers were adverse to the popular worship, as tending to degrade the idea of the Divine Being, and to defile the national manners. Idol worship always demoralises a people who adopt it.

" Witness the Jews, whose idolatry was followed by universal chastisement. Witness Rome, Greece, and Egypt, where idol worship led to immorality and vice of the most frightful kind."

The following I find on the back of a Letter.

"—— is one of those clergymen who find it more easy to hide their thoughts than to suppress thinking, and who treat the Thirty Nine Articles as the whale did Jonah, *i. e.* swallowed, but could not digest him."

"Quarrels of anger ending in tears are favourable to love in its *spring tide, as plants are found to grow very rapidly after a thunderstorm with rain.*"

"The heart in its physical sense is not sufficient for a kite's dinner; yet the whole world is not sufficient for it."

"God hath from the beginning promised forgiveness to the penitent, but hath nowhere promised penitence to the sinner."

" So Mr. Baker heart did pluck,
And did a courting go!
And Mr. Baker is a buck;
For why?—he needs the *doe*."

" Oh! there are some natures which, under the most cheerless, all-threatening, nothing-promising circumstances, can draw hope from the Invisible; as the tropical trees, that in the sandy desolation produce their own lidded vessels full of water from air and dew. Alas! to my root not a drop trickles down but from the water-pot of immediate friends; and even so it seems much more a sympathy with their feeling rather than hope of my own, even as I should feel sorrow if Alsop's mother, whom I have never seen, were to die."

LETTER XXII.

Oct. 20, 1821.

My dear Friend,

Not a day has passed since we left Highgate in which I have not been tracing you in spirit up and down the Glens and Dells of Derbyshire, while my feet only have been in commune with the sandy beach here at Ramsgate. Once when I had stopped and stood stone still for some minutes, Mrs. Gillman's call snatched me away from a spot opposite to a house, to the second floor window of which I had been gazing, as if I had feared, yet expected, to see you passing to and fro by it. These, however, were visions to which I had myself given the commencing act—fabrics of which the "I wonder where . . . . . is now" had laid the foundation stone. But for the last three days your image, alone or lonely in an unconcerning crowd of human figures, has forced itself on my sleep in dreams of

the rememberable kind, accompanied with the feeling of being afraid to go up to you—and now of letting you pass by unnoticed, from want of courage to ask you, what was most on my mind—respecting the one awful to me because so awfully dear to you —(for there is a *religion in all deep love*, but the love of a Mother is, at your age, the veil of softer light between the Heart and the Heavenly Father!) Mrs. Gillman likewise has been thinking of you both asleep and awake: and so, though I know not how to direct my letter, yet a letter I am resolved to write.

I am sure, my dear Friend! that if aught can be a comfort to you in affliction or an addition to your joy in the hour of Thanksgiving, it will be to know, and to be reminded of your knowledge, that I feel as your own heart in all that concerns you. Next to this I have to tell you, that the Sea Air and the Sea Plunges, and the leisure of mind, with regular devotion of the Daylight to exercise (for I write only after tea), have been auspicious, beyond my best hopes, to my health and spirits. The change in my looks is beyond the present reality, but may

be veracious as *prophecy*, though somewhat exaggerating as *history*. The same in all essentials holds good of Mrs. Gillman; and I am most pleased that the improvement in her looks and strength has been gradual though rapid. First she got rid, in the course of four or five days, of the *Positives* of the wrong sort—*ex. gr.* the blackness under the eyes and the thinness of the cheeks—and now she is acquiring the Positives of the right kind, her eyes brightening, her face becoming plump, and a delicate, yet cool and steady colour, stealing upon her cheeks. Mr. Gillman too is uncommonly well since his second arrival here. The first week his arm, the absorbents of which had been perilously poisoned by opening a body, was a sad drawback, and prevented his bathing. In short, we are all better than we could have anticipated; and the better we are, the more I long, and we all wish, you to be with us. If you *can* come, though but for a few days, I pray you come to us. In grief or gladness, we shall grieve less, and (I need not say) be more glad, by seeing you, by having you with *us*. I will not say *write*, for I would a thousand times

rather have you plump in on me, unannounced; but yet write, unless this be possible. We have an excellent house, with beds enough for half a dozen . . . . . if so many there were or could be. The situation the very best in all Ramsgate (Wellington Crescent, East Cliff, Ramsgate); and we, or rather Mrs. Gillman's voice and manner, procured it *shameful cheap* for the size and accommodations.

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

S. T. Coleridge.

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

In reading these letters—so full of love and kindness—my first wish had been to keep them sacred to my own perusal, and to my own bitter and most painful regrets; but they contain so lively a portraiture of the writer's mind, express so clearly what he so entirely felt, that I have judged

it meet and fitting, as well as an act of justice to the memory of the dead, to give them place. I am reminded whilst I write this of an opinion—I fear not altogether a heresy—of Lamb's, that all strong affection, whether it be love of man, to woman, or pure and abiding friendship between men, is not merely of no interest, but that it is, to a certain degree, positively distasteful to all others. As I write for men as they are, not as they *may* be, or as I think they should, *and yet will be*, I should not have published these personal and individual communications during the life of their author under any conceivable circumstances, even if such publications were usual or conceivable. Adhering, therefore, o the rule I have laid down for myself—to publish exactly that which I myself should like most to know of any man, in whom I felt sufficient interest to wish to know anything—I have given every letter, not in itself a repetition in words or tone of feeling of some preceding communication; being determined not to incur justly the regret expressed in the Biographia Literaria, at Spratt's

refusing to allow Cowley to appear in "his dressing gown and slippers."

Of the Conversations about this period I possess the following:—

"We are none of us tolerant in what concerns us deeply and entirely."

"A man who admits himself to be deceived, must be conscious that there is something upon, or respecting which, he cannot be deceived."

"A man who wishes for an *end*, the *means* of which are criminal, is chargeable with all the guilt."

"I was told by one who was with Shelley shortly before his death, that he had in those moments, when his spirit was left to prey inwards, expressed

a wish, amounting to anxiety, to commune with me, as the one only being who could resolve or allay the doubts and anxieties that pressed upon his mind."

"Leigh Hunt (I think he said) having stated that it was my opinion that Byron only *made believe* when he painted himself in his poems, Shelley expressed his fears, his belief that there was no counterfeiting, that it was too real; that he was a being incapable of true sympathy, that he was selfish and sensual beyond his own portraiture."

The enclosed extract of a letter written about this time, I give for the sake of the conclusion.

"I am glad to learn that the dwellers at Rydal perceived an amendment in me. In self-management, in the power of keeping my eyes more, and my heart less open, in aversion to baseness, intrigue, in detestation of apostacy, to *

* * * * *

* I have now no means of supplying this hiatus.

and *silent* or suggestive detraction it would be well for me if I were as I was at twenty-five. Amendment! improvement in outward appearance, in health and in manners, I owe to my friends here; who, as they would not admit any improvement in innocence or blamelessness of life, so they would indignantly reject and repel any alteration for the worse."

"I am much delighted with Lamb's letter to Southey, I have read it many times; Lamb feels firm and has taken sure ground."

"I used to be much amused with Tobin and Godwin. Tobin would pester me with stories of Godwin's dulness; and upon his departure Godwin would drop in just to say that Tobin was more dull than ever."

"Mentioned many things of, and concerning,

Godwin; which, to me, at that time not yet familiar with the ignorance of the learned, with the contradictions, which I have since seen, between the knowledge so called and the practices of men, surprised me much."

"Spoke in the highest terms of affection and consideration of Lamb. Related the circumstance which gave occasion to the '*Old Familiar Faces.*' Charles Lloyd in one of his fits had shown to Lamb a letter, in which Coleridge had illustrated the cases of vast genius in proportion to talent and predominance of talent in conjunction with genius, in the persons of Lamb and himself. Hence a temporary coolness, at the termination of which, or during its continuance, these beautiful verses were written."

"Jeffery, speaking of Campbell, said 'He is one of the best fellows in the world. If, however, he has a fault, it is that he is envious, and to that

degree that he wishes the walls may fall and crush any one who may excel him. He is one of my most intimate friends, and with that *little* drawback, one of the best fellows in the world.'"

"Spoke of the cold and calculating character of the Scotch; agreed that they were in this the same drunk or sober: their heads seemed always so full that they could not hold more; adding, 'We value the Scotch without however liking them; and we like the Irish without however *over*valuing them. Instanced Dr. Stoddart as having most of the unamiable traits of the Scotch character without the personally useful ones—doing dirty work for little pay.'"

"Came to me very much heated and fatigued, stayed to refresh before proceeding to Sir George Beaumont's. Had received a letter from Colin Mackenzie, stating that he was occupied in attending the Privy Council, and that he feared he should

not be able to dine with him at Sir George Beaumont's. Coleridge not being able to decipher the letter, said 'It is an excellently contrived kind of hand for the purpose of disguising false orthography. I had before this conceived strong suspicions that my good friend Colin Mackenzie could not spell, and they are now confirmed.'"

"Met Wilkie at this dinner, who expressed his opinion that patronage did no good but much injury. Said also, that he should never think painting properly estimated until a painter should make his fifteen, twenty, or thirty thousand a year, like a man at the bar;—an opinion which did him no service with Sir George Beaumont.—Speaking of the Queen's trial I said,

'It was a most atrocious affair.'

'I am delighted to hear *you* sanction my use of that opinion,' said Lady Sarah Bathurst, 'indeed it was a most "atrocious" business; and if any iniquity could withdraw the sun's light, *that* would surely have occasioned a physical, as well as moral,

eclipse.' A general outcry; an earnest entreaty on the part of Lady Sarah, put an end to this extraordinary scene."

"Quoted with great glee, as one of the best practical jokes extant, if indeed a thing so good must not be true, a story from an old Spanish humourist which had, by some strange oversight or lapsus, escaped the shears of the Inquisition.

At the sacrament, a Priest gave, without perceiving it, a counter instead of a wafer. The communicant thinking it would melt, very patiently waited, but without effect. The Priest seeing him hesitate enquired what was the matter? 'Matter, said he, 'I hope you have not made a mistake and given me God the Father, he is so hard and tough there is no swallowing him.' These stories abound in all Catholic countries, especially in Italy. Indeed the religious of all countries are, in the eye of Reason, the greatest blasphemers, seeing that though all affirm God made man in his own *image*, they make God after their own *imaginations*."

LETTER XXIII.

Ramsgate, Nov, 2nd, 1821.

My dear Friend,

First, let me utter the fervent, God be praised! for the glad tidings respecting your dear Mother, which would have given an abounding interest to a far less interesting letter. May she be long preserved both to enjoy and reward your love and piety! And now I will try to answer the other contents of your letter, as satisfactorily I *hope*, as I am sure it will be sincerely and affectionately. Conscious how heedfully, how watchfully I cross-examined myself whether or no my anxiety for your earthly happiness and free exercise of head and heart had not *warped* the attention which it was my purpose to give whole and undivided to the one Question—What is the Right,—I can repeat (with as much confidence as the slippery and Protean nature of all self-inquisition and the great *a priori*

likelihood of my reason being tampered with by my affections, will sanction me in expressing) what I have already more than once said, viz. that I hold it incredible, at least improbable to the utmost extent, that you and I should decide differently in any one definite instance. Let a case be stated with all its *particulars*, personal and circumstantial, with its antecedents and *involved* (N.B.—not its contingent or apprehended) consequents—and my faith in the voice within, whenever the heart desiringly listens thereto, will not allow me to fear that our verdict should be diverse. If this be true, as true it is, it follows—that we have attached a different import to the same terms in some general proposition;—and that, in attempting to generalise my convictions briefly, and yet comprehensively, I have worded it either incorrectly or obscurely. On the other hand, your communications likewise, my dear friend! were indefinite—"taught light to counterfeit a gloom;" and love left in the dusk of twilight is apt to fear the worst, or rather, to think of worse than it fears, and the momentary transformations of posts and bushes into apparitions and

foot-pads must not be interpreted as symptoms of brain fever or depraved vision.

And now, my dearest . . . . ! why should it be "a *melancholy* reflection, that the three most affectionate, gentle, and estimable women in your world are the three from whom you have learnt almost to undervalue their sex?" In other words, those who in their reasonings have supposed as possible, not even improbable, that women can be unworthy and insincere in their expressions of attachment to men, the frequency of which it is as impossible, living open-eyed, not to have ascertained, as it is with a heart awake to what a woman ought to be, and those of whom you speak substantially * are. Why should this be a melancholy reflection? (Thursday, Nov. 1st. A fatality seems to hang over this letter; I will not, however, defer the continuation for the purpose of explaining its suspension.) Why, dearest friend! a melancholy reflection? Must not those women who have the highest sense of womanhood, who know what their sex may be, and who feel the rightfulness of their

* Thus in original letter.

own claim to be loved with honour, and honoured with love, have likewise the keenest sense of the contrary? Understand a few foibles as incident to humanity; take as matters of course that need not be mentioned, because we know that in the least imperfect a glance of the womanish will shoot across the womanly, and there are Mirandas and Imogens, a Una, a Desdemona, out of fairy land; rare, no doubt, yet less rare than their counterparts among men in real life. Now can such a woman not be conscious, must she not feel, how great the happiness is that a woman is capable of communicating, say rather, *of being* to a man of sense and sensibility, pure of heart, and capable of appreciating, cherishing, and repaying her virtues? Can she feel this, and not shrink from the contemplation of a contrary lot? Can she know this, and not know what a sore evil, fearful in its heart-withering affliction in proportion to the capacity of being blessed, a weak, artful, or worthless woman is—perhaps in her *own* experience has been? And if she happened to know a young Man, know him as the good, and only the good, know each other—

if he were precious to her, as a younger brother to a matron sister—and so that she could not dwell on his principles, dispositions, manners, without the thought—"If I had an only daughter, and she all a mother ever prayed for, one other prayer should I offer—that, freely chosen and choosing, she should enable me to call this man my son!" would you not more than pardon even an excess of anxiety, even an error of judgment, proceeding from a disinterested dread of his taking a step irrevocable, and, if unhappy, miserable beyond all other misery, that of guilt alone excepted? Especially if there were no known particulars to guide her judgment—if that judgment were given avowedly, on the mere unbelieved possibility, on an unsupposed supposition of the worst.

In Mrs. Gillman I have always admired, what indeed I have found more or less an accompaniment of womanly excellence wherever found, a high opinion of her own sex comparatively, and a partiality for female society. I know that her strongest prejudices against individual men have originated in their professed disbelief of such a

thing as female friendship, or in some similar brutish forgetfulness that woman is an immortal soul; and as to all parts of the male character, so chiefly and especially to the best, noblest, and highest—to the germs and yearnings of immortality in the man. I have much to say on this, and shall now say it with comfort, because I can think of it as a pure Question of Thought. But I will not now keep this letter any longer.

God bless you, and your friend,

S. T. Coleridge.

P.S. The morning after our arrival, a card with our address and *all our several* names was delivered in at the Post office and to the Postmaster; and this morning, Monday, Oct. 29, I received your letter dated 16th, which ought to have been delivered on Wednesday last—lying at the Post-office while I was hour by hour fretting or dreaming about you. And you, too, must have been puzzled with mine, written on my birth-day. A neglect of this kind may be forgiveable, but it is utterly inexcusable; a Blind-worm sting that has sensibly

quickened my circulation, and I have half a mind to write to Mr. Freeling, if my wrath does not subside with my pulse, and I should have nothing better to do.

Earnest, affectionate, and impressive as this letter was to me, and must be to others, I find in it a proof, if such were not upheaped and overflowing in the preceding letters, of the love and abounding sympathy of this wonderful being; the more admirable as his own experience and trials had been of a nature rather to sear and to embitter, than to cherish and extend hope and the sympathetic affections. I may yet undertake a full exposition of this particular question, which, though unsuited to this work, would be of the highest possible value, not merely or chiefly for those to whom it would be addressed, but by reflex to parents and young children. The vice of the present day, a *spurious* delicacy, which exceeding all propriety is essentially indelicate, prevents the communication of many of the most valuable truths to the gentler sex,

and thus tends to perpetuate those evils which are admitted to exist, and of which the removal is felt —known— to be co-existent with the public or open denunciation. Do I regret this delicacy? No; or if so, only as a pseudo-economist, from its rendering necessary a fresh *translation* of all the treasures of our ancient literature, not one volume of which, is in accord with the finical expressions, with the sickly sentimentality of our modern reading public. To what end is this? Are our morals more pure, our conduct more manly, than that of our ancestors? I fear much, that judged by any *fixed standard*, it will be found to be the reverse, and that the greater the fastidiousness the greater the *real* immorality. But this subject I will not farther pursue; it will be more fully discussed in the exposition I contemplate, should it be necessary to prepare it.

The subjoined fragment of an essay printed more than twenty years ago, and given to me with several others about this time, I subjoin, as being

in my opinion, and, what is of more worth, in the opinion of its author, of much value.

" The least reflection convinces us that our sensations, whether of pleasure or of pain, are the incommunicable parts of our nature, such as can be reduced to no universal rule, and in which, therefore, we have no right to expect that others should agree with us, or to blame them for disagreement. That the Greenlander prefers train oil to olive oil, and even to wine, we explain at once by our knowledge of the climate and productions to which he has been habituated. Were the man as enlightened as Plato, his palate would still find that most agreeable to which he had been most accustomed. But when the Iroquois Sachem, after having been led to the most perfect specimens of architecture in Paris, said that he saw nothing so beautiful as the cooks' shops, we attribute this without hesitation to the savagery of intellect, and infer with certainty that the sense of the beautiful was either altogether dormant in his mind, or at best very imperfect. The beautiful, therefore, not originating in the sensations, must belong to the intellect, and therefore we declare an object beautiful, and feel an inward right to expect that others should coincide with us. But we feel no right to demand it; and this leads us to that which hitherto we have barely touched upon, and which we shall now

attempt to illustrate more fully, namely, to the distinction of the beautiful from the good.

" Let us suppose Milton in company with some stern and prejudiced puritan, contemplating the front of York Cathedral, and at length expressing his admiration of its beauty. We will suppose it, too, at that time of his life when his religious opinions, feelings and prejudices more nearly coincided with those of the rigid anti-prelatists.

" PURITAN. Beauty! I am sure it is not the beauty of holiness.

" MILTON. True: but yet it *is* beautiful.

" PURITAN. It delights not me. What is it good for? Is it of any use but to be stared at?

" MILTON. Perhaps not: but still *it is* beautiful.

" PURITAN. But call to mind the pride and wanton vanity of those cruel shavelings that wasted the labour and substance of so many thousand poor creatures in the erection of this haughty pile.

" MILTON. I do. But *still* it is *very* beautiful.

" PURITAN. Think how many score of places of worship incomparably better suited both for prayer and preaching, and how many faithful ministers might have been maintained, to the blessing of tens of thousands, to them and their children's children, with the treasures lavished on this worthless mass of stone and cement.

" MILTON. Too true! but nevertheless it is *very beautiful.*

"PURITAN. And it is not merely useless, but it feeds the pride of the prelates, and keeps alive the popish and carnal spirit amongst the people.

"MILTON. Even so: and I presume not to question the wisdom nor detract from the pious zeal of the first Reformers of Scotland, who for these reasons destroyed so many fabrics, scarce inferior in beauty to this now before our eyes. But I did not call it GOOD, nor have I told thee, brother, that if this were levelled with the ground, and existed only in the works of the modeller or engraver, that I should desire to reconstruct it. The Good consists in the congruity of a thing with the laws of the reason and the nature of the will, and in its fitness to determine the latter to actualise the former, and it is always discursive. The BEAUTIFUL arises from the preconceived harmony of an object, whether sight or sound, with the inborn and constitutional rules of the judgment and imagination; and it is always intuitive. As light to the eye, even such is beauty to the mind, which cannot but have complacency in whatever is perceived, as pre-configured to its living faculties.

"Hence the Greeks called a beautiful object καλον, *quasi* καλουν, *i. e.* calling on the soul, which receives instantly and welcomes it as something con-natural."

LETTER XXIV.

Saturday Afternoon, Nov. 17th.

At length, my dear friend! we are safe and (I hope) sound at Highgate. We would fain have returned, as we went, by the Steam-vessel, but for two reasons; one that there was none to go by, the other that Mr. Gillman thought it hazardous from the chance of November fogs on the river. *Likewise*, my dear . . . ., I have *two* especial reasons for wishing that it may be in your power to dine with us to-morrow; first, it will give you so much real pleasure to see my improved looks, and how *very well* Mrs. Gillman has come back. I need not tell you, that your sister cannot be dearer to *you*—and you are no ordinary brother—than Mrs. Gillman is to me; and you will therefore readily understand me when I say, that I look at the manifest and (as it was gradual), I hope permanent change in her countenance, expression, and

motion, with a sort of *pride* of comfort; second (and in one respect more urgent), my anxiety to consult you on the subject of a proposal made to me by Anster, before I return an answer, which I must do speedily. I cannot conclude without assuring you how important a part your love and esteem constitute of the happiness, and through that (I will yet venture to hope) of the utility, of your affectionate friend,

S. T. Coleridge.

"I have somewhere read a story of a Turk, who, when in Paris, was prevailed upon to turn Christian, having been promised plenty of wine in this life, and a Paradise of *eternal delights* in the next. He was regularly instructed in the doctrine of the Church of Rome, and after a time had the sacrament administered to him. The next day, when his instructor was interrogating him, he asked how many gods there were?

"'None at all,' said Mustapha.

"'How! none at all?' said the priest.

"'No,' replied the sincere believer; 'you have always taught that there was only one God, and yesterday I eat him.'

"Verily there is no absurdity, how glaring soever in theology, that has not had at one time or other believers and supporters amongst men of the greatest powers and most cultivated minds."

"In one respect, and in one only, are books better than conversation. In a book, the mind of the writer is before you, and you can read and re-peruse it in case of doubt, whilst in conversation a link once lost is irrecoverable. Thus in all reported conversations, unless we are intimate with the mind of the person speaking, we often draw a wrong conclusion, and attribute *that* to discontent, to envy, or some other unworthy feeling, which, if we were in possession of the author's reasons and feelings, we should sympathise with, if indeed we did not in every case acquiesce in, his conclusions."

" In order to escape the government regulations, and with a view to contribute as little as possible to a war against freedom, it was decided that I should publish the ' Watchman ' every eighth day, by which the stamp duty became unnecessary—was, in fact, evaded."

When my friend was with me, I one day, about this time, placed in his hands a volume of Letters from Swift, Bolingbroke, Pope; and it was indeed delightful to hear him read and comment upon these very interesting records of the thoughts, feelings, and principles which actuated and impelled the distinguished men of a hundred years ago.

Bolingbroke, always my favourite, was, in his letters at least, the first in my friend's estimation. He dwelt with affectionate and almost reverential interest upon the few manly, philosophical, yet easy and graceful, letters and half letters in this collection. Entirely agreeing as I do with Lamb in the opinion, that Coleridge gave value to what he read, and that, if not for the writer's, yet for *his*

sake, you admired it,—I will gratify myself by giving a few of the passages upon which my friend dwelt with most *onction.*

POPE TO SWIFT.

"*Dawley.*

"I now hold the pen for my Lord Bolingbroke, who is reading your letter between two hay-cocks; but his attention is somewhat diverted by casting his eyes to the clouds, not in admiration of what you say, but for fear of a shower. He is pleased with your placing him in the triumvirate between yourself and me, though he says that he doubts he shall fare like Lepidus, while one of us runs away with all the power like Augustus, and another with all the pleasures like Antony. His great temperance and economy are so signal, that the first is fit for my constitution, and the latter would enable you to lay up so much money as to buy a bishopric in England. As to the return of his health and vigour, you might inquire of his hay-makers; but as to his temperance, I can answer that, for one whole day, we have had nothing for dinner but mutton broth, beans and bacon, and a barn door fowl.

"Now his lordship is run after his cart, &c."

SWIFT TO POPE.

"*Dublin.*

"You give a most melancholy account of yourself, and which I do not approve. I reckon that a man, subject like us to bodily infirmities, should only occasionally converse with great people, notwithstanding all their good qualities, easinesses, and kindnesses. There is another race which I prefer before them, as beef and mutton for constant diet before partridges; I mean a middle kind both for understanding and fortune, who are perfectly easy, never impertinent, complying in every thing, ready to do a hundred little offices that you and I may often want; *who dine and sit with me five times for once that I go to them, and whom I can tell, without offence, that I am otherwise engaged at present.*"

POPE TO SWIFT.

"*London.*

"At all events, your name and mine shall stand linked as friends to posterity, both in prose and verse; and (as Tully calls it) *in consuetudine studiorum.* Would to God our persons could but as well, and as surely, be inseparable! I find my other ties dropping from me; some worn off, some torn off, and others

relaxing daily: my greatest, both by duty, gratitude, and humanity, Time is shaking every moment, and it now hangs but by a thread! *I am many years the older for living with one so old;* much the more helpless for having been so long helped and tended by her; and much the more considerate and tender, for a daily commerce with one who required me justly to be both to her; and consequently the more melancholy and thoughtful, and the less fit for others, who want only in a friend or companion to be amused or entertained.

* * * *

"As the obtaining the love of valuable men is the happiest end I know of in this life, so the next felicity is to get rid of fools and scoundrels."

BOLINGBROKE TO SWIFT.

"DEAR SWIFT,

"Take care of your health: I'll give you a receipt for it, *a la Montaigne;* or, which is better, *a la Bruyère.*

"'Nourisser bien votre corps; ne le fatiguer jamais: laisser rouiller l'ésprit, meuble inutil, votre outil dangereux: laisser souper nos cloches le matin pour éveiller les chanoines, et pour faire dormir le doyen d'un sommeil doux et profond, qui lui procure de beaux

songes: levez vous tard,' &c. &c. I am in my farm, and here I shoot strong and tenacious roots; I have caught hold of the earth (to use a gardener's phrase), and neither my friends nor my enemies will find it an easy matter to transplant me again.

SWIFT TO POPE.

"I have conversed with some freedom with more ministers of state of all parties than usually happens to men of my level; and I confess, in their capacity of ministers, *I look upon them as a race of people whose acquaintance no man would court, otherwise than upon the score of vanity or ambition.*

"As to what is called a revolution principle, my opinion was this,—*that whenever those evils which usually attend and follow a violent change of government, were not in probability so pernicious as the grievance we suffer under a present power, then the public good will justify such a revolution.*

"I had likewise in those days a mortal antipathy against standing armies in times of peace; because I always took standing armies to be only servants hired by the master of the family for keeping his own children in slavery, and because I conceived that a prince, who could not think himself secure without mercenary

troops, must needs have a separate interest from that of his subjects; although I am not ignorant of those artificial necessities which a corrupted ministry can create, for keeping up forces to support a faction against the public interest.

"As to Parliament, I adored the wisdom of that Gothic institution which made them ANNUAL*; and I was confident our liberty could never be placed upon a firm foundation until that ancient law were restored among us: *for who sees not that, while such assemblies are permitted to have a longer duration, there grows up a commerce of corruption between the ministers and the deputies, wherein they both find their accounts, to the manifest danger of liberty?—which traffic would neither answer the design nor expense if Parliament met once a year.*

"I ever abominated that scheme of politics (now about thirty years old) of setting up a monied interest in opposition to the landed: for I conceived there could not be a truer maxim in our government than this,—that the possessors of the soil are the best judges of what is for the advantage of the kingdom.

* * * * *

"I have ever hated all nations, professions, and communities, and all my love is towards individuals: for

* This from Swift—the Arch Tory!

instance, I hate the tribe of lawyers, but I love Counsellor Such-a-one and Judge Such-a-one. But principally I hate and detest that animal *man*, although I love Peter, John, Thomas, and so forth. I have got materials towards a treatise, proving the falsity of that definition, 'animal ratione,' and to show it should be only 'rationis capax.' Upon this great foundation of misanthropy (though not in Timon's manner) the whole building of my travels is erected. The matter is so clear that it will admit of no dispute.

* * * *

"Dr. Arbuthnot likes the Projectors (in Gulliver's Travels) least; others you tell me the Flying Island; some think it wrong to be so hard upon whole bodies or corporations; yet the general opinion is, that reflections on particular persons are most to be blamed: in these cases, I think the best method is to let censure and opinion take their course. *A Bishop here said that book was full of improbable lies; and for his part, he hardly believed a word of it.* So much for Gulliver.

"I hope my Whitehall landlord is nearer to a place than when I left him: as the preacher said, "*the day of judgment was nearer than ever it had been before.*"

POPE TO SWIFT.

" I often imagine, if we all meet again after so many varieties and changes, after so much of the old world and the old man in each of us has been altered, that scarce a single thought of the one any more than a single atom of the other remains the same. I have fancied, I say, that we shall meet like the righteous in the Millenium, quite in peace, divested of all our former passions, smiling at our past follies, and content to enjoy the kingdom of the just in tranquillity; but I find you would rather be employed as an avenging angel of wrath, to break your vial of indignation over the heads of the wretched creatures of this world.

* * * *

" I enter as fully as you can desire into the principle of your love of individuals; and I think the way to have a public spirit is first to have a private one; for who can believe that any man can care for a hundred thousand men who never cared for one? No ill-humoured man can ever be a patriot any more than a friend.

* * * *

" I take all opportunities of justifying you against these friends, especially those who know all you think or write, and repeat your slighter verses. It is generally on such little scraps that witlings feed; and it is

hard that the world should judge of our housekeeping *from what we fling to the dogs.*"

* * * *

"My lord, in the first part of the letter, has spoken justly of his lady; why not I of my mother? Yesterday was her birthday, now entering on the ninety-first year of her age, her memory much diminished, but her senses very little hurt, her sight and hearing good; she sleeps not ill, eats moderately, drinks water, says her prayers; *this is all* she does. I have reason to thank God for continuing so long to me a very good and tender parent, and for allowing me to exercise for some years those cares which are now as necessary to her as hers have been to me.

"An object of this sort daily before one's eyes very much softens the mind, but, perhaps, may hinder it from the willingness of contracting other ties of the like domestic nature, when one finds how painful it is even to enjoy the tender pleasures. I have formerly made some strong efforts to get and deserve a friend; perhaps it were wiser never to attempt it, but live *extempore, and look upon the world only as a place to pass through, just pay your hosts their due, disperse a little charity, and hurry on.*

* * * *

"While we do live we must make the best of life.

"'Cantantes licet usque (minus via lædet) eamus,' as

the shepherd said in Virgil when the road was long and heavy.

* * * *

"Can you possibly think he can neglect you? If you catch yourself thinking such nonsense, your parts are decayed; for, believe me, great geniuses must and do esteem one another, *and I question if any others can esteem or comprehend uncommon merit. Others only guess at that merit, or see glimmerings of their minds; a genius has the intuitive faculty;* therefore, imagine what you will, you cannot be so sure of any man's esteem as of his. If I can think that neither he nor you despise me, it is a greater honour to me by far, and will be thought so by posterity, than if all the House of Lords writ commendatory verses upon me, the Commons ordered me to print my works, the Universities gave me public thanks, and the King, Queen, and Prince crowned me with laurel. You are a very ignorant man; you do not know the figure his name and yours will make hereafter. I do, and will preserve all the materials I can that I was of your intimacy. *Longo, sed proximus, intervallo.*

* * * *

"The world will certainly be the better for his (Lord Bolingbroke's) change of life. He seems, in the whole turn of his letters, to be a settled and principled philosopher, thanking Fortune for the tranquillity he

has been forced into by her aversion, like a man driven by a violent wind, into a calm harbour. The most melancholy effect of years is that you mention, the catalogue of those we loved and have lost, perpetually increasing. You ask me if I have got a supply of new friends to make up for those who are gone? I think that impossible; for not our friends only, but so much of ourselves is gone by the mere flux and course of years, *that, were the same friends restored to us, we could not be restored to ourselves to enjoy them.* But as, when the continual washing of a river takes away our flowers and plants, it throws weeds and sedges in their room, so the course of time brings us something as it deprives us of a great deal, and instead of leaving us what we cultivated, and expected to flourish and adorn us, gives us only what is of some little use by accident. Thus, I have acquired a few chance acquaintance of young men who look rather to the past age than the present, and *therefore* the future may have some hopes of them. *I find my heart hardened and blunted to new impressions; it will scarce receive or retain affections of yesterday, and those friends who have been dead these twenty years are more present to me now than those I see daily.*

* * * * *

"I am rich *enough*, and can afford to give away 100*l.* a year. I would not *crawl* upon the earth without

doing a little good. I will enjoy the pleasure of what I give, *by giving it alive, and seeing another enjoy it.* When I die, I should be ashamed to leave enough for a monument, *if there were a wanting friend above ground.*"

SWIFT TO BOLINGBROKE.

"My Lord,—I have no other notion of economy than that it *is the parent of liberty and ease*, and I am not the only friend you have who have chid you in his heart for the neglect of it, though not with his mouth as I have done. And, my lord, I have made a maxim that should be writ in letters of diamonds,—*That a wise man ought to have money in his head, but not in his heart.* I am sorry for Lady Bolingbroke's ill health; but I protest I never knew a *very* deserving person of that sex who had not too much reason to complain of ill health*. I never wake without finding life a more insignificant thing than it was the day before; but my greatest misery is recollecting *the scene of twenty years past, and then all of a sudden dropping into the present. I remember, when I was a little boy,*

* Is not this an additional ground, if any more were needed, in support of the conclusion that all men, and indeed all women, who have been very remarkable or very loveable, owe the original tendency of their characters to *physical* structure.

I felt a great fish at the end of my line, which I drew up almost on the ground, but it dropt in, and the disappointment vexes me to this very day, and I believe it was the type of all my future disappointments.

* * * *

" I tell you it is almost incredible how opinions change by the decline or decay of spirits.

* * * *

" I was forty-seven years old when I began to think of death, and the reflections upon it now begin when I wake in the morning, and end when I am going to sleep.

" My Lord, what I would have said of fame is meant of fame which a man enjoys in this life, because I cannot be a great lord I would require a kind of *subsidium*. I would endeavour that my betters should seek me, by being in something distinguishable, instead of my seeking them. The desire of enjoying it in aftertime is owing to the spirit and folly of youth; but with age we learn to know that the house is so full that there is no room for above one or two at most in an age through the whole world.

BOLINGBROKE TO SWIFT.

" I am under no apprehension that a glut of study and retirement should cast me back into the hurry of

the world; on the contrary, the single regret which I ever feel, is, that I fell so late into this course of life; my philosophy grows confirmed by habit, and if you and I meet again, I will extort this approbation from you; 'Jam non consilio bonus, sed more eo perductus, ut non tantum recte facere possim, sed nisi recte facere non possim.' The incivilities I meet with from opposite parties have been so far from rendering me violent or sour to any, that I think myself obliged to them all; some have cured me of my fears by showing me how impotent the world is; others have cured me of my hopes by showing how precarious popular friendships are; all have cured me of surprise. *In driving me out of party they have driven me out of cursed company; and in stripping me of titles, and rank, and estate, and such trinkets, which every man that will, may spare, they have given me that which no man can be happy without.*

"Perfect tranquillity is the general tenour of my life: good digestion, serene weather, wind me above it now and then, but I never fall below it; *I am sometimes gay, but I am never sad.* As soon as I leave this town I shall fall back into that course of life which keeps knaves and fools at a great distance from me: I have an aversion to them both, but in the ordinary course of life I think I can bear the sensible knave better than the fool. One must, indeed, with the former, be in some or other of the attitudes of those wooden men whom I have seen before a sword-cutler's shop in Germany:

but even in those constrained postures the witty rascal will divert me, and he that diverts me does me good, and lays me under an obligation to him, which I am not obliged to pay in any other coin: the fool obliges me to be almost as much upon my guard as the knave, and he makes me no amends; he numbs me like the torpor or teases me like a fly.

* * * *

"I used to think sometimes formerly of old age and of death enough to prepare my mind, not enough to anticipate sorrow, to dash the joys of youth, and be all my life a dying. I find the benefit of this practice now, and find it more as I proceed on my journey; little regret when I look backwards, little apprehension when I look forward.

* * * *

"You know that I am too expensive, and all mankind knows that I have been cruelly plundered; and yet I feel in my mind the power of descending without anxiety two or three stages more. In short, Mr. Dean, if you will come to a certain farm in Middlesex, you shall find that I can live frugally without growling at the world or being peevish *with those whom fortune has appointed to eat my bread, instead of appointing me to eat theirs;* and yet I have naturally as little disposition to frugality as any man alive.—I am sure you like to follow reason, not custom; through this medium you will see few things to be vexed at, few persons to be angry at; and

yet there will frequently be things which we ought to wish altered, and persons whom we ought to wish hanged.

In your letter to Pope, you agree that a regard for fame becomes a man more towards his exit than at his entrance into life, and yet you confess that the longer you live the more you are indifferent about it. Your sentiment is true and natural; your reasoning, I am afraid, is not so on this occasion. Prudence will make us desire fame, because it gives us many real and great advantages in all the affairs of life. *Fame is the wise man's means; his ends are his own good, and the good of society. You poets and orators have inverted this order; you propose fame as the end, and good, or at least great actions, as the means.* You go farther; you teach our self-love to anticipate the applause which we suppose will be paid by posterity to our names, *and with idle notions of immortality you turn other heads besides your own.*

Fame is an object which men pursue successfully by various and even contrary courses. Your doctrine leads them to look on this end as essential, and on the means as indifferent; so that Fabricius and Crassus, Cato and Cæsar, pressed forward to the same goal. After all, perhaps it may appear from the depravity of mankind, that you could do no better, nor keep up virtue in the world, without calling up this passion or this direction of self-love to your aid. Tacitus has crowded this ex-

cuse for you, according to his manner, into a maxim, *contemptu famæ, contemni virtutes.*

* * * *

I know not whether the love of fame increases as we advance in age; sure I am that the force of friendship does. I loved you almost twenty years ago; I thought of you as well as I do now, better was beyond the power of conception, or, to avoid an equivoque, beyond the extent of my ideas. *Whether you are more obliged to me for loving you as well when I knew you less, or for loving you as well after loving you so many years, I shall not determine.* What I would say is this: whilst my mind grows daily more independent of the world, and feels less need of leaning on external objects, the ideas of friendship return oftener; they busy me, they warm me more. *Is it that we grow more tender as the moment of our great separation approaches?* or is it that they who are to live together in another state (for *vera amicitia non nisi inter bonos*) begin to feel more strongly that divine sympathy which is to be the great band of their future society? There is no one thought which soothes my mind like this; I encourage my imagination to pursue it, and am heartily afflicted when another faculty * of the intellect comes boisterously in, and wakes me from so pleasing a dream, if it be a dream.

* Reason

I will dwell no more on economics than I have done in my former letter; thus much only will I say, that *otium cum dignitate* is to be had with 500*l.* as well as with 5,000*l.* a year; *the difference will be found in the value of the man, not of the estate.*

* * * *

"I have sometimes thought that if preachers, hangmen, and moral writers, keep vice at a stand, or so much as retard its progress, they do as much as human nature admits. A real reformation is not to be brought about by ordinary means; it requires those extraordinary means which become punishments as well as lessons. National corruption must be purged by national calamities.

* * * *

"I was ill in the beginning of the winter for near a week, but in no danger either from the distemper *or from the attendance of three physicians.* Since that I have had better health than the regard I have paid to health deserves. We are both in the decline of life, my dear dean, and have been some years going down the hill; let us make the passage as smooth as we can; let us fence against physical evil by care, and the use of those means which experience must have pointed out to us; let us fence against moral evil by philosophy. The decay of passion strengthens philosophy; for passion may decay and stupidity not succeed. What hurt does age do us in subduing what we toil to subdue all

our lives? It is now six o'clock in the morning; I recal the time (I am glad it is over) when about this hour I used to be going to bed, *surfeited with pleasure or jaded with business; my head often full of schemes, and my heart as often full of anxieties.*

"Is it a misfortune, think you, that I rise at this hour refreshed, serene, calm? that the past and even the present affairs of life stand like objects at a distance from me, where I can keep off the disagreeable so as not to be strongly affected by them, and from whence I can draw the others nearer to me? Passions in their force would bring all these, nay, even future contingencies, about my ears at once, and reason would but ill defend me in the scuffle.

* * * *

" My wife says she would find strength to nurse you if you was here; and yet, God knows, she is extremely weak. The slow fever works under, and mines the constitution. We keep it off sometimes, but still it returns and makes new breaches before nature can repair the old ones. I am not ashamed to say to you, that I admire her more every hour of my life. Death is not to her the King of Terrors; she beholds him without the least fear. When she suffers much, she wishes for him as a deliverer from pain; when life is tolerable, she looks on him with dislike, because he is to separate her from those friends to whom she is more attached than to life itself.—You shall not stay for my

next as long as you have done for this letter; and in every one Pope shall write something better than the scraps of old philosophers, which were the presents, *munuscula*, that Stoical fop, Seneca, used to send in every epistle to his friend Lucilius.

* * * * *

"As to retirement and exercise, your notions are true; *the first should not be indulged in so much as to render us savages, nor the last neglected so much as to impair health;* but I know men who, for fear of being savage, live with all who will live with them; and who, to preserve their health, saunter away half their time."

LETTER XXV.

Monday Morning.

My dear Friend,

Ab Hydromania, Hydrophobia: from Water-Lust comes Water-dread. But this is a violent metaphor, and disagreeable to boot. Suppose then, by some caprice or colic of nature, an Aqueduct split on this side of the slider or Sluice-gate, the two parts removed some thirty feet from each other,

and the communication kept up only by a hollow reed split lengthways, of just enough width and depth to lay one's finger in; the likeness would be fantastic to be sure, but still it would be no inapt likeness or emblem of the state of mind in which I feel myself as often as I have just received a letter from you!—and when, after the first flush of interest and rush of thoughts stirred up by it, I sit down, or am about to sit down. to write in answer, a poor fraction, or finger-breadth of the intended reply fills up three-fourths of my paper; so, sinking under the impracticability of saying what seemed of use to say, I substitute what there is no need to say at all—the expression of my wishes, and the Love, Regard, and Affection, in which they originate.

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

I do not know whether I was most affected or delighted with your last letter. It will endear Flower de Luce Court to me above all other remem-

brances of past efforts; and the pain, the restless aching, that comes instantly with the thought of giving out my soul and spirit where you cannot be present, where I could not see your beloved countenance glistening with the genial *spray* of the outpouring; this, in conjunction with your anxiety and that of Mr. and Mrs. Gillman concerning my health, is the most efficient, I may say, imperious of the *retracting* influences as to the Dublin scheme.

Basil Montagu called on me yesterday. I could not but be amused to hear from him, as well as from Mrs. Chisholm and two other visiters, the instantaneous expression of surprise at the apparent change in my health, and the certain improvement of my looks. One lady said, "Well! Mr. Coleridge really *is* very handsome."

Highgate is in high feud with the factious stir against the governors of the chapel, one of whom I was advising against a reply addressed to the inhabitants as an *inconsistency*. "But sir! we would not carry any thing to an extreme!" THIS IS THE DARLING WATCH-WORD OF WEAK MEN, *when they*

sit down on the edges of two stools. Press them to act on fixed principles, and they talk of extremes; as if there were or could be any way of avoiding them but by keeping close to a fixed principle, *which is a principle only because it is the one medium between two extremes.*

God bless you, my ever dear friend, and

Your affectionately attached,

S. T. Coleridge.

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

* Mercury, the god of lucre and selfish ends, patron god of thieves, tradesmen, stock-jobbers, diplomatists, pimps, harlots, and go-betweens; the soothing, pacifying god.

The superscription might be "Pacification," a little finely pronounced on the first syllable.

The passage in italics, at the close of the last letter, may *now* fitly be applied to the present unsorted or *mis*-sorted ministry; though the possibility of such men being, by any conjunction of circumstances, placed in a situation to influence the destinies of a mighty nation in its struggles for self-government, never, in the most extravagant mood of the Poet's mind, occurred to *him*. If the old Chancellor Oxenstiern chided his son's under estimation of himself and over estimate of others, by telling him "to go and see with how little wisdom the world is governed;" what words would he have used had he wished to express a correct notion of *our rulers?* Either we have no choice, or not the wisdom to choose aright. At the moment that a modification or the abolition of the Peerage is sought, we have a Government consisting of Peers, or sons of Peers; a Government, the necessity of whose existence precludes

their carrying reform beyond the point to which they are pledged, *if indeed they have any intention to go even that length.* This is the parent defect in our present social condition; and until we shall have virtue and self-reliance enough to place power in the middle classes at first, and in all classes almost *immediately* after, the onward progress will be slow, and exposed to the greatest danger, by the occurrence of any adverse circumstances.

I am well aware that the "greatest and wisest minds, are those of whom the world hears least;" still, when it is our interest to be well governed, we shall *seek* and *choose* for ourselves, and distrust those who *seek* us. *I speak advisedly:* in the district in which I reside, self-government has been obtained; and I speak from observation, and a *thorough* knowledge of its results, when I say, that imperfect as it is at present (and chiefly so from the inferior circumstances by which it is environed), yet that its superiority in practice is in the highest degree satisfactory to those who have watched its progress and seen its results. When the basis upon which representation is founded is extended to *all*, then

all will have an interest in good Government; and this so far from being to be feared, is of all things the most to be desired. In proportion as power is diffused, the *rewards* of public service *lessened* and its *labours increased,* will the public be served well; and the public functionary will become the mere organ for the *expression of the universal public will.*

If this were an untried scheme, it would be well to urge caution; but when we know that it is in existence, and that practically it acts well, it is discreditable to our public spirit, and to the character of our age, that self-government has not been adopted, or that approximation to this desirable state has not taken place to a much greater extent.

"On one occasion Godwin took me to Purley, where we met Sir Francis Burdett. Altogether, during the whole day,

'The feast of reason and the flow of soul'

was without drawback. It was indeed an Attic Feast.

"I was pressed to go again. I went: but how changed! No longer did I see gentlemen or scholars, I only saw drunkards, who to obscenity, scurrility, and malignity, added every species of grossness and impurity. I had been in the company of sceptics, of Pyrrhonists, but never before had I seen wickedness exhibited so completely without disguise, and in all its naked deformity.

"The only emulation was, which could utter the most senseless, the most horrid impurities, uttered in all the uproarious mirth and recklessness of lost souls. I became sick; I left the room and got into a hackney coach, which happened to be at the door. I was followed by Sir Francis Burdett, who earnestly entreated me to visit him at Wimbledon. I made no promise, nor did I ever go, and I now blame myself that political predilections should have hindered me from visiting him, as it is possible I might have assisted, if not to reclaim, to recal at least the truant energies of one who, in spite of my disgust at the orgies in which he participated, so respectfully entreated me."

I find the following lines amongst my papers, in my own writing, but whether an unfinished fragment, or a contribution to some friend's production I know not.

" What boots to tell how o'er his grave
She wept, that would have died to save;
Little they know the heart, who deem
Her sorrow but an infant's dream
Of transient love begotten;
A passing gale, that as it blows
Just shakes the ripe drop from the rose—
That dies, and is forgotten.

Oh woman! nurse of hopes and fears,
All lovely in thy spring of years,
Thy soul in blameless mirth possessing;
Most lovely in affliction's tears,
More lovely still those tears suppressing."

LETTER XXVI.

Jan. 25*th*, 1822.

Dearest Friend,

My main reason for wishing that Mrs. Gillman should have made her call on Mrs. . . . . ; or that Mrs. . . . . would waive the ceremony, and taking the willingness for the act, and the præsens *in rus* (if Highgate deserves that name) for the future *in urbe*, would accompany you hither, on the earliest day convenient to you both, is, that I cannot help feeling the old inkling to press you to spend the Sunday with me, and yet feel a something like impropriety in so doing. Speaking confidentially, *et inter nosmet*, if it were prognosticable that dear Charles would be half as delightful as when we were last with him, and as pleasant relatively to the probable impressions on a stranger to him as Mary always is, I should still ask you to fulfil our first expectation. As it is, I must be

content to wish it; and leave the rest to your knowledge of the circumstantial pros and cons. Only remember, that what is dear to you becomes dear to me, and that whatever can in the least add to happiness in which you are interested, is a duty which I cannot neglect without injury to my own. *I am convinced that your happiness is in your own possession.*

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

And now for my pupil schemes. Need I say that the verdict of your judgment, after a sufficient hearing, would determine me to abandon a plan of the expediency and probable result of which I was less sceptical than I am of the present? But, first, let me learn from you whether you had before your mind, at the moment that you formed your opinion, the circumstance of my being already in some sort engaged to *one* pupil already: that with Mr. Stutfield and Mr. Watson I have already proceeded on two successive Thursdays, and completed

the introduction and the first chapter, amounting to somewhat more than a closely-printed octavo sheet, requiring no such revision as would render transcription necessary; and that three or four more young men at the table will make no addition, or rather no change. Mr. Gillman thought my agreeing to receive Stutfield advisable. Mrs. G. did not indeed influence me by any express wish, but thought that this was the most likely way in which my work would proceed with regularity and constancy; in short, it was, or seemed to be, a *bird in the hand*, that, in conjunction with other reliable resources, would remove my anxiety with regard to the *increasing* any positive pressure on their finances of former years; so that if I could not lessen, I should prevent the deficit from growing. On all these grounds I did—I need not say downright—*engage* myself, but I certainly permitted Mr. Stutfield to make the trial in such a form that I scarcely know whether I can, in the spirit of the expectation I excited, be the first to cry *off*, he appearing fully satisfied and in good earnest. Now, supposing this to be the state of the case,

how would my work fare the better by dictating it to two amanuenses instead of five or six, if I get so many? For the occasional explanations, and the necessity of removing difficulties and misapprehensions, are a real advantage in a work which I am peculiarly solicitous to have "level with the plainest capacities." To be sure, on the other hand, I *might* go on three days in the week instead of one, and let the work outrun the lectures, but just so I *might* on the plan of an increased number of auditors; and, secondly, so many little obstacles start up when it is not *fore*known that on such a day I *must* do so and so. I need not explain myself further. You can understand the "I would not ask you but it is only—" "and but that—" "I pray do not take any *time* about it," &c., &c, added to my *startings* off.

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

Your affectionate friend,

S. T. Coleridge.

I have preserved the prospectus of a Course of Lectures which were delivered in Flower de Luce Court in 1818, and were constantly thronged by the most attentive and intelligent auditory I have ever seen. This prospectus I insert. I wish the same care had been taken of the notes made at the time. I still cling to the hope that I shall recover them, or that the notes said to have been taken by a reporter will be made available in the forthcoming biography.

"*Prospectus of a Course of Lectures by S. T. Coleridge.*

"There are few families at present in the higher and middle classes of English society, in which literary topics and the productions of the Fine Arts, in some one or other of their various forms, do not occasionally take their turn in contributing to the entertainment of the social board, and the amusement of the circle at the fire-side. The acquisitions and attainments of the intellect ought, indeed, to hold a very inferior rank in our estimation, opposed to moral worth, or even to professional and specific skill, prudence, and industry.

But why should they be *opposed,* when they may be made subservient merely by being *subordinated?* It can rarely happen that a man of social disposition, altogether a stranger to subjects of taste (almost the only ones on which persons of both sexes can converse with a common interest), should pass through the world without at times feeling dissatisfied with himself. The best proof of this is to be found in the marked anxiety which men who have succeeded in life without the aid of these accomplishments show in securing them to their children. A young man of ingenuous mind will not wilfully deprive himself of any species of respect. He will wish to feel himself on a level with the average of the society in which he lives, though he may be ambitious of *distinguishing* himself only in his own immediate pursuit or occupation.

" Under this conviction, the following Course of Lectures was planned. The several titles will best explain the particular subjects and purposes of each; but the main objects proposed, as the result of all, are the two following:—

" I. To convey, in a form best fitted to render them impressive at the time, and remembered afterwards, rules and principles of sound judgment, with a kind and degree of connected information, such as the hearers, generally speaking, cannot be supposed likely to form, collect, and arrange for themselves, by their

own unassisted studies. It might be presumption to say that any important part of these Lectures could not be derived from books; but none, I trust, in supposing, that the same information could not be so surely or conveniently acquired from such books as are of commonest occurrence, or with that quantity of time and attention which can be reasonably expected, or even wisely desired, of men engaged in business and the active duties of the world.

"II. Under a strong persuasion that little of real value is derived by persons in general from a wide and various reading; but still more deeply convinced as to the actual *mischief* of unconnected and promiscuous reading, and that it is sure, in a greater or less degree, to enervate even where it does not likewise inflate, I hope to satisfy many an ingenuous mind, seriously interested in its own development and cultivation, how moderate a number of volumes, if only they be judiciously chosen, will suffice for the attainment of every wise and desirable purpose; that is, *in addition* to those which he studies for specific and professional purposes. It is saying less than the truth to affirm, that an excellent book (and the remark holds almost equally good of a Raphael as of a Milton) is like a well-chosen and well-tended fruit-tree. Its fruits are not of one season only. With the due and natural intervals, we may recur to it year after year, and it will supply the

same nourishment and the same gratification, if only we ourselves return with the same healthful appetite.

"The subjects of the Lectures are indeed very *different*, but not, in the strict sense of the term, *diverse:* they are *various* rather than *miscellaneous*. There is this bond of connexion common to them all,—that the mental pleasure which they are calculated to excite is not dependent on accidents of fashion, place, or age, or the events or the customs of the day, but commensurate with the good sense, taste, and feeling, to the cultivation of which they themselves so largely contribute, as being all in *kind*, though not all in the same *degree*, productions of GENIUS.

"What it would be arrogant to promise, I may yet be permitted to hope,—that the execution will prove correspondent and adequate to the plan. Assuredly, my best efforts have not been wanting so to select and prepare the materials, that, at the conclusion of the Lectures, an attentive auditor, who should consent to aid his future recollection by a few notes, taken either during each Lecture or soon after, would rarely feel himself, for the time to come, excluded from taking an intelligent interest in any general conversation likely to occur in mixed society.

"S. T. COLERIDGE."

LETTER XXVII.

Friday Night, March 4th, 1822.

My dearest Friend,

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

———" The night's dismay
Sadden'd and stunned the intervening day ;"

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

I scarce know whether the enclosed Detenu is worth enclosing or reading. I fancy that I send it because I cannot write at any length that which is even tolerably adequate to what I wish to say. Mrs. Gillman returned from town—very much pleased with her reception by Mrs. . . . . , and with

the impression that it would be her husband's fault if she did not make him a happy home.

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

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

God bless you and yours,

S. T. Coleridge.

Letter to a Young Lady.

If there be any one subject which it especially concerns a young woman to understand, both in itself generally, and in its application to her own

particular habits and circumstances, IT IS THAT OF MARRIAGE; and if there be any one subject of more perplexing delicacy than any other to advise a young woman about, above all for one of a different sex, and of no marked inequality in respect of age, however the attempt may seem authorised by intimacy and nearness of kindred; if there be one that at once attracts by its importance and repels by its difficulty, IT IS THAT OF MARRIAGE. To both sexes, indeed, it is a state of deep and awful interest, and to enter into it without proportionate Forethought is in both alike an act of Folly and Self-degradation. But in a Woman, if she have sense and sensibility enough to deserve the name, it is an act tantamount to Suicide—for it is a state which, once entered into, fills the *whole* sphere of a Woman's moral and personal Being, her Enjoyments and her Duties, dismissing none, adding many, and modifying all. Even those Duties (if such there be) which it may seem to* leave behind, it does but *transfer;* say rather, it re-imposes and

* Too often, I fear, on the supposed sanction of the *mistranslated* and still worse *interpreted* text, Genesis ii. 29.

re-consecrates them under yet dearer names (though names more dear than those of Daughter and Sister it is not easy to imagine); at all events, with obligations additionally binding on her conscience, because undertaken by an act of her own free will. A woman—mark me! in using that term I still have before my mind the *idea* of Womanhood, and suppose the individual to possess its characteristic constituents—a woman in a single state may be happy and may be miserable; but *most* happy, *most* miserable—these are epithets which, with rare exceptions, belong exclusively to a Wife. The tree of *full* life, and that "whose mortal taste brings death" into the heart, these, my dear ——, grow in the probationary Eden of courtship alone. To the Many of both sexes I am well aware this Eden of matrimony is but a Kitchen-garden, a thing of Profit and convenience, in an even temperature between *indifference* and *liking;* where the beds, bordered with *Thrift,* reject all higher attractions than the homely charms of *Marygold* and *Penny-royal,* or whatever else is good to boil in the Pot, or to make the Pot boil; or if there be aught of richer fragrance and

more delicate hues, it is put or suffered there not for the *Blossom* but for the Pod. But this, my dear ——, is neither the soil, climate, nor aspect, in which *your* "Heart's-ease" or your "Herbs of grace" would bloom or burgeon. To be happy in Marriage Life, nay (unless you marry with the prospect of sinking into a lower state of moral feeling, and of gradually quenching in yourself all hope and all aspiration that looks beyond animal comforts and the outside shows of worldly respectability), in order not to be miserable, *you* must have a *Soul*-mate as well as a *House* or a *Yoke*-mate; *you* must have a Husband whom before the Altar, making yourself at that moment distinctly conscious of the presence of the Almighty God to whom you appeal, you can safely, that is, according to your confident belief, grounded on sufficient opportunities of observation, *conscientiously* vow to love, *honour*, and *respect*. With what disgust would you not turn from a sordid, with what horror would you not recoil from a contagious or infectious garment offered to you? you would not suffer it to come near your *skin*. And would you surrender

your *person*, would you blend your whole personality, as far as God has put it in your power to do so, all that you call "I"—soul, body, and estate—with one, the contagion of whose Principles, the infection or sordidness of whose habits and conversation you would have to guard against in behalf of your own soul; and the insidious influence of which on the tone and spirit of your thoughts, feelings, objects, and unconscious tendencies and manners, would be as the atmosphere in which you lived! Or were the Man's character merely negative in these respects, were he only incapable of understanding the development of your moral Being, including all those minor duties and objects of quiet pursuit and enjoyment which constitute the moral *Taste*; were he only indifferent to the interest you felt for his and your own salvation, and for the conditions of your re-union in the world to come—still it would be a *benumbing* influence, and the heart may be *starved* where it is neither stabbed nor poisoned. God said that it was not well for the human Being to be alone; to be what *we* ought to be, we need support, help, communion in good.

What, then, if instead of a Helpmate we take an Obstacle, a daily counteraction? But the mere want of what God has rendered necessary or most desirable for us is itself an obstacle. Virtue sickens in the air of the Marshes, loaded with poisonous Effluvia; but even where the air is merely deficient in the due quantity of its vital Element, and where there is too little, though what there is may be faultless, human virtue lives but a *panting* and anxious life. For as to a young woman's marrying in the hope of reforming the man's principles, you will join with me in smiling at the presumption, or more probably the *pretext;* as if the Man was likely to appreciate as of very serious importance a danger which the Wife had not feared to risk on so slender a chance, or be persuaded by her to feel as hateful the very qualities which she had taken to her Bosom, as a few weeds in a Nosegay that she might pick out at leisure.

Well (you will perhaps reply), you would have convinced me, if I had not been convinced before, of the misery attendant on an unfit choice, and the criminal folly of a rash and careless one. But by

what marks am I to distinguish the suitable from the unsuitable? What are the criteria, or at least the most promising signs of a man likely to prove a good husband to a good wife? And, as far as you can judge from your knowledge of my character, principles, and temper, likely to find his happiness in me, and to make me happy and deserving to be so? For perfection can be expected on neither side.

Most true; and whilst the Defects are both in their *kind* and their degree within the bounds of that Imperfection which is common to all in our present state, the best and wisest way that a Wife can adopt, is to regard even faulty trifles as serious faults in herself, and yet to bear with the same or equivalent faults as trifles in her Husband. If the Fault is removable, well and good; if not, it is a speck in a Diamond—set the jewel in the Marriage Ring with the speck downmost. But it is one thing to choose for the companion of our life a man troubled with occasional Headachs or Indigestions, and another to run into the arms of *inveterate Gout*, or consumption (even though the consequent Hectic

should render the countenance still more winning and beautiful), or of Hemiplegia, that is, of Palsy on one side. For, as you will see that I am speaking figuratively, and under the names of bodily complaints am really thinking, and meaning you to think, of moral and intellectual Defects and Diseases, I have hazarded the hard word "*Hemiplegia;*" as I can conceive no more striking and appropriate Image or Symbol of an Individual with one half of his Being, that is, his person, manners, and circumstances well and as it should be, while the other and inestimably more precious Half is but half alive, blighted and insensate. Now for the prevention of the perilous mistake, into which a personal prepossession is too apt to seduce the young and marriageable, and females more often, perhaps, than males, from the very gentleness of their sex, the mistake of looking through the diminishing end of the Glass and confounding vices with foibles,—I know no better way than by attempting to answer the questions, which I have supposed you to put, overleaf; viz.—What are the marks, &c., first, generally, and, secondly, in par-

ticular application to yourself? In the latter I can of course only speak conjecturally, except as your outward circumstances and relative Duties are concerning; in all else you must be both Querist and Respondent. But the former, the knowledge of which will be no mean assistance to you in solving the latter for your own satisfaction, I think I can answer distinctly and clearly; and with this, therefore, we will begin.

You would have reason to regard your sex affronted, if I supposed it necessary to warn any good Woman against open viciousness in a Lover, or avowed indifference to the great principles of moral obligation, religious, social, or domestic.

By "religious" I do not *here* mean matters of opinion or differences of belief in points where good and wise men have agreed to differ. Religious (in my present use of the word), is but morality in reference to all that is *permanent* and *imperishable*, God and our souls, for instance; and Morality is Religion in its application to individuals, circumstances, the various relations and spheres in which we *happen* to be placed; in short, to all that is

contingent and transitory, and passes away, leaving no abiding trace but the conscience of having or not having done our duty in each.

I would fain, if the experience of Life would permit me, think it no less superfluous to dissuade a Woman of common foresight and information, from encouraging the addresses of one, however unobjectionable or even desirable in all other respects, who, she knew, or had good reason to believe, was by acquired or hereditary constitution affected by those mournful complaints, which, it is well known, are ordinarily transmitted to the offspring, to one or more, or all. But, alas! it often happens, that afflictions of this nature are united with the highest worth and the most winning attractions of Head, Heart, and Person; nay, that they often add to the native good Qualities of the Individual a tenderness, a sensibility, a quickness of perception, and a vivacity of Principle, that cannot but conciliate an interest in behalf of the Possessor in the affections of a Woman, strong in proportion to the degree in which she is herself characterised by the same excellencies. Manly virtues and manly sense

with feminine manners without effeminacy, form such an assemblage, a *tout ensemble* so delightful to the Womanly Heart, that it demands a hard, a cruel struggle to find in any ground of objection an effective counterpoise, a *decisive* negative. Yet the Struggle must be made, and must end in the decisive and, if possible, the preventive "NO;" or all claims to Reason and Conscience, and to that distinctive seal and impress of divinity on Womanhood, the *Maternal* Soul, must be abandoned. The probable misfortunes attendant on the early death of the Head of the Family are the least fearful of the consequences that may rationally, and therefore *ought*, morally, to be expected from such a choice. The *Mother's* anguish, the *Father's* heart-wasting self-reproach, the recollection of that Innocent lost, the sight of this Darling suffering, the Dread of the Future,—in fine, the conversion of Heaven's choicest Blessings into sources of anguish and subjects of Remorse. I have seen all this in more than one miserable, and *most* miserable because amiable and affectionate couple, and have seen that the sound constitution of one parent has not availed against

the Taint on the other. Would to God the picture I have here exhibited were as imaginary in itself as its exhibition is unnecessary and the reality of improbable occurrence for *you*.

Dismissing, therefore, as taken for granted or altogether inapplicable, all objections grounded on gross and palpable unfitness for a state of moral and personal union and life-long interdependence, —and less than this is not Marriage, whether the unfitness result from constitutional or from moral Defect or Derangement; and with these, and only not *quite* so bad, dismissing too the objections from want of competence, on both sides, in worldly means, proportional to their former rank and habits; and yet what worse or more degradingly selfish (yea, the very Dregs and Sediment of Selfishness, after the more refined and *human* Portion of it, the sense of self-*interest*, has been drawn off), what worse, I repeat, can be said of the Beasts of the Field, without reflection, without forethought, of whom and for whose Offspring Nature has taken the responsibility upon herself?—Putting all these aside, as too obvious

to require argument or exposition, I will now pass to those marks which too frequently *are* overlooked, however obvious in themselves they may be; but which *ought* to be *looked for*, and *looked after*, by every woman who has ever reflected on the words "my future Husband" with more than *girlish* Feelings and Fancies. And if the *Absence* of these *Marks* in an Individual *furnishes* a decisive reason for the rejection of his addresses, there are others the *presence* of which forms a sufficient ground for hesitation, and I will begin with an instance.

When you hear a Man making exceptions to any fundamental Law of Duty in favour of some particular pursuit or passion, and considering the dictates of *Honour* as neither more nor less than motives of selfish Prudence in respect of character; in other words, as conventional and ever-changing regulations, the breach of which will, if detected, *black-ball* the offender, and send him to Coventry in that particular Rank and Class of Society of which he was born or has become a member; when, instead of giving instantaneous and unconditional obedience to the original Voice from within, a man substitutes

for this, and listens after, the mere echo of the Voice from without; his knowledge, I mean of what is commanded by *Fashion* and enforced by the foreseen consequences of non-compliance on his Worldly reputation (thus I myself heard a buckish Clergyman, a clerical Nimrod, at Salisbury, avow, that he would *cheat his own Father in a* HORSE), then I say, that to smile, or show yourselves *smiling-angry*, as if a Tap with your Fan was a sufficient punishment, and a "for shame! you don't think so, I am sure," or "you should not *say* so," a sufficient reproof, would be an ominous symptom either of your own laxity of moral Principle and deadness to true honour, and the unspeakable *Contemptibleness* of this gentlemanly Counterfeit of it, or of your abandonment to a blind passion, kindled by superficial Advantages and outside Agreeables, and blown and fuelled by that most base, and yet frequent thought, "one must not be over nice, or a woman may say No till no one asks her to say Yes." And what does this amount to (with all the other pretty common places, as, "What right have *I* to expect

an angel in the shape of a man?" &c. &c.) but the plain confession, "I *want* to be married, the better the man the luckier for me; I have made up my mind to be the Mistress of a Family; in short, I *want* to be married!"

Under this head you may safely place all the knowing Principles of action, so often and so boastingly confessed by your clever fellows—"I take care of *Number* One; hey, Neighbour: what say you?"—"Each for himself, and God for us all: that's my maxim." And likewise, as the very same essentially, though in a more dignified and seemly Form, the principle of determining whether a thing is right or wrong, by its supposed Consequences.

There are men who let their life pass away without a single effort to do good, either to Friend or Neighbour, to their country or their religion, on the strength of the Question—"What *good* will it do?" But woe to the man who is incapable of feeling, that the greatest possible good he can do for himself or for others, is to *do his duty* and to leave the

consequences to God. But it will be answered, "How can we ascertain that it is our duty but by weighing the probable *consequences?* Besides, no one can act without *Motives;* and all motives must at last have respect to the agent's own self-interest; *and that is the reason why Religion is so useful, because it carries on our Self-interest beyond the grave!*"

O my dear . . . . . ! so many worthy persons, who really, though unconsciously, both act from, and are actuated by, far nobler impulses, are educated to talk in this language, that I dare not expose the folly, turpitude, immorality, and *irreligion* of this system, without premising the necessity of trying to discover, previous to your forming a fixed opinion respecting the true character of the Individuals from whom *you* may have heard declarations of this kind, whether the sentiments proceed from the Tongue only, or at worst, from a misinstructed Understanding, or are the native growth of his Heart."

* * * * *

S. T. C.

The following verses were pointed out to me by my friend about this time. They are worthy of the age to which they belong.

I.

And what is love, I praie thee tell?
It is that fountain and that well
Where pleasure and repentance dwell;
It is, perhaps, that passing bell
Which tolls all into heaven or hell:
And this is love, as I heare tell.

II.

Yet what is love, I praie thee saie?
It is a work—a holiday,
It is December matched with May;
When lusty Blood's in fresh arraie
Heare ten months after of the plaie,
And this is love, as I heare saie.

III.

* * *
* * * *
* * *

It is a game where none doth gaine;
The lasse saithe no, and would full faine;
And this is love, as I heare saine.

IV.

Yet what is love, I pray thee say?
It is a yea, it is a nay,
A pretie kind of sporting fray;
It is a thing will soon away,
Then take advantage while you may;
And this is love, as I heare say.

V.

Yet what is love, I pray thee shoe?
A thing that creeps, it cannot goe,
A prize, that passeth to and fro;
A thing for one, a thing for two,
And they that prove must find it so;
And this is love (sweet friend) I tro.

LETTER XXVIII.

Saturday Morning, March 22nd, 1822.

My dear Friend,

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

Si tibi deficiant medici, medici tibi fiant
Hæc tria: mens hilaris, requies, moderata diæta.

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

by advertising the nostrum under the name of Dr. Samsartorius, *Carbonifugius's Panacea Salernitana ——iensis.*

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

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

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

assurance of your love towards me, a genial, unclouded faith in the entireness and steadfastness of your more than friendship, sustained and renewed by the consciousness of a responsive attachment in myself, that blends the affections of parent, brother and friend,—

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

and secondly, impressions of grief or joy, according, and in proportion to, the information I receive, or the inferences that I draw, respecting your health, ease of heart and mind, and all the events, incidents, and circumstances, that affect, or are calculated to affect, both or either. Only this in addition —whatever *else* may pass through your mind, never, from any motive, or with any view, withhold from me your thoughts, your feelings, and your sorrows. What if they be momentary, winged thoughts, not native, that blowing weather has driven out of their course, and to which your mind has allowed thorough flight, but neither nest, perch, nor halting room? Send them onward to pass through mine; and between us both, we shall be better able to

give a good account of them! What if they are the offspring of low or perturbed spirits — the changelings of ill health or disquietude? So much the rather communicate them. When on the white paper, they are already out of *us;* and when the letter is gone, they will not stay long behind; the very anticipation of the answer will have answered them, and superseded the need, though not the wish, of its arrival. And shall I not, think you, take them for what they are? With what comfort, with what security, could I receive or read your letters, or you mine, if we either of us had reason to believe, that whatever affliction had befallen, or discomfort was harassing, or anxiety was weighing on the heart, the other would say no word of or about it, under the plea of not transplanting thorns, or whatever other excuse a depressed fancy might invent, in order to transmute *unfriendly withholding* into a self-sacrifice of tenderness. If you had come to stay with me while I lay on a bed of pain, it would grieve you indeed, if, from an imagined duty of not grieving you, I should suppress every expression of suffering, and not tell you

where my pain was, or whether it was greater or less. *Grant* that I was rendered anxious or heavy at heart, or keenly sorrowful, by any tidings you had communicated respecting yourself! *Should* it it not be so? Ought it not to be so? Will not the Joy be greater when the Cloud is passed off—greater in *kind*, nobler, better—because I should feel it was my *right?* And is there not a dignity and a hidden Healing in the suffering itself—which is soothed in the wish and tempered in the endeavour of removing, or lessening, or supporting it, in the Soul of a dear Friend? However trifling my vexations are, yet if they vex me, and I am writing to you, to you I will unbosom them, my dear . . . . . and my serious sorrows and hindrances I will still less keep back from you. General Truths, Discussions, Poems, Queries—all these are parts of my nature, *often* uppermost; and when they are so, you have them—and I like well to write to, and to hear from you on them—but these I might write to the Public: and, with all Christian respect for that gentleman, I love your little finger better than his whole multitudinous Body.

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

Ever and ever God bless you, my dearest friend.

S. T. COLERIDGE.

The letter here alluded to is a most delightful communication from Charles Lamb; which, with the hints thrown out by Manning, as to the probable origin of roast meat, were afterwards interwoven into that paper on Roast Pig, one of the most, if not the most, *delightful* Essay in our Language.

A collection of Lamb's very curious letters—more especially those written during the last twenty years—would be invaluable. Indeed, if I judge aright from the numberless Letter-*lets* in my possession, and from those longer letters now I fear lost, a selection, if made from *various* sources, would be one of the most interesting in our Literature.

"Dear C.,

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

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

"To confess an honest truth, a Pig is one of those things I could never think of sending away. Teals, widgeons, snipes, barn-door fowls, ducks, geese, your tame villatic things—Welsh mutton—collars of brawn—sturgeon, fresh and pickled—your potted char—Swiss cheeses—French pies—early grapes—muscadines,—I impart as freely to my friends as to myself,—they are

but *self*-extended; but pardon me if I stop somewhere—*where the fine feeling of benevolence giveth a higher smack than the sensual rarity; there my friends* (or any good man) *may command me:* but pigs are pigs; and I myself am therein nearest to myself; nay, I should think it an affront, an undervaluing done to Nature, who bestowed such a boon upon me, if, in a churlish mood, I parted with the precious gift. One of the bitterest pangs I ever felt of remorse was when a child—my kind old aunt had strained her pocket-strings to bestow a sixpenny whole plum-cake upon me. In my way home through the Borough, I met a venerable old man—not a mendicant—but thereabouts; a *look-beggar*—not a verbal petitionist—and, in the coxcombry of taught charity, I gave away the cake to him. I walked on a little *in all the pride of an evangelical peacock*, when of a sudden my old aunt's kindness crossed me—*the sum it was to her—the pleasure that she had a right to expect that I, not the old impostor, should take in eating her cake*—the damned ingratitude by which, under the colour of a Christian virtue, I had frustrated her cherished purpose. I sobbed, wept, and took it to heart so grievously, that I think I never suffered the like. And I was right;—it was a piece of unfeeling hypocrisy, and proved a lesson to me ever after. The cake has long been masticated, consigned to the dunghill, with the ashes of that unseasonable pauper.

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

"Yours (short of Pig) to command in everything,

"C. L."

"When I first heard from Stewart of the Courier that Buonaparte had declared that the interests of small states must always succumb to great ones, I said, 'Thank God! he has sealed his fate: from this moment his fall is certain.'"

"Clarkson (the moral steam engine, or Giant with one idea) had recently published his book, and being in a very irritable state of mind, his wife expressed great fears of the effect of any severe review in the then state of his feelings. I wrote to Jeffrey, and expressed to him my opinion of the cruelty of any censure being passed upon the work *as a composition*. In return I had a very polite letter, expressing a wish that I should review it.

I did so: but when the Review was published, in the place of some just eulogiums due to Mr. Pitt, and which I stated were upon the best authority (in fact, they were from Tom Clarkson himself), was substituted some abuse and detraction *. Yet Clarkson expressed himself gratified and satisfied with the effect of the review, and would not allow me to expose the transaction. Again, Jeffrey had said to me that it was hopeless to persuade men to prefer Hooker and Jeremy Taylor to Johnson and Gibbon. I wrote him two letters, or two sheets, detailing, at great length, my opinions. *This* he never acknowledged; but in an early number of the Review he inserted the whole of my communication in an article of the Review, and added at the conclusion words to this effect: 'We have been anxious to be clear on this subject, as much has been said on this matter by men who evidently do

* Was not this a fraud, a moral forgery? And this man, who attained notoriety and influence by conduct and practices like these, is he not a Judge, whose office it is to punish such acts in another?

not understand it. Such are Wordsworth, Southey, Coleridge, and Miss Baillie.' "

" One day, when I had not a shilling which I could spare, I was passing by a cottage not far from Keswick, where a carter was demanding a shilling for a letter, which the woman of the house appeared unwilling to pay, and at last declined to take. I paid the postage; and when the man was out of sight, she told me that the letter was from her son, who took that means of letting her know that he was well: the letter was *not to be paid for*. It was then opened, and found to be blank!"

" On my return I found a double letter, for which two shillings had been paid. I tore it open, and found it to contain a long communication from Haydon the Artist, which, in allusion to my Poem on Mont Blanc, ended thus: 'From this moment you are immortal.' I was ungrateful enough to

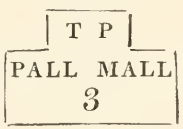
consider Mr. Haydon's immortality dear at two shillings! And though I can now smile at the infliction, my judgment remains the same; and to this day my thanks have not been given to Mr. Haydon for his apotheosis."

"Darwin was so egregiously vain, that, after having given to his son a thesis upon Ocular Spectra, in itself an entire plagiarism from a German book published at Leipsig, he became jealous of the praise it received, and caused it to be given out that he was the real author. Nay, he even wrote letters and verses to himself, which he affixed to his own Poems as being addressed to him, by (I think) Billsborough, a young admirer of his. He asked his friends whether they had not frequently heard him express opinions like these twenty years ago?"

LETTER XXIX.

April 18*th*, 1822.

My dearest Friend,

There was neither self nor unself in the flash or jet of pleasurable sensation with which I saw the old 

tea canister top surmounting my own name, but a mere unreflecting gladness, a sally of inward welcoming, on finding you near to me again. I am indebted to it, however, for this, and the dear and affectionate letter that sustained and substantiated it, like a gleam of sunshine ushering in a genial south-west, and setting all the birds a-singing; while the joy at the recal of the old, dry, *scathy*, viceroy of the discouraged spring, the Tartar laird from the north-east, augments yet loses itself in the delight at the arrival of the long wished-for successor to his native realm,

gave a sudden spur and kindly sting to my spirits, the restorative effects of which I felt on rising this morning, as soon after, at least, as the pain which always greets me on awaking, and never fails to be my Valentine for every day in the year, had taken its leave.

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

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

God bless you, my dear, dear friend,

S. T. Coleridge.

The following observations preface a chronological and historic assistant to a course of lectures, delivered in 1818.

" The history of philosophy commences with the birth of Thales. Of the three different dates given by three several chronologists—namely, 640, 629, and 594th year before Christ—I have chosen the second, not only as a mean, but as best agreeing with his manhood being contemporary with Solon's, and with the recorded fact of his having foretold an eclipse of the sun in the fourth year of the 45th Olympiad, or 597 B.C.: thus making an interval of 322 years between the birth of Thales and the era in which Hesiod and Homer are generally supposed to have flourished; that is, about the year B.C. 907. In the great poems of this era we find a language already formed, beyond all example adapted to social intercourse, to description, narration, and the expression of the passions. It possesses pre-eminently the perfections which our Milton demands of the language of poetry. It is simple, sensuous, and impassioned. And, if in the word 'sensuous' we include, as Milton doubtless intended that we should, the gratification of the sense of hearing as well as that of sight, sweetness as well as beauty, these few pregnant words will be found a full and discriminative character of the Greek language, as it appears in the Iliad and Odyssey; and

expressing with no less felicity the desideratum or ideal of poetic diction in all languages. But our admiration must not seduce us to extend its perfections beyond the objective into the subjective ends of language. It is the language of poetry, not of speculation; an exponent of the senses and sensations, not of reflection, abstraction, generalisation, or the mind's own notices of its own acts. It was, in short, what the state of society was—the best and loveliest *of its kind*, but of an imperfect kind; an heroic youth, but still a youth, and with the deficiencies and immaturity of youth.

"In all countries, the language of intellect has been posterior to, and the consequence of, settled LAW and an ESTABLISHED RELIGION. But in the Homeric times laws appear to have been extemporaneous, made for the occasion by tumultuary assemblage, with or without the consent of their king, whose sovereignty (or effective power) depended chiefly on his superior wealth,

* Thus Ulysses (OD. l. xi.) tells Alcinous that kings must be rich, if they would be respected by their people; and the larger the estate the more the obedience, And of himself we are told (l. xiv.)—

> Ulysses his estate and wealth were such,
> No prince in Greece, nor Argos, nor Epire,
> In Ithica no twenty, had so much:
> And, if to have it reckoned you desire,

though the royal title resulted from birth and ancestry, as is always the case in countries the aborigines of which have been conquered by new settlers, who regarding themselves, of course, as a superior race, constitute and leave an order of nobility.

"Concerning the state of religion, it would be as difficult, as for the purpose in hand it is unnecessary, to speak otherwise than *negatively*. It is sufficient to see, that it neither had nor could have any bearing on philosophy; inasmuch as all the problems, which it is the peculiar object of philosophy to solve, the Hesiodic theology, or rather theogony, precludes, by resolving the absolute origin and ground of all things into night

> Upon the continent twelve herds of kine,
> Twelve herds of goats, as many flocks of sheep,
> As many swine-houses replete with swine;
> And here, upon the island's farthest end,
> There be eleven herds of goats.
>
> HOBBES' ODYSSEY;

which, homely as it is throughout and too often vulgar, scarcely falls below the point more than the other translators strain above it. In easy flow of narration Hobbes has few rivals; and his metre in alternate rhyme is so smooth (*negatively* smooth, I mean), so lithe, without bone or muscle, that you soon forget that it is metre, and read on with the same kind and degree of interest as if it were a volume of the Arabian Nights.

and chaos. The gods differed from animals only by a right of primogeniture. Will, Intelligence, and Love, are an equivocal generation of Death, Darkness, and Passive Necessity. The scheme, therefore, as delivered by Hesiod, is an anti-philosophic Atheism, of which a sensual Polytheism was but the painted veil.

"During the long interval from Homer to Solon all the necessary conditions and antecedents of Philosophy had been gradually evolved; the governments had ripened into constitutions; legislation had become a science, in which the disposition of the parts was predetermined by some one predominant object, to which they were to be all alike subservient and instrumental. Thus, in Sparta, the country as the efficient object SELF of each citizen; self-sufficing fortitude in the individuals, and self-sufficing strength in the state; and, as the means to those ends, war and the exclusion of trade: in Athens, political equilibrium by the balance of artificial and physical force, so as to prevent revolution and faction, without checking progressiveness and public spirit. In this manner, the minds of men were accustomed to principles, and ideal ends: and the faculties, more especially intellectual—Abstraction, Comparison, and Generalisation, the contemplation of unity in the balance of differences and the resolution of differences into unity by the establishment of a common object; all the powers, in short, by which the mind is

raised from the things to the *relations* of things,—were called forth and exercised. In the meantime, the Phœnicians and Egyptians were successively the masters of the Mediterranean: and to the former, and their close connections with Palestine, it is more than merely probable, we must ascribe the institution of the Cabiric Mysteries * in Samothrace, for the influence of which, as the foster-mother of Philosophy, we refer to our first lecture. We have only to add the appearance of individuality in conception and style, as manifested in the rise of the Lyric Poets, Thales, the immediate predecessors or contemporaries, the connection of which with the awakening of the speculative impulse, will be likewise shown, in the first lecture, to explain and justify our choice in the point from which we have made the Chronology of Philosophy commence, and conducted it to the final extinction of Philosophy (or, at least, its long trance of suspended animation) in the reign of Justinian. The chronology of its resuscitation, with the requisite historical illustrations, includes a far larger number of names and events than could be contained within the prescribed limits; and, in addition to this, it would belong rather to the claims of individuals

* "That Orpheus and Jason were initiated, or that Ulysses was the founder, must be regarded as mere poetic fictions, contradictory in themselves and inconsistent with the earliest genuine poems of Greece."

than to the rise, progress, and (as it were) completed cycle of philosophy itself, which will occupy the first and larger division of the course. Should such a work, however, be desired, it will more profitably appear at the conclusion, so formed as to assist in the recollection of the several lectures."

"Vivid impressions are too frequently mistaken, by the young and ardent, for clear conceptions."

"The argument that the mind is a result of the body, supported by the apparent coincidence of their growth and decay, is a *non sequitur*. The mind, when acquired or possessed (though subject to progression and retrogression) can never be lost or enfeebled by old age or bodily debility. It is the decay of the *bodily powers* which enervates or enfeebles the will, by refusing to obey its promptings."

"Teachers of youth are, by a necessity of their

present condition, either unsound or uncongenial. If they possess that buoyancy of spirit, which *best fits them* for communicating to those under their charge, the knowledge it is held useful for them to acquire, they are deemed unsound. If they possess a subdued sobriety of disposition, the result of a process compared to which the course of a horse in a mill is positive enjoyment, they of *necessity become ungenial.* Is this a fitting condition, a meet and just return for the class, Instructors? And yet have I not truly described them? Has any one known a teacher of youth who, having attained any repute as such, has also retained any place in society as an individual? Are not all such men 'Dominie Sampsons' in what relates to their duties, interests, and feelings as citizens; and, with respect to females, do they not all possess a sort of *mental* odour? Are not all masters, all those who are held in estimation, not scholars, but *always* masters, even in their sports; and are not the female teachers always *teaching* and *setting right?* whilst both not only lose the freshness of youth, both of mind and body, but seem as though they never had been

young. *They* who have to teach, can *never afford* to learn; hence their improgression.

To the above remarks, true as they are in themselves, I am desirous to draw your particular attention. Those who have to teach, a duty which if ably discharged is the highest and most important which society imposes, are placed in a position in which they necessarily acquire a general or generic character, and this, for the most part, unfits them for mixing in society with ease to themselves or to others. Is this just, is it for the advantage of the community that those to whom the highest and most responsible trusts are confided, should be rendered unfit to associate with their fellow men, by something which is imposed upon them, or which they are made to acquire, as teachers? Does not Society owe it to this meritorious class, to examine into the causes of these peculiarities with a view to remove ascertained evils, or, by developing them to bring constantly before our eyes the necessity, in *their case*, of results which at present have such evil influences upon the more genial feelings of so large, and every way estimable and intelligent, a

portion of our fellow men. It is requisite that the conviction now become so self-evident, "that vice is the effect of error and the offspring of surrounding circumstances, the object of condolence and not of anger," should become a habit of the mind in the daily and hourly occurrences of social life. This consummation, so devoutly to be wished, is now for the first time possible; and, when it shall be fully realised, will lead most assuredly to the amelioration of the human race, and whatever has life or is capable of improvement.

LETTER XXX.

Thursday Afternoon, May 30th, 1822.

My very dear Friend,

On my arrival at Highgate after our last parting, I ought to have written, if it were only that I had fully resolved to do so, and when I feel that I have not done what I ought, and what you would have done in my place, I will, as indeed too

safely to make a merit of it I may do, leave the palliative and extenuating circumstance to your kindness to think of. This only let me say, that mournful as my experience of Messrs. ——— and ———* in my own immediate concerns had been, of the latter especially, I was not prepared for their late behaviour, or, to use Anster's words on the occasion, for "so piteous a lowering of human nature," as the contents of Mr. W.'s letters were calculated to produce.

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

The exceeding kindness and uncalculating instantaneous and decisive generous Friendship of the

* Great as was the shock my friend sustained from the unkind conduct of the gentlemen here alluded to, it is to me a great solace to be assured that he forgave them fully and entirely.

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

Charles and Mary Lamb and Mr. Green dine with us on Sunday next, when we are to see Mathews' Picture Gallery. Can you and Mrs. . . . . join the party? or, if Mrs. . . . . 's health should make this hazardous or too great an exertion, can you come yourself? I am sure she will forgive me for putting the question.

God bless you and your affectionate

S. T. Coleridge.

"The most extraordinary and the best attested instance of enthusiasm existing in conjunction with perseverance is related of the *founder* of the Foley family. This man, who was a fiddler living near Stourbridge, was often witness of the immense labour and loss of time, caused by dividing the rods of iron, necessary in the process of making nails. The discovery of the process called splitting, in works called splitting mills, was first made in Sweden, and the consequences of this advance in art were most disastrous to the manufacturers of iron about Stourbridge. Foley the fiddler was shortly missed from his accustomed rounds, and was not again seen for many years. He had mentally resolved to ascertain by what means the process of splitting of bars of iron was accomplished; and, without communicating his intention to a single human being, he proceeded to Hull, and thence, without funds, worked his passage to the Swedish iron port. Arrived in Sweden, he begged and fiddled his way to the iron foundries, where, after a time, he became a universal favourite with the workmen; and, from the apparent entire absence

of intelligence or anything like ultimate object, he was received into the works, to every part of which he had access. He took the advantage thus offered, and having stored his memory with observations and all the combinations, he disappeared from amongst his kind friends as he had appeared, no one knew whence or whither.

On his return to England he communicated his voyage and its results to Mr. Knight and another person in the neighbourhood, with whom he was associated, and by whom the necessary buildings were erected and machinery provided.—When at length every thing was prepared, it was found that the machinery would not act, at all events it did not answer the sole end of its erection—it would not split the bar of iron.

Foley disappeared again, and it was concluded that shame and mortification at his failure had driven him away for ever. Not so: again, though somewhat more speedily, he found his way to the Swedish iron works, where he was received most joyfully, and, to make sure of their fiddler, he was lodged in the splitting mill itself. Here was the

very aim and end of his life attained beyond his utmost hope. He examined the works and very soon discovered the cause of his failure. He now made drawings or rude tracings, and, having abided an ample time to verify his observations and to impress them clearly and vividly on his mind, he made his way to the port, and once more returned to England. This time he was completely successful, and by the results of his experience enriched himself and greatly benefited his countrymen. This I hold to be the most extraordinary instance of *credible* devotion in modern times."

"Phillips left Nottingham, where he had first established himself, at an early age. He afterwards kept a hosiery shop in St. Paul's, and sold the Magazine at the back. He used to boast that he could do more by puffing than all the other booksellers. It is certain that he was a great annoyance to them at one time. He had a host of writers in his pay, whom, however, he never retained. A gross flatterer. I recollect hearing

him address some fulsome compliments to Dr. Beddoes, to which the Doctor appeared to listen with patience. He was, after a peroration of ten minutes' duration, told by the Doctor that he was wrong in his chronology.

"'Not right in my chronology!" said the surprised bookseller; "what has chronology to do with the matter?"

"'Only this: that so far back as the year 1540, this kind of complimentary insult had become obsolete.'

"The Knight said no more, but decamped at once.

"Once, when in an abstruse argument with Mrs. Barbauld on the Berkleian controversy, she exclaimed,—'Mr. Coleridge! Mr. Coleridge!'

"The Knight was present. No sooner did he hear my name mentioned than he came up to my chair, and after making several obsequious obeisances, expressed his regret that he should have been half an hour in the company of so great a man without being aware of his good fortune, adding, shortly afterwards, 'I would have given

nine guineas a sheet for his conversation during the last hour and half?' This too at a time when I had not been at all publicly known more than a month.

"He avowed, indeed, afterwards that he never feared offending by flattery, being convinced that for one man who was offended ninety-nine were pleased with that, which, if presented to others, they would have deemed nauseating and disgusting."

LETTER XXXI.

June 29th, 1822.

My Dear Friend,

As fervent a prayer, as glow-trembling a joy, thanksgiving that seeks to steady itself by prayer, and prayer that dissolves itself into thanks and gladness, as ever eddied in or streamed onward from, of love and friendship for pain and dread, for travail of body and spirit passed over, and a mother smiling over the first-born at her bosom,

have sped toward you from the moment I opened your Letter. For as if there had been a light suffused along the paper at that part, "birth of a Daughter after a very short illness," were the first words I saw. "Well pleased!" To be sure you are. It was scarcely a week ago that—during the only hour free from visits, visitors, and visitations that we have had to ourselves for I do not know how long—Mrs. Gillman and I had settled the point; and, after a strict, patient, and impartial poll of the *pro's* and *con's* on both sides, a Girl it was to be, and a Girl was returned by a very large majority of wishes. But as wishes, like strawberries, do not bear carriage well, or at least require to be poised on the *head*, I will send a scanty specimen of the Reasons by way of *Hansel*. *Imprimis*, A Girl takes five times as much spoiling to spoil her. *Item*.—It is a great advantage both in respect of Temper, Manners, and the Quickening of the Faculties, for a Boy to have a Sister or Sisters a year or two older than himself.—But I devote this brief scroll to Feeling: so no more of disquisition, except it be to declare the entire coin-

cidence of my experience with yours as to the very rare occurrence of strong and deep Feeling in conjunction with free power and vivacity in the expression of it. The most eminent Tragedians, Garrick for instance, are known to have had their emotions as much at command, and almost as much on the surface, as the muscles of their countenances; and the French, who are all Actors, are proverbially heartless. Is it that it is a false and feverous state for the Centre to live in the Circumference? The vital warmth seldom rises to the surface in the form of sensible Heat, without becoming hectic and inimical to the Life within, the only source of real sensibility. Eloquence itself—I speak of it as habitual and at call—too often is, and is always like to engender, a species of histrionism.

In one of my juvenile poems (on a Friend who died in a Frenzy Fever), you will find * that I was

* To me hath Heaven with bounteous hand assigned
Energic Reason and a shaping mind,
The daring ken of Truth, the patriot's part,
And Pity's sigh, that breathes the gentle heart.

jealous of this in myself; and that it is (as I trust it is), otherwise, I attribute mainly to the following causes:—A naturally, at once searching and communicative disposition, the necessity of reconciling the restlessness of an ever-working Fancy with an intense craving after a resting-place for my Thoughts in some *principle* that was derived from experience, but of which all other knowledge should be but so many repetitions under various limitations, even as circles, squares, triangles, &c., &c., are but so many positions of space. And, lastly, that my eloquence was most commonly excited by the desire of running away and hiding myself from my personal and inward feelings, *and not for the expression of them*, while doubtless this very effort of feeling gave a passion and glow to my thoughts

Sloth jaundiced all! and from my graspless hand
Drop Friendship's precious pearls, like hour-glass sand.
I weep, yet stoop not! the faint anguish flows,
A dreamy pang in Morning's feverish dose.

Is this piled earth our Being's passless mound?
Tell me, cold grave! is Death with poppies crowned?
Tired sentinel! 'mid fitful starts I nod,
And fain would sleep, though pillowed on a clod.

and language on subjects of a general nature, that they otherwise would not have had. I fled in a Circle, still overtaken by the Feelings, from which I was ever more fleeing, with my back turned towards them; but above all, my growing deepening conviction of the *transcendency of the moral to the intellectual*, and the inexpressible comfort and inward strength which I experience myself to derive as often as I contemplate truth realised into Being by a human Will; so that, *as I cannot love without esteem, neither can I esteem without loving.* Hence I *love* but few, but those I love as my own Soul; for I feel that without them I should—not indeed cease to be kind and effluent, but by little and little become a soul-less fixed Star, receiving no rays nor influences into my Being, *a Solitude which I so tremble at, that I cannot attribute it even to the Divine Nature.*

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

S. T. Coleridge.

"Once, when in the Roman States, I entered a house of entertainment on a Friday, accompanied by a German artist, and, being hungry, asked for some ham or meat. The woman to whom I addressed myself said I could not have it; it was fast day. I replied we were heretics. She still hesitated, when her husband growled out,—'Let them have it, let them have it; they are *damned already*.' Thus satisfying himself that, as we were heretics, or what, singular enough, is here considered synonymous, philosophers, and therefore already damned, he could not injure us farther, but might benefit himself by ministering to our guilty appetites."

"I have been reading Antony and Cleopatra. It is with me a prime favourite. It is one of the most gorgeous and sustained of all Shakspeare's dramas. In particular do I dote upon the last half of the fifth act."

"An American, by his boasting of the superiority of the Americans generally, but more especially in their language, once provoked me to tell him that 'on that head the least said the better, as the Americans presented the extraordinary anomaly of a *people without a language*. That they had mistaken the English language for baggage (which is called plunder in America), and had stolen it.' Speaking of America, it is I believe a fact verified beyond doubt, that, some years ago it was impossible to obtain a copy of the Newgate Calendar, as they had all been bought up by the Americans, whether to suppress this blazon of their forefathers, or to assist in their genealogical researches I could never learn satisfactorily."

LETTER XXXII.

Ramsgate, Oct. 8th, 1822.

My dearest Friend,

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

> That names but seldom meet with Love,
> And Love wants courage without a name!

The second commenced on the night of my arrival (from Grasmere) in town with Mr. and Mrs. Montagu, when all the superstructure raised by my idolatrous Fancy during an enthusiastic and self-sacrificing Friendship of fifteen years—the fifteen

bright and ripe years, the strong summer of my Life—burst like a Bubble! But the Grief did not vanish with it, nor the Love which was the stuff and vitality of the grief, though they pined away up to the moment of . . . . . 's last total Transfiguration into Baseness; when, with 1200*l.* a year, and just at the moment that the *extraordinary* Bankruptcy of Fenner and Curtis had robbed me of every penny I had been so many years working for, every penny I possessed in the world, and involved me in a debt of 150*l.* to boot, he *first* regretted that he was not able to pay a certain Bill of mine to his . . . . . 's wife's brother, himself 'never wanted money so much in his life,' &c. &c.; and an hour after attempted to extort from me a transfer to himself of all that I could call my own in the world—my books—as the condition of his paying a debt which in *equity* was as much, but in honour and gratitude was far more, *his* debt than mine!

My third sorrow was in some sort included in the second; what the former was to Friendship the latter was to a yet more inward bond. The former

spread a wider gloom over the world around me, the latter left a darkness deeper within myself; the former is more akin to indignation, and moody scorn at my own folly in my weaker moments, and to contemplative melancholy and alienation from the Past in my ordinary state; the latter had more of self in its character, but of a Self, emptied—a gourd of Jonas: and is *this* it under which I hoped to have prophesied?

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

And yet, in all these four griefs, my recollection,

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

When I had left behind me what I had no power to make better or worse, and arrived at the sea side, I had soon reason to remember that I was not at *home*, or at Muddiford, *or* at Little Hampton, or at Ramsgate, but under the conjunct signs of Virgo and the Crab; the one in the wane, the other in advance, yet in excellent agreement with the former, by virtue of its rare privilege of advancing backward. In sober prose, I verily believe we should have found as genial a birth in a nest hillock of Termites or Bugaboos as with this single Ant-consanguineous. As soon therefore as dear Mr. Gillman returned to us, you will not hold it either strange or unwise that, in agreeing to accompany him to Dover, the kingdom of France west of Paris, Ramsgate, Sandwich, and foreign parts in general, I determined to give myself up to each moment as it came, with no anticipations and with no recollections, save as far as is involved in the wish every now and then, that you had been with me; and in this resolve it was that I destroyed the kit-cat or bust at least of the letter I had meant to have sent you. But O! how often have I wished,

and do I wish, that you and Mrs. . . . . could form a household in common at Ramsgate with us next year.

And now for your second Letter. What shall I say? When our Griefs and Fears and agitations are strongly roused towards one object, we almost want some fresh memento to remind us that we have other Loves, other Interests. Forgive me if I tell you that your last letter did, in something of this way, make me feel afresh, that there was that in my very heart that called you Son as well as Friend, and reminded me that a Father's affection could not exist exempt from a Father's anxiety. I am fully aware that every syllable in the latter half of your letter proceeded from the strong two-fold desire at once to comfort and to conciliate, and that I ought to regard your remarks as the mere straining of the Soul towards an End felt and known to be pure and lovely; and even so I do regard them, yet I cannot read them without anxiety: not indeed anxious Thoughts, but anxious Feeling. Sane or insane, fearful thing it is, when I can be comforted by an assurance of the latter; but I neither know

nor *dare* hear of any mid state, of no vague necessities dare I hear. Our own wandering thoughts may be suffered to become Tyrants over the mind, of which they are the Offspring and the most effective Viceroys, or substitutes of that dark and dim spiritual Personëity, whose whispers and fiery darts holy men have supposed them to be, and that these may end in the loss, or rather forfeiture, of Free agency, I doubt not. But, my dearest friend, I have both the *Faith of Reason* and the Voice of Conscience and the assurance of Scripture, that, "resist the evil one, and he will flee from you." But for self-condemnation, J. . . . would never have tampered with Fatalism; and but for Fatalism, he would never have had such cause to condemn himself. With truest love,

Yours,

S. T. Coleridge.

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

This and the preceding letters are painful, very painful, to me. I know not whether they have not given birth to sensations more afflicting in the re-perusal, than they caused me to feel even at the time. Then, I could hope that the clouds which darkened the life of hope would pass away, and that the genial sunshine of my friend's mind would again shine, inward at least, with unobscured brilliancy. *Now*, I can but garner in my heart the experience of the past, to be conveyed, as all personal experience must be, to unwilling or inattentive ears: to be part of that experience which he himself so beautifully and so truly describes, as like the stern lights of a vessel, illuminating only the past. In the instance alluded to, the extreme sensitiveness of my *young* friend caused him, to avoid a little present pain, so to act, as to give a far greater amount of pain to Mr. Coleridge than he could ever compensate, and to store up for himself the most acute and protracted regrets. Moral courage, my dear children, the daring to suffer the present evil, be it an expiation for the past, or as an offer-

ing or a testimony to convictions, not *lightly* attained, *is always its own great reward.*

To say nothing, or to say all you think, and at all times, provided no personal offence is intended or sought to be given, is the course for an honest man, for a lover of truth, invariably to pursue. It may be said that the course of affairs is so complicated and so tortuous, that conduct to harmonise with it must be tortuous also, and that in the necessity that exists for numerous and skilful combinations, simplicity must altogether be cast aside as unsuited to the present state and necessities of the social condition. I have come to a wholly different conclusion. I deem it most important, even on these very grounds, and for these (to me, at least) always secondary objects, to preserve sincerity in the means, and simplicity in the end, however extensive may be the combinations by which that end is sought to be obtained. For if, in addition to the complications of society, and to the combinations necessary to our individual success, we superadd suppressions and those moral falsehoods which are

worse and every way more injurious than direct lies, we render success *far less probable*, and even in its attainment, less valuable, from the recollection of the very unworthy means by which it has been achieved.

I well know the process by which men are led on to this fearful state of constant insincerity in matters of worldly interest, whether of fame, riches, or power, all of which might and *yet will*, I hope, be estimated at their proper value (whilst they are permitted to have any value at all), as means and not as ends.

LETTER XXXIII.

Dec. 26th, 1822.

My very dear Friend,

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

and means of deceiving or being deceived; third, as the Organ, or positive instrument for discovering truth, together with the general introduction to the whole.

The second was to come to town, and pass a week with you and Mrs. . . . . The latter I could not have done, and yet have been able to send you the present good tidings that with regard to the former we are in sight of land; that Mr. Stutfield will give three days in the week for the next fortnight; and that I have no doubt, notwithstanding Mrs. Coleridge and my little Sarah's expected arrival on Friday next, that by the end of January the whole book will not only have been finished, for *that* I expect will be the case next Sunday fortnight, but ready for the press. In reality, I have *now* little else but to transcribe, and even this would in part only be necessary, but that I must of course dictate the sentences to Mr. Stutfield and Mr. Watson, and shall therefore avail myself of the opportunity for occasional correction and improvement. When this is done, and can be offered as *a whole* to Murray or other Publisher, I shall have the

Logical Exercises, or the Logic exemplified and applied in a critique on—1. Condillac; 2. Paley; 3. The French Chemistry and Philosophy, with other miscellaneous matters from the present Fashions of the age, moral and political, ready to go to the Press with by the time the other is printed off; and this without interrupting the greater work on Religion, of which the first Half, containing the Philosophy or ideal Truth, possibility, and *a priori* probability of the articles of Christian Faith, was completed on Sunday last.

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

I was unspeakably delighted to see Mrs. . . . . look so *charmingly* well. My affectionate regards

to her, and a heart-uttered Happy, Happy, Happy, Christmas to you both, one for each, and the third for the little girl, who (Mr. Watson assures me) has now the ground work and necessary pre-condition of thriving, though it may be some time before a notable change in the appearances may take place for the general eye.

God bless you, and your friend,

S. T. Coleridge.

"It is good to get and good to spend; but it is not well or seemly to carry the *spirit* of thrift into kind acts, nor a profuse spirit into thrift."

"Men are not more generous than women. Men desire the happiness of women apart from themselves, chiefly, if not only, *when and where* it would be an imputation upon a woman's affections for her to be happy; and women, on their part, seldom cordially carry their wish for their husband's happiness and enjoyment beyond the threshold.

Whether it is that women have a passion for nursing, or from whatever cause, they invariably discourage all attempts to seek for health itself, beyond their own abode. When balloons, or these new roads upon which they say it will be possible to travel fifteen miles an hour, for a day together, shall become the common mode of travelling, women will become more locomotive;—the health of all classes will be materially benefitted. Women will then spend less time in attiring themselves—will invent some more simple head gear, or dispense with it altogether.

"Thousands of women, attached to their husbands by the most endearing ties, and who would deplore their death for months, would oppose a separation for a few weeks in search of health, or assent so reluctantly, and with so much dissatisfaction, as to deprive the remedy of all value—rather make it an evil. I speak of affectionate natures and of the various, but always selfish, guises of self will.

" Caresses and endearment on this side of sickening *fondness*, and affectionate interest in all that concerns himself, from a wife freely chosen, are what

every man loves, whether he be communicative or reserved, staid or sanguine. But affection, where it exists, will always prompt or discover its own most appropriate manifestation. All men, even the most surly, are influenced by affection, even when little fitted to excite it. I could have been happy with a servant girl had she only in sincerity of heart responded to my affection."

On this matter I could enlarge, but shall defer it for the present, seeing that all the materials are not yet collected upon which to form a correct judgment.

LETTER XXXIV.

Grove, Highgate, Dec. 10th, 1823.

My dear . . .

I shall be alone on Sunday, and shall be happy to spend it with you. Ever since the disappearance of a most unsightly eruption on my Face I have been, with but short intermission, annoyed with the noise as of a distant Forge hammer incessantly sounding, so that for some time I actually supposed it to be an outward sound. To me, who never before *knew* by any sensation that I had a head upon my shoulders, this you may suppose is extremely harassing to the spirits and distractive of my attention. Mrs. Gillman, on stepping from my attic, slipt on the first step of a steep flight of nine high stairs, precipitated herself and fell head foremost on the fifth Stair; and when at the piercing scream I rushed out, I found her lying on the landing Place, her head at the wall. Even now

the Image, and the Terror of the Image, blends with the recollection of the Past a strange expectancy, a fearful sense as of a something still to come; and breaks in, and makes stoppages as it were, in my Thanks to God for her providential escape. For an escape we all must think it, though the small bone of her left arm was broken, and her wrist sprained. She went without a light, though (O! the vanity of Prophecies, the truth of which can be established only by the proof of their uselessness) two nights before I had expostulated with her on this account with some warmth, having previously more than once remonstrated against it, on Stairs not familiar and without carpeting.

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

Your most cordial, attached, and

Affectionate friend,

S. T. Coleridge.

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

" The notion, that affections are of less importance than advantages, or that the latter dare even be weighed in the same scales, is less truly described as opposite to my opinion than as alien from my very nature. As to accomplishments, I do not know whether it is right to cherish a positive opinion of an indifferent thing, that is neither good nor evil. If we leave all moral relations out of view, such as vanity, or the disposition to underrate the solidities of the soul, male or female, &c. &c., the question of *accomplishments* (as they are absurdly called) seems to me to depend on the individual woman, in the same way that dress does. Of two equally amiable and equally beloved women, one looks better in an evening, the other in a morning dress. It is just as it *suits*, and so with accomplishments. There are two women, to whom, though in different ways, I have been *deeply* attached in the course of my life. The one had no

so-called *accomplishments*, and not only at the time when I had faith in the return, did I say, "And I love her all the better," but I am still convinced that such would be my opinion of any such woman. Accomplishments (in which nothing good, useful, or estimable, is or can be accomplished) would not suit her. Just as I should say to a daughter, or should have said to the lassy in question, had she been my wife, "My dear! I like to see you with bracelets; but your hand and fingers are prettiest without any ornament, they don't suit *rings*." The other lady, on the contrary, became them; they were indeed so natural *for* her that they never strike me *as* accomplishments. And, to do her justice, I must say that I am persuaded that the consciousness of them occupies as little room in her own thoughts.

"Accomplishments, what are they? why truly the very want of the French, Italian, smattering of terms without relation to things or properties of any kind, and piano-fortery, which meets one now with Jack-o'-lantern ubiquity in every first and second story in every street, is become a presumptive accom-

plishment, *as the being free from debt is a negative stock.* Mrs. C . . . had no meretricious *accomplishments.* Did you ever suspect, from anything I ever said, that this lay in the way of my domestic happiness? And she, too, had no accomplishments, to whom *the man* in the poet sighed forth the

> ' Dear maid! no prattler at a mother's knee
> Was e'er so deeply prized as I prize *thee*,
> Why was I made for love, and love denied to me?' "

The following letter addressed to me, arrived on Christmas-Eve, and was opened by Mrs. . . .; who replied that I was spending my Christmas with my parents, but that had I been at home this was a season of *family* re-unions.

This will serve to explain the letter which follows; which I give to show the pain caused by a slight misapprehension, and the great anxiety of the writer to remove an erroneous impression.

LETTER XXXV.

Dec. 24th, 1823.

My dearest . . . .

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

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

With kindest regards to Mrs. . . . . ,

Your ever faithful and affectionate,

S. T. Coleridge.

LETTER XXXVI.

My dear Mrs. . . . .

Indeed, indeed you have sadly misunderstood my last-hurried note. So over and over again has Mr. . . . . been assured that every invitation to him included you, so often has he been asked to consider one meant for both, that in a few lines scrawled in the dark, with a distracting, quick, thick, and noisy beating as of a distant forge-hammer in my head, and, lastly, written, not so much under any expectation of seeing him (in fact for *Christmas* day I had none), as from a nervous jealousy of any customary mark of respect and affection being omitted, the ceremony of expressing your name did not occur to me. But the blame, whatever it be, lies with me, wholly, exclusively on me; for on asking *Mr.* Gillman whether an invitation had been sent to you, he replied by asking me if I had not spoken, and on

my saying it was now too late, he still desired me to write, his words being,—" For though . . . . must know how glad we always are to see him, yet still, as far as it is a mark of respect, it is his due." Accordingly I wrote. But after the letter had been sent to the post, on going to Mrs. Gillman to learn how she was, and saying that I had just scrawled a note in the dark in order not to miss the post, *she* expressed her disapprobation as nearly as I can remember in these words:—" I do not think a mere ceremony any mark of respect to intimate friends. How, in such weather as this, and short days, can it be supposed that Mrs. . . . . could either leave the children or take them? But to expect Mr. . . . . to dine away from his family at this time is what I would not even appear to do, for I should think it very wrong if he did." I was vexed, and could only reply,—" This comes of doing things of a hurry. However, ... knows me too well to attribute to me any other feeling or purpose than the real ones." I give you my word and honour, my dear madame, that these were, to the best of my recol-

lection, the very words; but I am quite CERTAIN that they contain the same substance. And for this reason, knowing how it would vex and fret on her spirits that you had been offended, and (if the letter of itself without any interpretation derived from the character or known sentiments of the writer were to decide it), justly offended, I have not shown her your note, nor mentioned the circumstance to her; for this sad accident has pulled her down sadly, coming too in conjunction with the distressful state of my health and spirits; for such is my state at present, that though I would myself have run any hazard to have spent to-morrow with Miss Southey, my own Sarah's friend and twin-sister, and with Miss Wordsworth at Monkhouse's, in Gloster-place; yet Mr. Gillman has both dissuaded and forbidden me as my medical adviser. I trust, therefore, that, finding Mrs. Gillman *more* than *blameless*, and that in me the blame was in the judgment and not in the *intention*, you will think no more of it, but do me the *justice* to believe that any intentions or feelings of which I have been conscious have ever been of a kind

most contrary to any form of disrespect, omissive or commissive ; to which, let me add, that *I should* be doing what Mr. . . . . (I am sure) would *not* do, *if, having* shown you *consciously* any *dis*respect I continued to subscribe myself *his* friend, not to speak of any profession of being what in very truth I am, my dear Mrs. . . . .,

Sincerely and affectionately *yours*,

S. T. Coleridge.

This letter is written in a very hurried and irregular manner, showing the exceeding pain the writer suffered from the thought of having hurt or offended another. Truly did he exemplify his own position, that great minds are ever gentle and affectionate.

LETTER XXXVII.

Grove, Highgate, April 8th, 1824.

Dear Mrs. . . . .

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

My dear . . . .

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

less painful recollections of the trouble and anxiety I have occasioned you.

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

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

God bless you,
And your obliged and most
affectionately attached friend,
S. T. Coleridge.

Thus early, my dear children, did you become the objects of his affection and affectionate solicitude. It is pleasant to me, almost as pleasant as it is painful, to recal those days, days when from many causes my anxieties were great and my position altogether most ungenial, and which, but for your dear sakes, and for one, then as now, dearer to me than all beside, would have been one of unmixed evil. From this position I have now happily escaped into a state of greater freedom, which, if it shall permit me to realise the objects of my earliest and steadfast aspirations, objects in which you, as Friends rather than as children, will have active and *pleasant* duties allotted, will leave me little more to wish, hardly anything to hope.

This letter was written after a sojourn of about ten days in London, respecting which I have preserved the correspondence, but which, as it is of interest chiefly to myself, would be out of place here. It is a painful fact, if any general condition or facts can with propriety be said to be painful,

that those alone who have been steeped in anxieties and in suffering can appreciate the anxieties or sufferings of others. Prosperous men avoid and eschew all approximation to distress or uneasiness in *real* life, however they may indulge in *mental* sympathy with suffering, or occasionally afford pecuniary assistance through the hands of third parties. Hence those who have themselves passed through mental and pecuniary distress are alone found to make sacrifices as a tribute to, or from sympathy with, their own past trials; though it may fairly be doubted whether suffering ever yet produced *patient* consideration for the anxieties of another, or increased the *real charities*, though it may greatly enlarge the sympathies and the sensibility which pass current as charity, that greatest of all the virtues.

LETTER XXXVIII.

April 14*th*, 1824.

My dearest Friend,

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

Your affectionate friend,

S. T. Coleridge.

My kindest love and remembrance to Mrs. . . . ., and assure her that I called this morning at Mrs. Constable's, induced by the very fine though unwarm day, to hope I might find the little boy there, and was rather disappointed to see her

return without him. But, doubtless, we are entitled every day to expect a change of the present to a more genial wind. If the meek little one does not crow and clap his wings in a week or so from Thursday, it shall not be for want of being looked after.

LETTER XXXIX.

April 27th, 1824.

My dearest Friend,

I direct this to your *house,* or *firm* should I say? because I should not think myself justified in exciting in Mrs. . . . . an alarm, for which I have no more grounds than my own apprehensions and unlearned conjectures. And yet having these bodings, I cannot feel quite easy in withholding them from you. On Saturday, the morning Mrs. . . . . was here, I was in high hope, the little boy looking so much clearer and livelier than on the Thursday; but the weather since then being on the whole

genial, and the baby showing no mark of progress, but rather the reverse, and it seeming to me each returning day to require a stronger effort to rouse its attention, and the relapse to a dulness, which it is evident the upright posture alone prevented from being a doze, becoming more immediate, I cannot repel the boding that there is either some mesenteric affection, which sometimes exists in infants without betraying itself by any notable change in the ingestion or the egestæ, yet producing on the brain an effect similar to that which flatulence, or confined gas pressing on the nerves of the stomach, will do; or else that it is a case of chronic (slow) hydrocephalus. Against this fear I have to say, first, that I have not been able to detect any insensibility to light in the pupil of its eyes, and that the little innocent has no convulsive twitches, and neither starts nor screams in its sleep. For the first I have no opportunity (the sun being clouded) of making a decisive experiment, and requested Mrs. Constable to try it with a candle, as soon as it was taken up after dark; and

though the presence of this symptom is an infallible evidence of the presence of effusion, or some equivalent cause of pressure, its absence is no sure proof of the absence of the disease, though it is a presumption in favour of the *degree*. The freedom from perturbation in sleep, however, is altogether a favourable circumstance, and allows a hope that the continued heaviness and immediate relapse into slumber on being placed horizontally may be the effect of weakness. But then the poor little fellow habitually keeps its hand to its head, and there is a sensible heat and throbbing at the temples. On the whole, you should be prepared for the possible event, and Mrs. Constable is naturally very anxious on this point, not merely lest any neglect should be suspected on her part, but likewise from an anticipation of the mother's agitation, should she at any time come up just to witness the baby's last struggles, or to find no more what she was expecting to see in incipient recovery.

Do not misunderstand me, my dearest friend, nor let this letter alarm you beyond what the facts require. I have seen no decisive marks, no posi-

tive change for the worse, no measurable *retro*-gression. I have of course repeatedly spoken to Mr. Gillman, but he says it is impossible to form any conclusive opinion. There is no proof that it may not be weakness at present and hitherto, but neither dare he determine what the continuance of the weakness may not produce. Nothing can warrantably be attempted in this uncertainty but mild alteratives, watchful attention to the infant's regularity, with as cordial nourishment as can be given without endangering heat or inflammatory action.

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

* * * *

* * *

* * * *

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

"Idly we supplicate the Powers above—
There is no Resurrection for a Love

That uneclipsed, unthwarted, wanes away
In the chilled heart by inward self-decay.
Poor mimic of the Past! the love is o'er,
That must *resolve* to do what did itself of yore."

God bless you, and your ever affectionate

S. T. COLERIDGE.

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

To you, my dear Rob, this letter will be a reminiscence of interest in after life, should life and health be preserved to you; and I cannot choose but think that it must also find a response in the heart of every parent, still more of every mother. Of all the men, ordinary or extraordinary, I have ever known, Coleridge was the one in whom the *child-like*, the almost infantile, love and joyance, giving birth to or rather intermingled with perfect sympathy and identity of feeling, most predominated. His mind was at once the most masculine,

feminine, and yet *child-like* (and, in that sense, the most innocent) which it is possible to image. The expressions which conclude this letter I know were only forced from him in a moment of imperfect sympathy, a short interval of ebb in the genial current of affection and love, and a proof how entirely his being yearned for sympathy; not similarity in taste, in feeling, or in judgment, but a love for the good, the beautiful, and the loveable, which become *more good*, *more beautiful*, and *more loveable*, when contemplated by minds essentially individual and independent under the *same* aspect.

LETTER XL.

March 20th, 1825.

My dearest Friend,

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

But enough of this Subject. I ought to be

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

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

Mr. Chance, I take it for granted, has written to you. My opinion is, that he will be a valuable man, not only generally, but *especially* to that which alone concerns *me*—*your* comfort and happiness.

He is a self-satisfied man, but of the very kindest and best sort. Prosperous in all his concerns, and with peace in his own conscience and family, I regard such vainness but as the overflow of humanity. I do not like him the better *for* it; but I should not like him the better *without* it. Meantime he is active, shrewd, a thorough man of business; *sanguine* I should think, both by constitution and by habitual success: and, under any sudden emergency, I think that Mr. Chance, not so deeply interested, and yet (such is his nature) with equal liveliness in feeling, would be a comfort to you.

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

Your sincere and affectionate friend,

S. T. Coleridge.

It will be necessary to the better understanding of some passages of this letter, to refer very briefly

to matters affecting myself, and my position at that time.

At the date of this letter I had been for nearly six years actively engaged in an extensive business, which, owing partly to want of unity of opinion and action amongst those most interested, and partly to changes which were beyond controul, had resulted in serious loss, and still more serious deterioration in the value of the property embarked; a loss and a deterioration which I even then saw could never be retrieved, and could only be parried by a system of contrivances, with anxiety and discredit attendant upon the means, and loss and ruin as the assured end.

Under these circumstances, and not with any view to get rich in haste, did I adventure in one of the undertakings with which the time abounded. I owe it to truth to state, that it was a sound, useful, practicable project *, and that it only failed

* This very project has been revived, and is now carried on with advantage by a private company. It was, as *I always* foresaw it would be, adopted by those on the spot out of the necessities of their condition.

from the unfitness of the men who were associated in its management, and from the general discredit into which *all* similar undertakings fell at this era.

I here state as a beacon to others, that, great as my losses had been, first, in the business in which I had, for six years, incurred yearly pecuniary damage; second, by the very serious losses attendant upon the relinquishment of the undertaking, these would have been parried, and, such is the force of custom, I should probably still have clung to the business in which I had been so great a loser, had I not, in the plenitude of my confidence, accepted a draft for a very great amount, for the use and accommodation of parties, upon whose means I had the most entire confidence, and in their honour, if possible, a still more implicit reliance. Will it be credited that, before this draft reached maturity (a dissolution of partnership having taken place between the drawers), that the senior and more affluent partner placed this very bill in the hands of the worthy member for Leominster, and himself, being an attorney, commenced proceedings for its recovery, although the circum-

stances were detailed, and the undertaking of the parties, this very attorney being one, were known to that representative of the People; and that this very person so placing the draft in the Honourable Member's hands, knew it was accepted on the faith of *his* means, and that I held his and his partner's joint undertaking? Above all, will it be believed that this very man, whom I had thus assisted with my acceptance, was the attorney in the action? I mention these circumstances neither in anger nor in pity. Me they have not injured, unless the anxiety of those days, and the anxiety they caused to one most dear to me, may in some degree have impaired those buoyant and joyous hopes (common to ardent temperaments) before their appointed time. On the contrary, by severing a connexion I was not in a condition to abandon of myself, I have been saved years of continued and hopeless anxiety, and have thus arrived at a position from whence I can look forward to the realisation of the hope, which has been to me an abiding source of comfort in all my strivings, the prospect of which has ever soothed and supported me—a country

life; to end my life in the pursuits and amid the occupations of my childhood. That you, my dearest children, may be free from the soiling influences of buying and selling, from the frightful insincerity and heartlessness which they engender, that you may find a happy home away from scenes of self-seeking competition and the debasing motives which may yet be said to be natural in large communities, is now almost the only wish I have ungratified. I have ever made, as much as possible, "the chosen *employments* of the years in *hope*, the relaxations of the time present; of the years devoted to present duties, and among them to the means of realising that hope; thus have I kept my inward trains of thought, my faculties, and my feelings, in a state of fitness, and as it were contempered to a Life of ease, and capable of enjoying Leisure, because both able and disposed to employ it." Not having been able to lift my means to the extent of the wants sanctioned, almost necessitated, by conventional habits, I have succeeded in reducing my needs to the measure of my condition. I have attained, though somewhat seared in the

conflict, content and mental repose, without having passed through or sought refuge in that most *cheerless* condition, *Resignation*. I can yet say,

"Homo sum; a me alienum nihil humani puto."

"So was it when my life began,
So is it now I am a man,
So let it be when I grow old,
Or let me die."

I recollect well—as it were only yesterday—a little excursion I made into the wilder parts of the Peak with my worthy friend and schoolfellow, Mr. John Bromley of Derby. It was a very sultry day, when having with some difficulty led our horses down the precipitous declivity, which from the summit of the shivering Mountain leads into the beautiful Dale of E., or E-dale, we proceeded through that most interesting and most secluded spot on our return to Bakewell, and arrived, weary and heated, at the village (how beautifully named) of Hope. There, having refreshed and rested our-

selves, we were preparing to continue our ride, when the appearance of a man, who, by an expression of meekness and benevolence, at once created an interest in my heart, detained me for some time.

From this man of many sorrows, with whom I had long and fervid colloquy, I first learned that Resignation was only acquiescence in that which was felt to be wrong or unjust, or undeserved; and was a very different condition from content. Whilst the impressions were yet vivid, or rather whilst they were yet fresh in my recollection, I wrote to my revered friend, expressing more clearly than I can hope to convey to you now, my repugnance and utter dislike of Resignation. Resignation to, or acquiescence in, that which is felt to be an evil, a sorrow, or a grievous injury, Loss or infliction, is of very doubtful value, is at best but suffering superseded, not Enjoyment superinduced; whilst Content, whatever may be the condition of mind, body, or estate with which it co-exists, leaves a man to hope, that highest of human delights, whilst at the same time it secures him from its opposite,

fear. It seems that condition in which the energies, mental and physical, find their equipoise and equilibrium; where they all exist and act in harmony; where the discords are neutralised, if not entirely withdrawn; where the atmosphere is such, that they can no longer make themselves heard.

"For this the best preparative is a belief in philosophical necessity." Read again and again this passage, which I would more frequently impress upon your attention did I not fear that the iteration might defeat the effect I seek to produce.

LETTER XLI.

April 30th, 1825.

My dearest Friend,

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

Now I cannot recollect anything that can—I am sure, ought to have given you offence, unless it

were my non-performance of the request communicated to me by Mr. Jameson.

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

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

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

Your truly sincere

S. T. Coleridge.

Whilst I write, my attention is called to a work where this Great and Gentle Being is called bigoted, uncharitable, and I know not what harsh terms are huddled and upheaped upon his Honoured name. If I had no other object but to disabuse the minds of those who are likely to be influenced by this work, I should persevere; regarding, though I may, an injustice done to another as the greatest misfortune that can befal the perpetrator. Well indeed has the Departed said, that the world is a great Labyrinth in which all men take different ways, and abuse all who do not take the same way. Hence I hold it safe at all times to say *I* instead of *it*. What do we really express? *our* opinions. Why not then couple the opinion with the Being who holds or propounds it? To what then does the opinion thus impersonally expressed

amount? That *he*, the writer of this Review, thinks wisely, or it may be otherwise. Is he not, however, dishonest in bringing to bear upon the character, the reputation, or the conduct of another man, not facts, not merely the weight of his own arguments or opinions, whatever may be their worth, but the ponderous WE, or the more insidious and dishonest IT. Let us have the opinion of Henry Brougham, of Sydney Smith, of *Francis Jeffery*, of any one man, young or old, and he will be careful in his affirmations. I am inclined to honour and hope well of the attempts of Mr. Roebuck, Mr. Fox, and *my high purposed* and *honest* Friend, John Bell, who have nobly set the example of writing on subjects so important to all without the Stamp, and have given their opinions, under their own names, in their own Journals, and for every word of which they are thus *morally* and legally responsible.

"I think the praise of Folly is the most pleasant Book of Erasmus."

"The distich which he returned to Sir Thomas More in the place of the Horse he had borrowed, is as good as was any Steed in the Stable of that most Excellent Utopian. I cannot see how a good Catholic could refuse to receive it. *He* ought to be prepared to renounce *his* religion who shrinks from the necessary, inevitable, and legitimate consequences to which it must lead. Here it is:

"Quod mihi dixisti
De corpore Christi
Crede quod edas et edis,
Sic tibi rescribo
De tuo Palfrido
Crede quod habeas et habes."

Garrick.

"The warmest admirers of histrionic merit would not willingly be supposed to overlook the difference, both in kind and degree, between an excellence that in its very nature is transient, or continuing, only as an echo, in the memory of a single generation, while the name alone remains for posterity,

and a power, enduring as the Soul of Man and commensurate with the human language.

But, without dreading the imputation of a wish to balance weights so unequal, we may assert that if ever two great men might seem to have been made for each other, we have this correspondency presented to us in the instance of Garrick and Shakspeare. It will be sufficient for me to direct attention to one peculiarity, the common and exclusive characteristic of both,—the union of the highest Tragic and Comic Excellence in the same Individual. This indeed supersedes the necessity of mentioning the particular merits which it implies and comprehends, while it is eminently and in the exactest sense of the word *characteristic*, inasmuch as this transcendant power sprung from the same source in both,—from an insight into human nature at its fountain head, which exists in those creations of Genius alone, in which the substance and essential forms are the Gifts of Meditation and self-research, and the individualising accidents, and the requisite drapery are supplied by observation and acquaintance with the world. We may then hope

for a second Garrick or of an approach to a Shakspeare where we find a knowledge of Man united to an equal knowledge of Men, and both co-existing with the power of giving Life and Individuality to the Products of both. For such a Being possesses the rudiments of every character in himself, and acquires the faculty of *becoming*, for the moment, whatever character he may choose to represent. He combines in his own person at once the materials and the workman. The precious proofs of this rare excellence in our Greatest Dramatic Poet are in the hands of all men. To exhibit the same excellence in our greatest actor, we can conceive no more lively or impressive way than by presenting him in the two extreme Poles of his Creative and almost Protean Genius—in his Richard the Third and his Abel Drugger."

"In the language of prophecy, the first and prominent symptom of a good or evil will, or influencing tendency, is brought forward as the condition or occasion of all that follows. The first

link in the chain of effects is made the representative of the common cause of them all, or the good or evil state of the moral Being of the agents. So, for instance, a turbulent malcontent disposition in large classes of a country, with the assertion of *Rights*, unqualified by, and without any reference to, duties, a vague Lust for Power, mistaken for, and counterfeiting the love of, Liberty—

> ‘ Licence they mean when they cry Liberty,
> For who loves *that*, must first be wise and good—’

show themselves first in clubs, societies, political unions, &c. &c. And this, as the first prominent symptom, foretels and becomes itself a powerful efficient cause of the disruption, disorganisation, and anarchy that follow. Most truly, therefore—indeed what great truth and principle of State Wisdom can be mentioned which is not to be found in the oracle of the Hebrew Prophets—most truly doth Isaiah proclaim—ch. viii. v. 9,—“ Associate yourselves, O ye people! and ye shall be broken in pieces. Give ear, all ye of far countries!

Gird yourselves (*i. e.* form yourselves into Clubs as with Girdles), and ye shall be broken in pieces."

"It at once soothes and amuses me to think—nay, to know, that the time will come when this little volume of my dear, and well nigh oldest, friend, dear Mary Lamb, will be not only enjoyed but acknowledged as a rich jewel in the treasury of our permanent English Literature; and I cannot help running over in my mind the long list of celebrated writers, astonishing Geniuses! Novels, Romances, Poems, Histories, and dense Political Economy quartos, which, compared with Mrs. Leicester's School, will be remembered as often and prized as highly as Wilkie's and Glover's Epics, and Lord Bolingbroke's Philosophics compared with Robinson Crusoe!"

All my recollections of Sir James Mackintosh were mislaid, or, I fear, lost, together with many letters of Charles Lamb and of Coleridge, on the

occasion of a removal about six years ago. The only thing that I distinctly retain is a *bon mot* which Coleridge considered very felicitous.

Speaking of Mr. Hume, who had recently distinguished himself by something connected with finance—a loan for Greece, I think—as an extraordinary man,—"Yes," said Mackintosh, "he is: he is an extraordinary man—an extra-ordinary ordinary man."

LETTER XLII.

Saturday, May 2, 1825.

My dear Friend,

I am sure you did not mean that the interest I feel in this undertaking was one which I was likely to *throw* off, or one which there was any chance of my not retaining; but I would fain have you not even speak or write below that line of friendship and mutual implicit reliance, on which you and I stand. We are in the world, and

obliged to chafe and chaffer with it; *but we are not of the world, nor will we use its idioms or adopt its brogue.*

God bless you, and your affectionate Friend,

S. T. COLERIDGE.

Goldsmith makes one of his Characters say of the Magazines or Reviews of his day, "They hate each other, but I like them all." I have known, with less or greater intimacy, many men of note and great attainments, who have hated or mistaken (if indeed these are not convertible terms) each other, and yet I have found something not only to admire, but something to *love*, in them all. You have seen the expression applied to Cobbett, and you will see what is said of Hazlitt, O'Connell, and Owen, in the subsequent portion of these reminiscences. Now first of the First.

With William Cobbett, I once passed three days; three days of the most delightful interest throughout. He was, perhaps, at the zenith of his influence (it was before he *sunk* into Parliament), and in the meridian of his powers. It was in the

Five *hard* Parishes, as he always called them, in Hampshire, in the stronghold of the Parsons—the large sheep and arable Farms.

He then and there held a Court of Enquiry touching the misdeeds of the Millionaires, the Barings: and truly, if what was there stated and confirmed and corroborated to iteration by all who were likely to be cognisant of the facts, is worthy of any credit, MOST FOUL WRONG was done to those, who had been previously *only* oppressed. Fear is always cruel; and I cannot doubt that the Barings considered themselves justified in their *shameful* conduct to Mrs. Deacle, not to mention the case of Farmer Boyes, or Boyce, and the atrocious execution, or, to speak honestly, the legal murder, or murder under legal forms, of Henry Cook, for striking Bingham Baring. I mention this now, at a period of political calm, not to point indignation at misdeeds long since perpetrated, but to awake compunction in the breasts of rich men, who, themselves never exposed to want, cannot conceive or image to themselves the sufferings of the very poor. To them, the reply of the young lady, when told that the

poor could not get bread, "then why not eat pie-crust?" is natural; how can it be otherwise? And yet from this class, who are necessarily ignorant of all that it really imports man, in his social condition, to know, are nearly all our Legislators; and not merely those who misrepresent Counties, but the misrepresentatives of Towns. Colonel Sibthorp may sneer at Bulwer as an author, and in his return be contemned as an unreasoning soldier; but they are both of the useless class. Manchester could not find amongst its active and intelligent population a second member, but must have a *rich* man from London: whilst Liverpool—aristocratic and refined Liverpool—must have *a Lord.* The chosen haunts of idleness and profligacy have rejected the idle and the worthless, who are received and cherished in the hives of industry. Brighton, Bath, and Mary-le-bone, are well and truly served by men who belong to the people; whilst Manchester, Liverpool, and Derby, have chosen Lords or Lord-lings, to attend to the interests of cotton, calico, and hosiery!

The first day the fine and sturdy Yeoman, with

his bold, and, it may be, somewhat burly, bearing, feasted under an immense Tent, more than a thousand Visiters, to whom he gave Food and Drink in ample quantities, a speech after dinner, and a dance in the evening. The gathering came far and near; the best proof, if *any* were needed, of the favourable impression he had made in his own neighbourhood.

The following morning I was up about half-past three, and was shortly after joined by this very noticeable Man, with whom I walked across the Fields in the direction of Micheldever. It was delightful at that hour of a fine summer's morning to see him quiet, calm, like the time. Nothing escaped him. Not a flower—especially a honeysuckle—which he did not figuratively sniff up if he could approach it; not a feature of rural beauty which he did not notice, and explain in what lay its distinguishing excellence. Although living at that time constantly in the country, he seemed, in the freshness of his joy and enjoyment, like one who had "been long in dismal cities pent." My pencil recollections of that day are few and scant.

On the morning following, I was one of a party which proceeded to the Church-yard of Michel-dever, and strewed the grave of Henry Cook with flowers. Ill-fated youth! hadst *thou* been struck even to the earth, a small gratuity would have been offered to thee, and thou wouldst have been envied by thy poor comrades for thy luck. In what, then, consists thy crime? Truly *thou wert poor*. Had a Prince struck Bingham Baring, he might have been made a Baronet, as his father has since been made a Baron, and the blow would have been esteemed fortunate, and have been added to the Escutcheon of a Loan Jobber; but to be struck by a Ploughman or a Carpenter, *that* is the difference. What matter whether it was in self-defence or in the resistance of wrong done? Fear is ever cruel, is only appeased with Blood!

It was touching and painful, an hour after, to find the mother of this ill-fated victim of the panic of property, so utterly prostrated by the fear of offending the owner of Stratton, employed in removing the flowers from her son's grave, fearful lest the wrath of these Parvenu's should follow her

and her husband even unto the Parish Workhouse, in which they had taken refuge, and that this touching tribute to the dead, should be remembered in vengeance against the unoffending bereaved Parents, driven by the death of their son, in old age, to the wretched Workhouse of Micheldever. Again, on the arrival of Mr. Cobbett, were flowers strewed on the Grave; again and more quickly were they removed by the *in soul affrighted* Parent. I do not know when I have been more affected.

To you, my dear children, I wish to point out what may else escape your attention whilst young—that these oppressors, these *soul enslavers* of the Poor, are either conscious of the enormity of their conduct or they are not. If not conscious, if totally alienated from *all* sympathies with their kind unless it be in their own especial class, what sympathies, what sources of pleasure and pure delight, are for ever closed to them!

These are fit and appropriate punishments for them. Pleasures withheld for punishments vouchsafed.

If they are awakened to the consciousness of the

Blood they have shed, the Widows and the Fatherless that owe their bereaved condition to them, think you that vengeance—ample though unseen vengeance—has not been taken? *Oh! never doubt but that, in some form or other, retribution for misdeeds, for taking, or mistaking, the power for the right, will assuredly arrive to every man during his life.*

Pleasant was it to see the stout Yeoman, the *Country* Gentleman (for such he was in his bearing and general demeanour), go over the ground which he had visited under other and quieter aspects. "Here lived Mr. . . . and there Tom . . .; they were very kind to my sons whilst at school with the Parson at Micheldever." And the recollection of kindness from those who had passed away "from this visible diurnal sphere," caused his eyes to glisten and his voice to soften. The Widow of the Clergyman with whom his sons had been placed, hearing that he was in Micheldever, sent most earnest entreaties that he would not leave the Village without visiting her. He refused, saying, "it may injure her: she receives assistance, coun-

tenance, or support, from Baring." Again the good Lady sent; he went, abusing her *in words*, springing, however, from, and associated with, the finest and purest feelings of our nature; and after a colloquy of some half hour, I rejoined him as he descended the steps of the Widow's house, his face streaming with tears—weeping like a child.

Kind and cordial, frank, hearty, and generous, with energies and powers of mind unequalled in his day, it will indeed be a deep disgrace to the national character, if those who have been benefited, delighted, and instructed by his multifarious writings, shall not evince their sense of his transcendant powers, in the only mode now possible, by prompt contributions to the Statue about to be erected to his Memory.

I am grateful for the delightful days I have passed in communion with a mind, whose matchless energy was softened and attempered by a kindness, which can only have its highest value when allied to, or springing out of, great powers. It was of this man, thus gifted, that Hunt, after he had become a personal enemy, said, when asked

what was his opinion of Cobbett's powers, "I have seen him engage the attention of a company for hours by his energy, variety, and the extent of his resources; I have seen him the life and soul of every domestic or social circle, attracting and engaging the attention alike of all—from the child of three years to the old woman of eighty." I gratify myself by inserting the two following letters; the first addressed to the Daughter of an old Friend, on his return from a visit of recreation, the second addressed to the Father upon the death of his excellent Wife. I yet hope that we shall be able to profit by a collection of Mr. Cobbett's letters to private friends, though I much fear that the value he attached to time, deterred him from writing many familiar and friendly letters *. In this view, therefore, these letters, as well as from their kindness and delicate attention, to those who had been heretofore his assistants, are of great interest.

* This economy of time he also carried into conversation. I recollect his observing, to the clever and pretty girl who ministered to him at Sutton Scotney, "Time is valuable; never throw away your words. I never do."

Normandy Farm, Aug. 26th, 1834.

DEAR MISS . . . .

Your father and mother return in pretty good health; and they have the great consolation to reflect that they owe their recovery to the air which their just confidence in your prudence and diligence have enabled them to avail themselves of.

I have to thank you also, which I do most sincerely, for that very great service which has been rendered me by the great care of your father, at a time when I knew not which way to turn. This he could not have rendered me if he had not had you to confide his business to.

I hope that your mother will come here as often as she may find it necessary for her health, and I hope your health will not suffer on account of your confinement. Your conduct has been so excellent, that I should have deemed it a neglect of my duty had I failed thus to express my sentiments regarding it.

I am your faithful friend,

And most obedient servant,

WM. COBBETT.

Normandy, April 9th, 1835.

Mr. . . . .

Dear Sir,

I am sure I need not tell you what grief your melancholy loss has occasioned me. I do not believe that a better human being ever existed in the world. Nor is it much consolation to know that you must have parted first or last. It is a great calamity, and all I can say is that I most deeply lament it.

Pray remember me to poor little Emma. I wish you could so manage as to come here for a while to withdraw your mind from the scene.

I beg you to be assured that I feel for this event *more* than I have felt for any misfortune of my own in my whole life, for I never yet had a death in my family. I am,

Most sincerely your friend,

Wm. Cobbett.

It is well to bear in mind that the last words

of William Cobbett were for and concerning the country, and those who make the food to be.

That even when his senses became dim, he still muttered,—"I have ever been their * friend. *They make all things to come: it is right they should have their full share first.*"

That he never swerved; that, contemning imposture whilst living, he was consistent in his Death as in his Life.

Peace to the memory of a Great, and, if words have any meaning, a GOOD man.

* The friend of the agricultural classes.

LETTER XLIII.

May 10*th*, 1825.

My dearest Friend,

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

On the Histories of Universities generally, the most interesting Features in the History of the most celebrated Universities in Great Britain, Germany, France, &c. Reduction of all Universities of any name, with respect to their construction and constitution, to three Classes. 2. The Meaning of the Term, University, and the one true and only adequate Scheme of a University stated and unfolded from the Seed (*i. e.* the idea) to the full Tree with all its Branches. 3. The advantages, moral, intellectual, national, developed from reason

and established by proofs of History; and, lastly, a plan (and sketch of the *means*) of approximating to the Ideal, adapted and applied to this Metropolis. (N.B. The Plan *in detail*, salaries only not mentioned—the particular sums, I mean.) The obstacles, the favourable circumstances, the *pro* and *con* regarding the question of Collegiate Universities, &c. &c. That I could make these subjects not only highly interesting but even entertaining, I have not the least doubt. But would the subject excite an interest of *curiosity?* Would the anticipation of what I might say attract an audience of respectable smallclothes and petticoats sufficiently large to produce something more than, with the same exertions of Head and Hand, I might earn in my Garret (to give the precise Top-ography of my abode) here at Nemorosi, *alias* Houses in the Grove. For the expense of coach-hire, the bodily fatigue, and (to borrow a phrase from poor Charles Lloyd) "*the hot huddle of indefinite sensations*" that hustle my inward man in the *monster* city and a Crown and Anchor Room demand a +, and would

an =, after all expenses paid, but ragged economy, unless I were certain of effecting more good in this than in a quieter way of industry.

I wrote to Mr. B. Montagu for his advice; but he felt no interest himself in the subject, and naturally therefore was doubtful of any number of others feeling any. But he promised to talk with his friend Mr. Irving about it! On the other hand, I heard from Mr. Hughes and a Mr. Wilkes (a clever Solicitor-sort of a man who lives in Finsbury-square, has a great sway with the Slangi yclept the Religious Public, and, *this I add as a white-washer,* was a regular attendant on *my* lectures), that the subject itself is stirring up the Mud-Pool of the Public Mind in London with the vivacity of a Bottom wind. If you can find time, I wish you would talk with Jameson about it, and obtain the opinion of as many as are likely to think aright; and let me know your own opinion and anticipation above all, and at all events, and as soon as possible. We dine on Friday with Mr. Chance. I wish you were with us, for I am sure he would be glad to see you. Need I say that

my thoughts, wishes, and prayers follow you in all your doings and strivings, for I am evermore, my dearest friend,

Yours, with a friend and a father's
affection and solicitude,
S. T. Coleridge.

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

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

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

It has been charged against the writer of this letter, that he had latterly secluded himself from the world, and had confined his communications chiefly to inferior and subordinate minds. I wish to believe that I have mistaken this writer; I would fain persuade myself that he must be a *very young man;* one, who having no settled or satisfactory opinions, *neither knowledge, experience, or judgment,* seeks in an eternal *gabble* of words, disconnected from thoughts, to impose upon his readers. If, however, he should prove to be a man to whom age has brought Evil alone, one who to restlessness, which is *more* than disease, adds treachery of the blackest nature and in all its forms, I would remind him of the communications which he made to the man he now slanders, at the time when the necessities of our *gracious* and *religious* King rendered necessary the resumption of the hundred guineas, granted from what is called the Privy Purse to the Fellows of the Society of Literature.

To you, my dear Children, it will be important to know that my dear Friend, with impaired health and in old age, found it a more fit vocation to

instruct others in that Knowledge he had with so great labour and research amassed, than any longer to waste time (to him most precious) in vain dispute and idle colloquies. He comprehended not only the view or the objection, taken by the clever and restless minds with which he occasionally came in contact, but the opposite and contrary views or objections, and had established for himself a harmony and co-unity, which it was latterly the whole business of his life to convey to others—to those who sought his instructions and the results of his long experience, great knowledge, and *most wonderful* genius.

I will frankly own that I dissuaded my Friend from wasting his powers upon ungenial subjects and ungenial minds, and am therefore open to the charge of having in some measure withdrawn him from an arena to which his health, genius, and modes of thinking, were alike unsuited. To convey to you an adequate *individual* notion or image of the Friend you have lost is with me quite hopeless; the next thing to this is to present to you as many individual pictures or views of his mind as

are within my power. To begin with the first—here is the Estimate formed by one of my earliest Friends; hear what was said of him by T. N. T. now Sergeant Talfourd, who, more than any man I know, himself a Poet of the highest order, is best fitted to appreciate the Poets of our time.

"Not less marvellously gifted, though in a far different manner, is Coleridge, who by a strange error has usually been regarded of the same school. Instead, like Wordsworth, of seeking the sources of sublimity and beauty in the simplest elements of humanity, he ranges through all history and science, investigating all that has really existed, and all that has had foundation only in the strangest and wildest minds, combining, condensing, developing, and multiplying the rich products of his research with marvellous facility and skill; now pondering fondly over some piece of exquisite loveliness brought from an unknown recess, now tracing out the hidden germ of the eldest and most barbaric theories, and now calling fantastic spirits from the vasty deep, where they have slept since the dawn of reason. The term 'myriad-minded,' which he has happily applied to Shakspeare, is truly descriptive of himself. He is not one, but Legion, 'rich with the spoils of time,' richer in his own glorious imagination and sportive fan-

tasy. There is nothing more wonderful than the facile majesty of his images, or rather of his worlds of imagery, which, whether in his poetry or his prose, start up before us self-raised and all perfect, like the palace of Aladdin. He ascends to the sublimest truths by a winding track of sparkling glory, which can only be described in his own language :—

"'The Spirit's Ladder,
That from this gross and visible world of dust,
Even to the starry world, with thousand rounds
Builds itself up; on which the unseen powers
Move up and down on heavenly ministries—
The circles in the circles, that approach
The central sun with ever narrowing orbit.'

"In various beauty of versification he has never been exceeded. Shakspeare, doubtless, in linked sweetness and exquisite continuity, and Milton in pure majesty and classic grace—but this in one species of verse only; and taking all his trials of various metres, the swelling harmony of his blank verse, the sweet breathing of his gentle odes, and the sybil-like flutter with the murmuring charm of his wizard spells, we doubt if even these great masters have so fully developed the music of the English Tongue. He has yet completed no adequate memorials of his genius, yet it is most unjust to assert that he has done little or nothing.

"To refute this assertion, there are his *Wallenstein;* his love poems, of intensest beauty; his *Ancient Mariner*, with its touches of profoundest tenderness amidst the wildest and most bewildering terrors; his holy and sweet tale of *Christabel*, with its rich enchantments and richer humanities; the depths, the sublimities, and the pensive sweetness of his *Tragedy;* the heart-dilating sentiments scattered through his '*Friend;*' and the stately imagery which breaks upon us at every turn of the golden paths of his metaphysical labyrinths. And if he has a power within him mightier than that which even these glorious creations indicate, shall he be censured because he has deviated from the ordinary course of the age in its development, and instead of committing his imaginative wisdom to the press has delivered it from his living lips? He has gone about in the true spirit of an old Greek bard, with a noble carelessness of self, giving fit utterance to the divine spirit within him. Who that has ever heard can forget him? his mild benignity, the unbounded variety of his knowledge, the fast succeeding products of his imagination, the child-like simplicity with which he rises from the driest and commonest theme into the wildest magnificence of thought, pouring on the soul a stream of beauty and of wisdom to mellow and enrich it for ever? The seeds of poetry, the materials for thinking, which he has thus scattered will not perish. The records of his fame are

not in books only, but on the fleshly tablets of young hearts, who will not suffer it to die even in the general ear, however base and unfeeling criticism may deride their gratitude."

Quoted the passage from Southey, in which he declares the Church to be in danger from the united attacks of Infidels, Papists, and Dissenters. Expressed his surprise at Southey's extreme want of Judgment. "*Any Establishment which could fuse into a common opposition, into an opposition on Common Grounds, such heterogeneous and conflicting materials, would deserve, ought, to be destroyed.* I *almost* wish that Southey had been one of the audience, *fit though few*, who attended my Lectures on Philosophy; though I fear that in his present state of mind, he would have perverted, rather than have profited by, them."

The prospectus of these Lectures is so full of Interest, and so well worthy of attention, that I subjoin it; trusting that the Lectures themselves will

soon be furnished by, or under the auspices of Mr. Green, the most constant, and the most assiduous of his Disciples.

That Gentleman will, I earnestly hope—*and doubt not*—see, *feel*, the necessity of giving the whole of his Great Master's views, opinions, and anticipations; not those alone in which he more entirely sympathises, or those which may have more ready acceptance in the present time. He will not shrink from the Great, the *Sacred duty* he has voluntarily undertaken, from any regards of prudence, still less, from that most hopeless form of fastidiousness, the wish to conciliate those who are never to be conciliated, *inferior minds* smarting under a sense of inferiority, and the imputation *which they are conscious is just*, that but for Him *they* never could have been; that distorted, dwarfed, changed, as are all his views and opinions, by passing *athwart* minds with which they could not assimilate, they are yet almost the only things which give such minds a *status* in Literature.

LETTER XLIV.

Nov. 26*th*, 1818.

DEAR SIR,

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

S. T. COLERIDGE.

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

" BY S. T. COLERIDGE, ESQ.

" Logical subtleties and metaphysical trains of argument form neither part nor object of the present Plan,

which supposes no other qualification in the auditors of either sex than a due interest in questions of deepest concern to all, and which every rational creature, who has arrived at the age of reflection, must be presumed, at some period or other, to have put to his own thoughts:—What, and *for* what am I made? What *can* I, and what *ought* I to, make of myself? and in what relations do I stand to the world and to my fellow men? Flattering myself with a continuance of the kind and respectful attention, with which my former courses have been honoured, I have so little apprehension of not being intelligible throughout, that were it in my power to select my auditors, the majority would, perhaps, consist of persons whose acquaintance with the History of Philosophy would commence with their attendance on the Course of Lectures here announced. When, indeed, I contemplate the many and close connexions of the subject with the most interesting periods of History; the instances and illustrations which it demands and will receive from Biography, from individuals of the most elevated genius, or of the most singular character: I cannot hesitate to apply to it as a whole what has been already said of an important part (I allude to Ecclesiastical History)—that for every reflecting mind it has a livelier as well as deeper interest, than that of fable or romance.

"Nor can these Lectures be justly deemed super-

fluous even as a literary work. We have, indeed, a History of Philosophy, or rather a folio volume so called, by STANLEY, and ENFIELD'S Abridgment of the massive and voluminous BRUCKER. But what are they? Little more, in fact, than collections of sentences and extracts, formed into separate groups under the several names, and taken (at first or second hand) from the several writings, of individual philosophers, with no *principle* of arrangement, with no *method*, and therefore without unity and without progress or completion. Hard to be understood as detached passages, and impossible to be remembered as a whole, they leave at last on the mind of the most sedulous student but a dizzy recollection of jarring opinions and wild fancies. Whatever value these works may have as books of reference, so far from *superseding*, they might seem rather to *require*, a work like the present, in which the accidental influences of particular periods and individual genius are by no means overlooked, but which yet does in the main consider Philosophy historically, as an essential part of the history of man, and as if it were the striving of a single mind, under very different circumstances indeed, and at different periods of its own growth and development; but so that each change and every new direction should have its cause and its explanation in the errors, insufficiency, or prematurity of the preceding, while all by reference to a common object is reduced to

harmony of impression and total result. Now this object, which is one and the same in all the forms of Philosophy, and which alone constitutes a work *philosophic*, is—the origin and primary laws (or efficient causes) either of the WORLD, man included (which is *Natural* Philosophy) —or of Human Nature exclusively, and as far only as it is *human* (which is *Moral* Philosophy). If to these we subjoin, as a third problem, the question concerning the sufficiency of the human reason to the solution of both or either of the two former, we shall have a full conception of the sense in which the term, Philosophy, is used in this Prospectus and the Lectures corresponding to it.

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

sophy, under Justinian. 7. The resumption of the Aristotelian philosophy in the thirteenth century, and the successive re-appearance of the different sects from the restoration of literature to our own times."

LETTER XLV.

My dearest Friend,

The person to whom I alluded in my last is a Mr. T . . . ., who, within the last two or three years, has held a situation in the Colonial Office, but *what*, I do not know. From his age and comparatively recent initiation into the office, it is probably not a very influensive one; and, on the other hand, from the rank and character of his friends he has occasionally brought up with him to our Thursday evening *conver*-, or, to mint a more appropriate term, *one*-versazione, it must be a respectable one. Mr. T . . . is *Southey's friend*, and more than a literary acquaintance to *me*, only in consequence of my having had some friendly

intercourse with his uncle during my abode in the north. Of *him* personally I know little more than that he is a remarkably handsome, fashionable-looking young man, a little *too deep* or *hollow-mouthed* and important in his enunciation, but clever and well read; and I have no reason to doubt that he would receive any one whom I had introduced to him as a friend of mine in whose welfare I felt anxious interest, with kindness and a disposition to forward his object should it be in his power.

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

S. T. Coleridge.

This was written just after the utter, and, as then it seemed, the hopeless ruin of my prospects. Need I say in that hour of great perplexity what unspeakable solace and support I found in the sympathy and untireable kindness of my revered friend, and in his frank, honest, and every way most excellent house-mate, Mr. Gillman. Charles Lamb, Charles and Mary Lamb, "union in partition," were never wanting in the hour of need: and I have a clear recollection of Miss Lamb's addressing me in *a tone* acting *at once* as a solace and support, and *after* as a stimulus, to which I owe more perhaps, than to the more extended *arguments* of all others. Believe me, my dear son, that in the hour of extreme affliction, of extreme misfortune, there is no solace like the sympathy of an affectionate and gentle woman. *Then*, their sympathy becomes to us strength, it blends with our own sense of sorrow, and we *feel*, rather than are convinced by any process of reason, that it is good. These reminiscences become painful when I think that you cannot now, as I had fondly hoped, pay back in kind attention and ministrations part of the vast debt I owe.

" Hatred of superiority is not, alas! confined to the ignorant. The best informed are most subject to jealousy, and to unfair representations of new views and doctrines."

" Quoted his short Sketch of Burke from the Biographia Literaria. Burke possessed and had sedulously sharpened that eye which sees all things, actions, and events, in relation to the laws which determine their existence and circumscribe their possibility. He referred habitually to *principles:* he was a scientific statesman, and therefore a *Seer*. For every principle contains in itself the germs of a prophecy; and, as the prophetic power is the essential privilege of science, so the fulfilment of its oracles supplies the outward, and (to men in general) the *only*, test, of its claim to the Title. There is not one word I would add or withdraw from this, scarcely one which I would substitute. I can read Burke, and apply every thing not merely temporary to the present most fearful condition of our country. I cannot conceive a time or a state

of things in which the writings of Burke will not have the highest value."

"Observe the fine humanity of Shakspeare in that his sneerers are all worthless villains. Too cunning to attach value to *self-praise*, and unable to obtain approval from those whom they are compelled to respect, they propitiate their own *self-love* by disparaging and lowering others."

"Of all the men I ever knew, Wordsworth has the least femineity in his mind. He is *all* man. He is a man of whom it might have been said,—'It is good for him to be alone.'"

"I have shown in the Biographia Literaria the great evil of too entire domestication. My after-experience would confirm, nay even extend, this. I incline to think that, unless the husband is abroad the whole day, and therefore only a par-

taker of his wife's social parties, that in the choice of their associates they should be independent. To exclude all that a woman or a man might wish to exclude from his or her help-mate's society, might leave the rest of little value, and lead to mutual discomfort. The Turkish method is good: they have no difference of opinion in that fine country; but, as our own habits and customs are different, we should seek to make arrangements in harmony with them; and this I think may be accomplished. Why insist upon a married pair—paired not matched—agreeing in the choice of their visiters. The less the independence of married people, especially that of man, is trenched upon, the better chance of happiness for both. Are there any men to whom the wife has a dislike? why should she be annoyed with their presence? Are there women amongst his wife's acquaintance who to him are ungenial, why force them upon the husband's distaste or dislike. I have known permanent aversions, and, what is the same thing, permanent alienations proceed from this cause, all which might have been avoided by each of the

parties simply agreeing to see their own friends without the presence or intervention of the other. In the one case the range of the more kindly sympathies may appear to be circumscribed, in the other, dislike is quickly ripened into aversion."

1832.

"I fear that the Revolutionary Spirit which was rebuked by Burke, and derided by Canning, though driven from high places, is not the less active amongst the people. This was my opinion in 1817, and it is still more so now, when the resumption of cash payments has revolutionised our monetary system, and with it has caused the most fearful devastation in the fortunes and general condition of the agriculturists—both labourers and proprietors. If what is charged against Goody Peel, or Peel the Candid, be true, the epithet "genteelly vulgar" is a term of approval to what I should be inclined to apply to him. To improve his fortune or his prospects by fair means is not denied to Mr. Peel; but to recommend a measure

of very doubtful, nay, dangerous policy, merely because it would double his own wealth, when earnestly exhorted by his father against its fearful consequences, is what I dare not believe of Peel (and of him you know I think very meanly), even though charged with it openly, and to my knowledge never denied. The miserable policy of men like Peel will have its reaction during this generation; for them, the problem will be solved, that half is greater than the whole; certainly better for them. The danger does not appear now, nay, at the hour of its arrival, I do not think it will *appear*, to be from within (and I incline to believe that its manifestation *must* be from without); but who can doubt that, if all were right at home, We, this People of ENGLAND, could have any thing really to fear from abroad?

It is quite folly to think that any book, or class of books, can be any longer of *general* Interest. Even Newspapers, the only papers of general Interest as a class, are daily being subdivided. The result of great and constant subdivision is a daily increasing antagonism — or *general* indifference

of the whole to the subject of each. It may be you are right in thinking, or rather in hoping, that the greater equalisation, not in wealth, for that is the reverse, but, in intelligence and the external appearance of all classes, and the growing power and ultimate supremacy of the middle classes, will cause greater mental activity, which must result in a daily increasing, and ultimately in universal, benevolence. I have entertained views not dissimilar, as you well know, and they are now held, in some form or other, by all good men; but I doubt whether any good can come from the use of evil or antagonist means. Benevolence and kindly feelings towards all that has life, must precede intelligence and mental activity, in those at least who are to effect any great changes in our social condition. Owen of Lanark fulfils this condition, as all his life has been devoted to extend and improve the happiness of those under his controul or within his influence. He has also the most indomitable perseverance, and has attested, by a Life devoted to the most disinterested objects, the purity and singleness of his purpose. With these qualities,

what might not such a man have effected, had he not wilfully stumbled over religion, which was not at all in his way, and thus impaired greatly his power of doing good.

I recollect writing a very long letter to Mr. Owen, and conjuring him, with tears in my eyes, to avoid this rock; this vexed question of Fate and Freewill; of which less seems to be known, by those who argue upon it, than of any other subject of difference.

"The Priesthood grossly cheat us with free-will;
Will to do what, but what Heaven first decreed?
Our actions then are neither Good nor Ill,
Since from eternal causes they proceed:
Our passions, fear and anger, love and hate,
Mere senseless engines that are moved by fate;
Like ships on stormy seas without a guide,
Tost by the winds, are driven by the tide."

These lines of Dryden seem to me to express the doctrine and its results better than any other I recollect. It is true the illustrations are now varied, but nothing has been added to the argument either in force or variety."

With reference to the early project of Coleridge, Southey, and others, to form a community on the banks of the Susquehannah, a project, or rather a principle, the practical application of which seems now in some form or other likely to be tried, I gratify myself, and, I doubt not, shall interest others, by the following brief notice from the Friend:—

"Truth I pursued, as Fancy led the way,
And wiser men than I went worse astray."

"From my earliest manhood I perceived that if the people at large were neither ignorant nor immoral, there could be no motive for a sudden and violent change of Government; and if they were, there could be no hope but of a change for the worse.

* * * *

"My feelings, however, and imagination did not remain unkindled in this general conflagration (the French revolution); and I confess I should be more inclined to be ashamed than proud of myself if they had. I was a sharer in the general vortex, though my little world described the path of its

revolution in an orbit of its own. What I dared not expect from constitutions of Government and whole nations, I hoped from Religion and a small company of chosen individuals, and formed a plan, as harmless as it was extravagant, of trying the experiment of human perfectibility on the banks of the *Susquehannah;* where our little society, in its second generation, was to have combined the innocence of the patriarchal age with the knowledge and genuine refinements of European culture; and where I dreamt that in the sober evening of my life, I should behold the Cottages of Independence in the *undivided* Dale of Industry.

'And oft, soothed sadly by some dirgeful wind,
Muse on the sore ills I had left behind.'

"Strange fancies! and as vain as strange! Yet to the intense interest and impassioned zeal, which called forth and strained every faculty of my intellect for the organisation and defence of this scheme, I owe much of whatever I at present possess,—my clearest insight into the nature of individual man, and my most comprehensive views of his social relations, of the true uses of trade and commerce, and how far the *wealth* and relative *power* of nations

promote or impede their welfare and inherent strength."

I have now done. I have placed before you memorials of one of the Greatest and Best Men of this age; in great and varied attainments, in the power of placing scattered Truths in harmonious combination, and of illustrating them out of the Stores of a vast Intellect, by far the most Wonderful Man of his Time.

In these Letters you are admitted, as it were, into the Inner shrine; you hear him commune with his own Soul. I indulge the hope that these volumes may not be without their response from the minds of those who yet, in early youth seek earnestly, nay anxiously, for Truth; that Truth the test of which is Consistency—the Harmony of the whole with the Parts, and of each Part with the Whole. The human face divine is blurred and transfigured by being made the impress of the Mean and the Selfish; not unfrequently the most intensely selfish, when falsely held to be most beneficent or benevolent.

Read the Faces of all you meet in your next half hour's walk. How many are there, the expression of which satisfies you, that they are happy or possess the conditions of well Being? And why is this? Is it not chiefly from the minds of all men having been trained to be unjust, to seek to become possessed of the labour of others without giving an equivalent, and being made to consider the greater or less extent to which each can carry this practice, as the test of their respective talent. It is this mental robbery, this desire to possess without deserving; of wishing the end and overleaping the means, which is now soon to find its retribution. Look at those beautiful women, beautiful, though, as you plainly see, restless and disquieted? And why restless or disquieted? Have they not Food, Shelter, and Clothing? Yes, these they possess in abundance and variety; in an abundance and variety far beyond the reasonable (I had almost said the *un*reasonable) needs of Human Beings. But they are disquieted because, slaves as they are to the External, the Adventitious, and the Unnecessary, they require yet more of that of which they have

already too much, just in the sense that the too much of Drink or of Food to-day, leads to the too much of to-morrow. What would be said of a society or a people of whom it was believed—known, that those were held in highest honour who exacted and destroyed the greatest amount of labour? And yet is not this our case? Would not a man at the present time, who purchased a suit of clothes every day, which he destroyed at night, be held as a sort of Divinity by those who uphold the present application, or misapplication, of labour? And yet this very people, or rather their self-constituted instructors, who hold, the greater the destruction the greater the benefit, shrink from the more rational proposition of Lord Castlereagh, of employing the "surplus population! in digging holes one day and filling them up the next" as an absurdity. The true principle—at least that which appears to me such—is founded in *eternal justice*, as far as those words have any definite meaning: it is, that no man shall receive more than he gives; that no man shall have rights (the very term being its best confutation) which do not belong to all; such

Rights invariably becoming Wrongs alike to those for whose advantage they are exercised, and those at whose expense they are purchased.

And now, my dear children, once more farewell! The life of exercise which I will not yet, nor perhaps again, call labour, to which I destine you, will, I hope, whatever else of good may result, leave you less of inclination, and *your future* less of necessity, for speculations, which have been, for me, as necessary as they are distasteful. You shall have your own independence, and by so much your well being (and how *great* a part independence constitutes, you cannot yet know) in your own power. Health, springing from, and leading to exercise and cheerfulness; an utter disregard and dislike of the petty externals which are, from custom and the association of weak minds, held in disproportionate regard, it shall be the endeavour of my future life to secure for you. Believe me, my dearest Children, that the highest wisdom is to be found in Simplicity, whether of Thought or Action, and that all those whom you see Slaves to the External and the Unessential, are necessarily Unhappy. This comes of concealment or suppression.

I do not think it would be possible for men to be selfish, if Truth, literal and verbal Truth, were the rule instead of the exception. If men and women were accustomed to "sun" their minds, to speak openly their wishes and aspirations, instead of brooding over them until they become parts not merely of the habits, but of the mind itself, we should have little vice and less misery. It is this tendency of an artificial and complicated society to become more and more insincere, which gives me to hope less for the future state and prospects of society than I should otherwise do; though I have faith, not alone in the absolute progression, as a fact apart from the human or conventional better or worse, but in the universal Law of Recoil and Re-action.

END OF VOL. II.

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