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S. T. Coleridge.

NUMBER 1

THE
ANCIENT MARINER

BY
SAMUEL TAYLOR COLERIDGE

EDITED WITH INTRODUCTION AND NOTES BY

JOHN PHELPS FRUIT, PH.D., (LEIPSI^C)

PROFESSOR OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE IN WILLIAM
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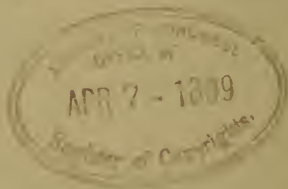
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PREFACE

SINCE the *Ancient Mariner* is no fragment like *Christabel* and *Kubla Khan*, but the single masterpiece that glorifies the genius of the poet, it seems proper to focus the attention of the student, in the Introduction, upon the significance of the poem in Coleridge's literary life, and upon its place in the history of English verse.

To aid the student in extricating himself from the embarrassing variety of imagery, it is thought wise to make many of the notes merely topical suggestions. By this means the larger parts are more readily appreciated as members of the organic whole; at the same time, details all kinds and their proper place and significance.

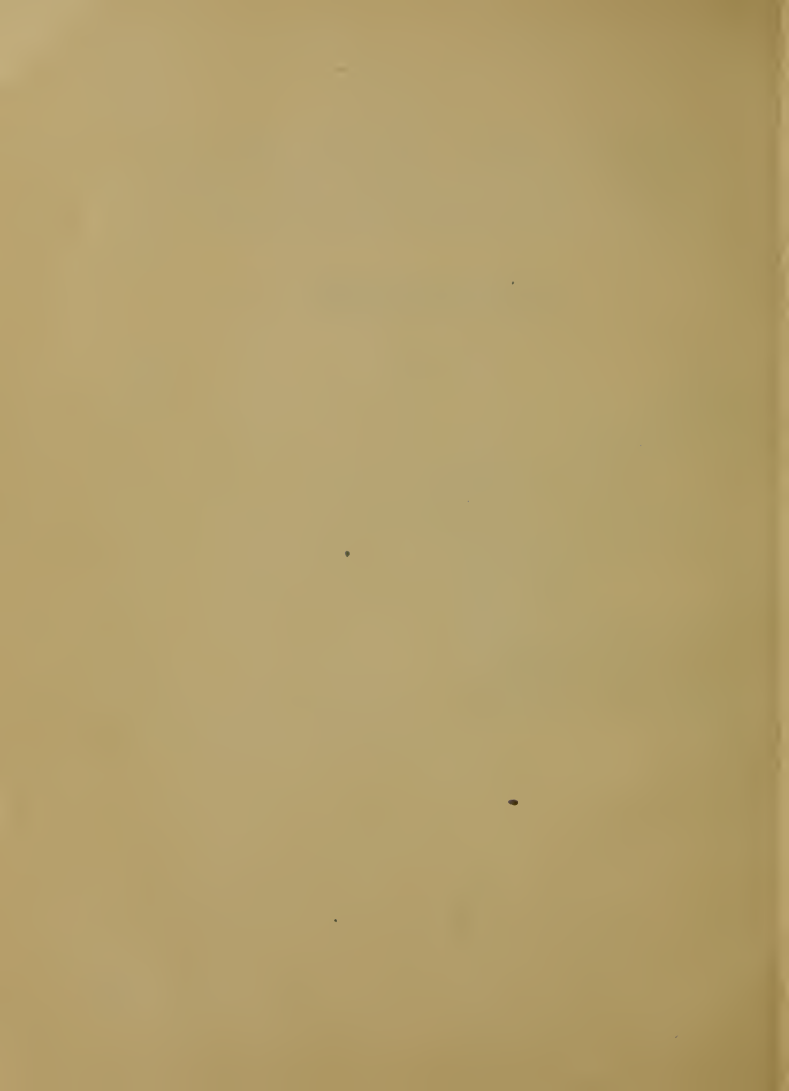
The notes contain just so much detail in the way of explanation as is considered adequate to the end for which this volume is published.

The picture herewith is from the portrait painted by Peter Vandyke, in 1795, and represents Coleridge in the heyday of his career as poet.

J. P. F.

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INTRODUCTION

I. COLERIDGE

IN English literature Coleridge is best characterized as our divine talker. Hazlitt speaks most aptly and significantly of Coleridge's charm in talk: —

“His genius has angelic wings, and fed on manna. He talked on forever, and you wished him to talk on forever. His thoughts did not seem to come with labor and effort, but as if the wings of imagination lifted him off his feet. His voice rolled on the ear like a pealing organ, and its sound alone was the music of thought.”

Charles Lamb recalls him as a boy at Christ's Hospital in this now famous passage: “Come back into memory, like as thou wert in the day-spring of thy fancies, with hope like a fiery column before thee, — the dark pillar not yet turned, — Samuel Taylor Coleridge, — Logician, Metaphysician, Bard! How have I seen the casual passer through the Cloisters

stand still, entranced with admiration (while he weighed the disproportion between the *speech* and the *garb* of the young *Mirandula*), to hear thee unfold, in thy deep and sweet intonations, the mysteries of *Jamblichus*, or *Plotinus* (for even in those years thou waxedst not pale at such philosophic draughts), or reciting *Homer* in his Greek, or *Pindar* — while the walls of the old *Grey Friars* re-echoed to the accents of the *inspired charity boy!*”

From his apprenticeship to books as a boy at *Christ's Hospital* until his death at *Highgate* in 1834, he was fascinating to hear in conversation, as the words of the literary men who came under the spell by privilege of a personal acquaintance bear witness.

Even *Carlyle* sets him forth in a rather picturesque way as he sees him in his last years at *Highgate*: “*Coleridge* sat on the brow of *Highgate Hill* in those years, looking down on *London* and its smoke-tumult, like a sage escaped from the inanity of life's battle, attracting towards him the thoughts of innumerable brave souls engaged there.”

When *Coleridge* talked, who could hear must listen. He was the *Ancient Mariner*, and held his guests not by the glittering eye, but by the magic of his tongue. It is strange, too, that the highest tribute to the fascinating power of his speech is to be found in his

great poem, and that in lines not written by him, but contributed by Wordsworth: —

“The Wedding-Guest stood still,
- And listens like a three years’ child :
The Mariner hath his will.”

No other poem so unconsciously betrays the character of the man and the mind of its author as does *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner*. We can see it making towards us early in his career. We know the poet was born in Devonshire, at the Vicarage of Ottery St. Mary, on the 21st of October, 1772, but we know nothing of his childhood except what he himself tells in a letter to his friend Thomas Poole. It is to the effect that he was a fretful, timorous, and tell-tale boy; and, at school, was driven from play, and subjected to continual nagging. Thus shut out from boyish sports, he gave himself up to the reading of such books as *Jack the Giant-Killer*, *Belisarius*, *Robinson Crusoe*, *Arabian Nights’ Entertainments*, and became a dreamer with less and less inclination to bodily exertion. So as a child he lived alone in a fairy world, and had, he says, all the simplicity of the little child and all the docility, but none of the child’s habits; he never thought as a child, and never had the language of a child. He remembered

that his father wished him to be a parson, and would take walks with him, and would name the stars to him, and expatiate upon the wonders of the heavens. "I heard him with a profound delight and admiration," says Coleridge, "but without the least mixture of wonder or incredulity. For from my early reading of fairy-tales, and about genii and the like, my mind had been habituated to the Vast; and I never regarded my senses in any way as the *criteria* of my belief. I regulated all my creeds by my conceptions, not by my sight, even at that age." We may conclude that we find, in this account of his childhood, the root of that which flowered into *The Ancient Mariner*.

He himself summed up this period by saying that before he was eight he was "*a character*." But when his father died in October, 1781, this wayward boy in his ninth year, fell into hands that fashioned his genius for poetry. He was sent to the great Charity School in London, Christ's Hospital, the headmaster of which was the Rev. James Boyer.

Of Boyer Coleridge thus writes:—

"At school I enjoyed the inestimable advantage of a very sensible, though at the same time, a very severe master, the Reverend James Boyer. He early moulded my taste to the preference of Demosthenes to Cicero, of Homer and Theocritus

to Virgil, and again of Virgil to Ovid. He habituated me to compare Lucretius (in such extracts as I then read), Terence, and, above all, the chaster poems of Catullus, not only with the Roman poets of the so-called silver and brazen ages, but with even those of the Augustan æra; and, on grounds of plain sense and universal logic, to see and assert the superiority of the former, in the truth and nativeness both of their thoughts and diction. At the same time that we were studying the Greek tragic poets, he made us read Shakspeare and Milton as lessons: and they were the lessons, too, which required most time and trouble to *bring up*, so as to escape his censure. I learned from him that poetry, even that of the loftiest, and, seemingly, that of the wildest odes, had a logic of its own, as severe as that of science, and more difficult, because more subtle, more complex, and dependent on more and more fugitive causes. In the truly great poets, he would say, there is a reason assignable, not only for every word, but for the position of every word; and I well remember that, availing himself of the synonyms to the Homer of Didymus, he made us attempt to show, with regard to each, why it would not have answered the same purpose, and wherein consisted the peculiar fitness of the word in the original text.

“In our own English Compositions (at least for the last three years of our school education), he showed no mercy to phrase, metaphor, or image, unsupported by a sound sense, or where the same sense might have been conveyed with equal force and dignity in plainer words. *Lute, harp, and lyre, Muse, Muses, and inspirations, Pegasus, Parnassus, and Hippocrene*, were all an abomination to him. In fancy I can almost hear him now, exclaiming, ‘*Harp? Harp? Lyre? Pen and ink, boy, you mean! Muse, boy, Muse? Your*

nurse's daughter, you mean! Pierian spring? Oh, aye! the cloister-pump I suppose!' Nay, certain introductions, similes, and examples were placed by name on a list of interdiction."

Severe as this regimen in books was, enforced by flogging, and accompanied by other discomforts mentioned by Lamb in his essay, *Christ's Hospital Five-and-Thirty Years Ago*, Coleridge yet remembered Boyer gratefully in these words:—

"The reader will, I trust, excuse this tribute of recollection to a man, whose severities, even now, not seldom furnish the dreams by which the blind fancy would fain interpret to the mind the painful sensations of distempered sleep; but neither lessen nor dim the deep sense of my moral and intellectual obligations. He sent us to the University excellent Latin and Greek scholars, and tolerable Hebraists. Yet our classical knowledge was the least of the good gifts which we derived from his zealous and conscientious tutorage."

After nine years at Christ's Hospital, Coleridge was appointed to an Exhibition at Jesus College, Cambridge, where he entered, as sizar in February, 1791; was made pensioner in November of the same year; and matriculated in March, 1792.

Among his friends at Christ's Hospital, Middleton, afterwards Bishop of Calcutta, stood to him as a counsellor and protector. Middleton was at Pem-

broke College when Coleridge entered Jesus, and it was under his influence that Coleridge began his university career auspiciously by winning in 1792 the Brown medal for a Greek ode. When Middleton left Cambridge, however, Coleridge came to grief. Wine-parties, political and religious views too freely discussed, debts, "a heavy disappointment in love," all contributed to his enlisting, in a moment of despondency, in the Light Dragoons in December, 1793, under the name of Silas Tomkyn Comberbach. In April, 1794, he procured his discharge, however, and was again at the University.

In June he visited at Oxford Bob Allen, a boon fellow of the Christ's-Hospital days, and through him met Southey. The two became warm friends, and with a few kindred spirits planned Pantisocracy, the visionary scheme of an ideal community in which a minimum of manual labor and much poetry and philosophy should bring the "statelier Eden" back to earth; it was to be "far from the madding crowd's ignoble strife," on the banks of the Susquehanna.

On his return from a tour in Wales, Coleridge came to Southey at his home in Bristol. Upon further discussion of Pantisocracy, the two resolved to go to America to realize the earthly paradise. The scheme conceived marriage to be essential.

Southey was already engaged to Edith Fricker; and the fitness of things seemed to suggest Coleridge's engagement to Edith's sister Sarah, and it was so.

After more than a year of impractical and unsuccessful effort to raise the means wherewith to carry out their dream, Southey, setting sail for Lisbon, announced his abandonment of the scheme. But Coleridge was rash enough to comply with the Pantisocratic regulation about taking a wife, and he was married to his "Sara" on the 4th of October, 1795.

His honeymoon was spent in a cottage at Clevedon, near Bristol. "My Sara" is the ear-mark of the poems of this period; he begins *The Æolian Harp* with "my pensive Sara." He loved, yet his eccentricities and poor health made the struggle for a livelihood hard. Fortunately he found a friend in one Thomas Poole. In order to be near him, Coleridge removed in December, 1796, to Nether Stowey, in Somersetshire.

Coleridge appreciated the poetic genius of Wordsworth in all the fulness of its promise in the *Descriptive Sketches* (1793): they were now to know each other personally, and cement a life-long friendship. On an occasion when Coleridge preached in the Unitarian Chapel at Bridgewater, he seems to have gone thence to meet Wordsworth and his sister

at Racedown. There was enough of mutual admiration; for Coleridge, on a second visit, brought them along with him on a proposed tour of the Quantock country, where they were his guests for two weeks. This was in July, 1797. The Wordsworths took a house in the neighboring village of Alfoxden. Dorothy, writing from there on August 14, said: "We spent a fortnight at Coleridge's; in the course of that time we heard that this house was to let, applied for it, and took it. Our principal inducement was Coleridge's society. It was a month yesterday since we came to Alfoxden."

This visit of the Wordsworths to the Quantock region is famous for being a year long, but it is more notable for its profit to Coleridge. It meant Coleridge's masterpiece, *The Ancient Mariner*, and much of what else is ranked as his best. Wordsworth was the quickener of his powers, and the moral support of his character.

There is little in the life of Coleridge after 1798 to interest the student of his poetry. He is the same interesting but vacillating creature of earlier days, standing sorely in need of a strong character to care for him.

Through the generosity of the brothers Wedgwood, he went, in September, 1798, to Germany for study.

He returned the following year to call attention to German literature by the translation of Schiller's *Wallenstein*. From this time till 1816 it is a sad story of a bond-slave to opium. He went for his health to Malta in 1804, returning in 1806. Estranged from his family, he did the most desultory kind of work to support life. In 1809 he made another venture in journalism, but *The Friend* was unsuccessful, as had been the *Watchman* of 1796.

He put himself in 1816 into the hands of Dr. Gillman of Highgate, London, where he resided till his death, and under whose treatment he mastered the opium habit, and enjoyed the distinction of drawing to him, to quote Carlyle again, many brave souls.

He died on the 25th of July, 1834.

II. THE ANCIENT MARINER

ORIGIN

The Ancient Mariner was first published anonymously in 1798, in a volume entitled *Lyrical Ballads*.

Coleridge, in the *Biographia Literaria*, speaks of the inception of this volume:—

“During the first year that Mr. Wordsworth and I were neighbors, our conversation turned frequently on the two car-

dinal points of poetry, — the power of exciting the sympathy of the reader by a faithful adherence to the truth of nature, and the power of giving the interest of novelty, by the modifying colors of the imagination. The sudden charm which accidents of light and shade, which moonlight or sunset, diffused over a known and familiar landscape, appeared to represent the practicability of combining both. These are the poetry of nature. The thought suggested itself (to which of us I do not recollect) that a series of poems might be composed of two sorts. In the one, the incidents and agents were to be, in part at least, supernatural; and the interest aimed at was to consist in the interesting of the affections by the dramatic truth of such emotions as would naturally accompany such situations, supposing them real. . . . For the second class, subjects were to be chosen from ordinary life; the characters and incidents were to be such as would be found in every village, and its vicinity, where there is a meditative and feeling mind to seek after them, or to notice them when they present themselves.

“In this idea originated the plan of the *Lyrical Ballads*, in which it was agreed that my endeavors should be directed to persons and characters supernatural, or at least romantic, yet so as to transfer from our inward nature a human interest and a semblance of truth sufficient to procure from these shadows of imagination that willing suspension of disbelief for the moment which constitutes poetic faith. Mr. Wordsworth, on the other hand, was to propose to himself, as his object, to give the charm of novelty to things of every day, and to excite a feeling analogous to the supernatural by awakening the mind’s attention from the lethargy of custom, and directing it to the loveliness and wonders of the world

before us, an inexhaustible treasure, but for which, in consequence of the film of familiarity and selfish solicitude, we have eyes which see not, ears that hear not, and hearts that neither feel nor understand.”

Concerning the origin of *The Ancient Mariner*, Wordsworth has written:—

“In the autumn of the year 1797, he (Coleridge), my sister, and myself, started from Alfoxden pretty late in the afternoon, with a view to visit Linton and the Valley of Stones near to it: and, as our united funds were very small, we agreed to defray the expense of the tour by writing a poem, to be sent to the New Monthly Magazine, set up by Phillips, the bookseller, and edited by Dr. Aiken. Accordingly we set off and proceeded along the Quantock Hills towards Watchet, and in the course of this walk was planned the poem of *The Ancient Mariner*, founded on a dream, as Mr. Coleridge said, of his friend Mr. Cruikshank. Much the greatest part of the story was Mr. Coleridge’s invention, but certain parts I suggested: for example, some crime was to be committed which should bring upon the Old Navigator, as Coleridge afterwards delighted to call him, the spectral persecution, as a consequence of that crime and his own wanderings. I had been reading in *Shelcocke’s Voyages*, a day or two before, that while doubling Cape Horn, they frequently saw albatrosses in that latitude, the largest sort of sea-fowl, some extending their wings twelve or fifteen feet. ‘Suppose,’ said I, ‘you represent him as having killed one of these birds on entering the South Sea, and that the tutelary spirits of those regions take upon them to avenge the crime.’ The

incident was thought fit for the purpose and adopted accordingly. I also suggested the navigation of the ship by the dead men, but do not recollect that I had anything more to do with the scheme of the poem. The gloss with which it was subsequently accompanied was not thought of by either of us at the time, at least not a hint of it was given to me, and I have no doubt it was a gratuitous afterthought. We began the composition together on that, to me, memorable evening. I furnished two or three lines at the beginning of the poem, in particular : —

“ ‘ And listened like a three-years’ child ;
The mariner hath his will.’ ”

These trifling contributions, all but one (which Mr. C. has with unnecessary scrupulosity recorded), slipped out of his mind as they well might. As we endeavored to proceed conjointly (I speak of the same evening), our respective manners proved so widely different that it would have been quite presumptuous in me to do anything but separate from an undertaking upon which I could only have been a clog. . . . *The Ancient Mariner* grew and grew, till it became too important for our first object, which was limited to our expectation of five pounds, and we began to talk of a volume, which was to consist, as Mr. Coleridge has told the world, of poems chiefly on supernatural subjects, taken from common life, but looked at, as much as might be, through an imaginative medium.”

The second edition of the poem appeared in 1800, pruned of many of its archaisms, and refined, in certain parts, of its horrors.

It was printed again in 1817 in a collection entitled *Sibylline Leaves*, in the Preface to which is this:—

“The Rime of the Ancient Mariner (with, for the first time, the marginal notes, and the motto from T. Burnet).”

III. COMMENTS.

1. THE POEM.

The Ancient Mariner was at first unpopular with the critics. Neither Southey nor Lamb was pleased with it. Wordsworth grumbled that it made against the success of the *Lyrical Ballads* as a volume, but would not omit it from the second edition, as Coleridge had desired.

He inserted a note into the Preface, however, which began by enumerating the “great defects” of his friend’s poem. These are:—

“First, that the principal person has no distinct character, either in his profession of Mariner, or as a human being who having been so long under the control of supernatural impressions, might be supposed himself to partake of something supernatural; secondly, that he does not act, but is continually acted upon; thirdly, that the events having no necessary

connection do not produce each other; and lastly, that the imagery is somewhat too laboriously accumulated."

On the other side, in way of compensation, he writes:—

"Yet the poem contains many delicate touches of passion, and, indeed, the passion everywhere true to nature; a great number of the stanzas present beautiful images, and are expressed with unusual felicity of language; and the versification, though the metre is unfit for long poems, is harmonious and artfully varied, exhibiting the utmost powers of that metre, and every variety of which it is capable. It, therefore, appeared to me that these several merits (the first of which, namely, that of the passion, is of the highest kind) gave to the poem a value which is not often possessed by better poems."

Coleridge was not appreciated then, evidently because he was new in both form and spirit. Taine says:—

"Others, like Southey and Coleridge in particular, manufactured totally new rhythms, . . . for instance, a verse in which accents, and not syllables, were counted."

Again he says:—

"Coleridge, a thinker and dreamer, a poet and critic, in *Christabel* and *The Ancient Mariner* reopened the vein of the supernatural and the fantastic."

Apropos, Leslie Stephen writes : —

“The germ of all Coleridge’s utterances may be found—by a little ingenuity—in the ‘Ancient Mariner.’ For what is the secret of the strange charm of that unique achievement? I do not speak of what may be called its purely literary merits,—the melody of versification, the command of language, the vividness of the descriptive passages, and so forth—I leave such points to critics of finer perception and a greater command of superlatives. But part, at least, of the secret is the ease with which Coleridge moves in a world of which the machinery (as the old critics called it) is supplied by the mystic philosopher. Milton, as *Penseroso* implores—

“‘The spirit of Plato to unfold
What worlds or what vast regions hold
The immortal mind that hath forsook
Her mansion in this fleshly nook ;
And of those demons that are found
In fire, air, flood, and underground,
Whose power hath a true consent
With planet or with element.’

“If such a man fell asleep in his ‘high, lonely tower,’ his dreams would present to him in sensuous imagery the very world in which the strange history of the *Ancient Mariner* was transacted. It is a world in which both animated things, and stones, and brooks, and clouds, and plants are moved by spiritual agency ; in which, as he would put it, the veil of the senses is nothing but a symbolism, everywhere telling of unseen and supernatural forces. What we call the solid and the substantial becomes a dream ; and the dream is the true

underlying reality. The difference between such poetry and the poetry of Pope, or even Gray, or Goldsmith, or Cowper, — poetry which is the direct utterance of a string of moral, political, or religious reflections, — implies a literary revolution. Coleridge, even more distinctly than Wordsworth, represented a deliberate rejection of the canons of the preceding school.”

The distinction is illustrated in Coleridge’s reply to those who harp on didactic lines : —

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

But the poem has won the very head and heart of modern criticism.

William Watson thus writes of it : —

“Whether or not a born ‘maker,’ he (Coleridge) was certainly a born theorist; and we believe not only that under all his most important achievements there was a basis of intel-

lectual theory, but that the theory, so far from being an alien and disturbing presence, did duty as the unifying principle which co-ordinated the whole. We think we can see such a theory underlying *The Ancient Mariner*, and securing the most unqualified success of that poem; and we further think we can see it departed from in one isolated instance, with temporary artistic disaster as the result.

“Any one examining the poem with a critical eye, for its machinery and ground-work, will have noticed that Coleridge is careful not to introduce any element of the marvellous or supernatural, until he has transported the reader beyond the pale of definite geographical knowledge, and thus left behind him all those conditions of the known and the familiar, all those associations with recorded fact and experience, which would have created an inimical atmosphere. Indeed, there is perhaps something inartistic in his undignified haste to convey us to the æsthetically necessary region. In some half dozen stanzas, beginning with ‘The ship was cleared,’ we find ourselves crossing the line, and driven far toward the Southern Pole. Beyond a few broad indications thus vouchsafed, Coleridge very astutely takes pains to avoid anything like geography. We reach that silent sea into which we are the first that ever burst, and that is sufficient for imaginative ends. It is enough that the world as known to actual navigators is left behind, and a world which the poet is free to colonize with the wildest children of his brain has been entered. Forthwith, to all intents and purposes, we may say, in the words of Goethe, as rendered by Shelley:

‘The bounds of true and false are passed;
Lead on, thou wandering gleam.’

Thenceforth we cease to have any direct relations with the verifiable. Natural law is suspended; standards of probability have ceased to exist. Marvel after marvel is accepted by us, as by the Wedding-Guest, with the unquestioning faith of 'a three-years' child.' We become insensibly acclimatized to this dreamland. Nor is it the chaotic, anarchic, incoherent world of arabesque romance, where the real and unreal by terms arbitrarily interrupt and supplant each other, and are never reconciled at heart. On the contrary, here is no inconsistency; for with the constitution of this dream-realm nothing except the natural and probable would be inconsistent. Here is no danger of the intellect or the reason pronouncing an adverse judgment, for the venue has been changed to a court where the jurisdiction of fancy is supreme. Thus far, then, the logic of the Incredible is perfect, and the result, from the view-point of art, magnificent. But at last we quit this consistently, unimpeachably, most satisfactorily impossible world; we are restored to the world of common experience; and when so restoring us, the poet makes his first and only mistake. For the concluded miracle, or, rather, brace of miracles, — the apparition of the angelic forms standing over the corpses of the crew, and the sudden preternatural sinking of the ship, — take place just when we have returned to the province of the natural and regular, to the sphere of the actual and the known; just when, floating into harbor, we sight the well-remembered kirk on the rock, and the steady weathercock which the moonlight steeps in silentness. A dissonant note is struck at once. We have left a world where prodigies were normal, and have returned to one where they are monstrous. But prodigies still pursue us with unseasonable pertinacity, and our feeling is somewhat akin to that of the Ancient Mariner

himself, whose prayer is that he may either 'be awake' or may 'sleep away.' We would fain either surrender unconditionally to reality, or remain free, as naturalized citizens of a self-governing dreamland."

Swinburne says:—

"And this poem is beyond question one of the supreme triumphs of poetry. Witness the men who brought batteries to bear on it right and left. Literally: for one critic said that the 'moral sentiment' had impaired the imaginative excellence; another, that it failed and fell through for want of a moral foothold upon facts. Remembering these things, I am reluctant to proceed; but desirous to praise, as I best may. Though I doubt if it be worth while, seeing how *The Ancient Mariner*, praised or dispraised, lives and is like to live for the delight equally of young boys and old men; and seeing also that the last critic cited was no less a man than Hazlitt. It is fortunate, among many misfortunes, that for Coleridge no warning word was needed against the shriek of the press-gang from this side or that. He stooped once or twice to spurn them; but he knew that he stooped. His intense and overwrought abstraction from things of the day or hour did him no ill service here.

"*The Ancient Mariner* has doubtless more of breadth and space, more of material force and motion, than anything else of the poet's. And the tenderness of sentiment which touches with significant color the pure white imagination is here no longer morbid or languid, as in the earlier poems of feeling and emotion. It is soft and piteous enough, but womanly rather than effeminate; and thus serves indeed to set off the strange splendors and boundless beauties of the story. For

the execution, I presume no human eye is too dull to see how perfect it is, and how high in kind of perfection. Here is not the speckless and elaborate finish which shows everywhere the fresh rasp of file or chisel on its smooth and spruce excellence; this is faultless after the fashion of a flower or a tree. Thus it has grown: not thus has it been carved."

Lowell writes:—

"It is enough for us here that he (Coleridge) has written some of the most poetical poetry in the language, and one poem, *The Ancient Mariner*, not only unparalleled, but unapproached in its kind, and that kind of the rarest. It is marvellous in the mastery over that delightfully fortuitous inconsequence that is the adamantine logic of dreamland. Coleridge has taken the old ballad measure, and given to it, by indefinable charm wholly his own, all the sweetness, all the melody and compass, of a symphony. And how picturesque it is in the proper sense of the word. I know nothing like it. There is not a description in it. It is all picture. Descriptive poets generally confuse us with multiplicity of detail; we cannot see their forest for trees; but Coleridge never errs in this way. With instinctive tact he touches the right chord of association, and is satisfied, as we also are. I should find it hard to explain the singular charm of his diction, there is so much nicety of art and purpose in it, whether for music or for meaning. Nor does it need any explanation, for we all feel it. The words seem common words enough, but in the order of them, in the choice, variety, and position of the vowel sounds they become magical. The most decrepit vocable in the language throws away its crutches to dance and sing at his piping. I cannot think it a personal peculiar-

ity, but a matter of universal experience, that more bits of Coleridge have embedded themselves in my memory than of any other poet who delighted my youth — unless I should except the sonnets of Shakespeare. This argues perfectness of expression.”

Walter Pater says : —

“ *Christabel*, though not printed till 1816, was written mainly in the year 1797: *The Rhyme of the Ancient Mariner* was printed as a contribution to the *Lyrical Ballads* in 1798; and these two poems belong to the great year of Coleridge’s poetic production, his twenty-fifth year. In poetic quality, above all in that most poetic of all qualities, a keen sense of, and delight in beauty, the infection of which lays hold upon the reader, they are quite out of proportion to all his other compositions. The form in both is that of the ballad, with some of its terminology, and some also of its quaint conceits. They connect themselves with that revival of ballad literature of which Percy’s *Relics*, and, in another way, Macpherson’s *Ossian*, are monuments, and which afterwards so powerfully affected Scott —

“ ‘ Young-eyed poesy
All deftly masked as hoar antiquity.’

“ *The Ancient Mariner* . . . is a ‘romantic’ poem, impressing us by bold invention, and appealing to that taste for the supernatural, that longing for *le frisson*, a shudder, to which the ‘romantic’ school in Germany, and its derivations in England and France, directly ministered. In Coleridge personally, this taste had been encouraged by his odd and out-of-the-way reading in the old-fashioned literature of the marvellous, — books

like Purchas's *Pilgrims*, early voyages like Hakluyt's, old naturalists and visionary moralists like Thomas Burnet, from whom he quotes the motto of *The Ancient Mariner*, 'Facile credo, plures esse naturas invisibiles quam visibiles in rerum universitate, etc.' Fancies of the strange things which may very well happen, even in broad daylight, to men shut up alone in ships far off on the sea, seem to have occurred to the human mind in all ages with a peculiar readiness, and often have about them, from the story of the stealing of Dionysus downwards, the fascination of a certain dreamy grace, which distinguishes them from other kinds of marvellous inventions. This sort of fascination *The Ancient Mariner* brings to its highest degree: it is the delicacy, the dreamy grace, in his presentation of the marvellous, which makes Coleridge's work so remarkable. The too palpable intruders from a spiritual world in almost all ghost literature, in Scott and Shakespeare even, have a kind of crudity or coarseness. Coleridge's power is in the very fineness with which, as by some really ghostly finger, he brings home to our inmost sense his inventions, daring as they are — the skeleton ship, the polar spirit, the inspiriting of the dead corpses of the ship's crew. *The Rhyme of The Ancient Mariner* has the plausibility, the perfect adaptation to reason, and the general aspect of life, which belong to the marvellous, when actually presented as part of a credible experience in our dreams. Doubtless, the mere experience of the opium-eater, the habit he must almost necessarily fall into of noting the more elusive phenomena of dreams, had something to do with that: in its essence, however, it is connected with a more purely intellectual circumstance in the development of Coleridge's poetic gift. Some one once asked William

Blake, to whom Coleridge has many resemblances when either is at his best (that whole episode of the re-inspiring of the ship's crew in *The Ancient Mariner* being comparable to Blake's well-known design of the 'Morning stars singing together') whether he had ever seen a ghost, and was surprised when the famous seer, who ought, one might think, to have seen so many, answered frankly, 'Only once!' His 'spirits,' at once more delicate, and so much more real than any ghost—the burden, as they were the privilege, of his temperament—like it, were an integral element in his everyday life. And the difference of mood expressed in that question and its answer, is indicative of a change of temper in regard to the supernatural which has passed over the whole modern mind, and of which the true measure is the influence of the writings of Swedenborg. What that change is we may see if we compare the vision by which Swedenborg was 'called,' as he thought, to his work, with the ghost which called Hamlet, or the spells of Marlowe's *Faust* with those of Goethe's. The modern mind, so minutely self-scrutinising, if it is to be affected at all by a sense of the supernatural, needs to be more finely touched than was possible in the older, romantic presentment of it. The spectral object, so crude, so impossible, has become plausible, as—

“ ‘The blot upon the brain
That *will* show itself without;’

and is understood to be but a condition of one's own mind, for which, according to the scepticism, latent at least, in so much of our modern philosophy, the so-called real things themselves are but *spectra* after all.

.

“Completeness, the perfectly-rounded wholeness and unity of the impression it leaves on the mind of a reader who fairly gives himself to it—that, too, is one of the characteristics of a really excellent work, in the poetic, as in every other kind of art; and by this completeness, *The Ancient Mariner* certainly gains upon *Christabel*—a completeness, entire as that of Wordsworth’s *Leech-gatherer*, or Keats’s *Saint Agnes’ Eve*, each typical in its way of such wholeness or entirety of effect on a careful reader. It is Coleridge’s one great complete work, the one really finished thing, in a life of many beginnings. *Christabel* remained a fragment. In *The Ancient Mariner* this unity is secured in part by the skill with which the incidents of the marriage-feast are made to break in dreamily from time to time upon the main story. And then, how pleasantly, how reassuringly, the whole nightmare story itself is made to end, among the clear, fresh sounds and lights of the bay, where it began, with—

“‘The moonlight steeped in silentness,
The steady weathercock.’

2. THE GLOSS.

Walter Pater does not forget the significance of the marginal prose commentary:—

“It is this finer, more delicately marvellous supernaturalism, fruit of his more delicate psychology, that Coleridge infuses into romantic adventure, itself also then a new or revived thing in English literature; and with a fineness of weird effect in *The Ancient Mariner*, unknown in those older,

more simple, romantic legends and ballads. It is a flower of mediæval, or later German romance, growing up in the peculiarly compounded atmosphere of modern psychological speculation, and putting forth in it wholly new qualities. The quaint prose commentary, which runs side by side with the verse of *The Ancient Mariner*, illustrates this — a composition of quite a different shade of beauty and merit from that of the verse which it accompanies ; connecting this, the chief poem of Coleridge, with his philosophy, and emphasising therein the psychological interest of which I have spoken, its curious soul-lore.”

The critical introduction to *Coleridge* in Craik’s *English Prose* has this concerning the prose gloss to *The Ancient Mariner* : —

“The marginal gloss to *The Ancient Mariner* (1828) is one of his finest compositions, in an unfamiliar mood ; a translation or transposition of his poem, for a purely artistic end, such as had never come within the view of the *Watchman*, or any other of the serious monitors of Church and State. The exercise was wholly different from that to which he was accustomed. It was not the evolution of an argument ; it was minute work piecemeal, following the lines of a composition already finished, giving no room for anything like his usual copious paragraphs of edification, compelling him to write for the mere beauty of writing.

.

“Nowhere else in the works of Coleridge is the element of prose thus disengaged from matter. It is significant of Coleridge’s spirit, that in his moral treatises he never relied

on anything like the charm of this prose, to gain applause or acceptance for his doctrines. Whether he fought well or slackly, he was always a combatant in his prose essays, and never a vendor of merely ornamental rhetoric. He never allowed himself to be tempted by any attraction inconsistent with his purpose; his digressions were always prompted by something in the matter, never by the vanities of language; he used no rhetorical display except what was immediately intended to support his ethical strategy. It is this consistency that distinguishes his style, even in its most intricate and florid passages, from all the varieties of ostentatious literature."

IV. TO THE STUDENT.

EVERY characteristic excellence of *The Ancient Mariner* has been mentioned in the critical comments quoted. Re-read them, observing that the verse-form is said to be that of the old romantic ballad. When the ballad is defined as "the protoplasmic form of verse-making," its simplicity is indicated; it is the verse that is improvised to the keeping time with the feet in dancing. It consists of syllables grouped by *accent*.

The protoplasmic form may be illustrated by this stanza from *A Plantation Serenade*:—

“ De ole bee make de honeycomb,
De young bee make de honey,
De niggers make de cotton en c'on,
En de w'ite folks gits de money.”

Into this simple verse-form Coleridge has breathed a delicate supernaturalism, infusing therewith romantic adventure.

Observe, too, that *unity* of impression and *completeness* of effect are spoken of. It is meant that the poem is an organic whole, that the parts are vitally interdependent. It is the appreciation of these qualities in a poem that results in the pleasurable sense of the beautiful.

One must visualize, that is, see with one's eyes wide open, the *situation* and the *incident*, stanza by stanza. The swing of the ballad-measure tends to make indefinite the imagery through dividing the attention between the mind's-ear and the mind's-eye. In this way the vastness of conception is rendered unobtrusive.

Verify this by reading stanza 47 in the rhythmic time of the syllable-grouping, and then read again, stopping *to see*, 'The sun's rim dips — The stars rush out — At one stride comes the dark.

Again, for a closer appreciation of the coherence of parts, study stanza 48, to understand how intimately it depends upon the preceding stanza; it grows out of stanza 47.

The notes are designedly full of suggestions for such a study of this remarkable poem.

The student could read with profit, in connection, other poems of Coleridge's as, *Time, Real and Imaginary*; *Kubla Khan*; *Fears in Solitude*; *Christabel*; *The Dark Ladie*; *Dejection*; *The Pains of Sleep*; *Love*.

Lamb's two essays, *Recollections of Christ's Hospital*, and *Christ's Hospital Five-and-Thirty Years Ago* are accessible in cheap form.

Read essays on Wordsworth, Lamb, Southey, De Quincey, *The Lake School*, for wider information concerning Coleridge.

If one essay on Coleridge above all others is to be recommended, let it be Walter Pater's in a volume entitled *Appreciations*; only a part of this is to be found as critical introduction to Coleridge in Ward's *English Poets*.

V. BIBLIOGRAPHY.

THERE IS *one* edition of *Coleridge's Poetical Works* that distances all others, that by J. Dykes Campbell, in a single volume published by The Macmillan Company. The editor says at the close of his *Introduction*:—

“I had long felt that two things were wanting, — first, a complete collection of his poems, printed according to his own

latest revised text, and arranged in some settled order; and, second, a fairly complete and accurate narrative of the events of his life. These *desiderata* I have attempted to supply in this volume, which is the imperfect result of many years' labor of love."

It is to this edition that the student of Coleridge will delight to own a large indebtedness. The text of the present edition of *The Ancient Mariner* is that of this volume, with a few unimportant changes.

The *Aldine Edition* of *Coleridge's Poetical Works*, edited with introduction and notes by T. Ashe, and published by George Bell & Sons, London, may be commended.

For biography, after Campbell's *Introduction*, may be mentioned the *Life of Coleridge* by H. D. Traill, in the English Men of Letters Series; and the *Life of Coleridge* by Hall Caine, in the Great Writers Series. This last is especially valuable for the ample bibliography appended.

FACILE credo, plures esse Naturas invisibiles quam visibiles in rerum universitate. Sed horum omnium familiam quis nobis enarrabit, et gradus et cognationes et discrimina et singulorum munera? Quid agunt? quæ loca habitant? Harum rerum notitiam semper ambivit ingenium humanum, numquam attigit. Juvat, interea, non diffiteor, quandoque in animo, tamquam in tabula, majoris et melioris mundi imaginem contemplari: ne mens assuefacta hodiernæ vitæ minutiis se contrahat nimis, et tota subsidat in pusillas cogitationes. Sed veritati interea invigilandum est, modusque servandus, ut certa ab incertis, diem a nocte, distinguamus.

T. BURNET, *Archæol. Phil.*, p. 68.

THE RIME OF
THE ANCIENT MARINER

IN SEVEN PARTS

PART I

1

It is an ancient Mariner,
And he stoppeth one of three.
“By thy long gray beard and glittering eye,
Now wherefore stopp’st thou me?”

An ancient
Mariner meet-
eth three gal-
lants bidden
to a wedding-
feast, and
detaiñeth one.

2

“The Bridegroom’s doors are opened wide, 5
And I am next of kin ;
The guests are met, the feast is set :
May’st hear the merry din.”

33

3

He holds him with his skinny hand,
 10 "There was a ship," quoth he.
 "Hold off! unhand me, graybeard loon!"
 Eftsoons his hand dropt he.

4

The wedding-guest is spell-bound by the eye of the old seafaring man, and constrained to hear his tale.

He holds him with his glittering eye —
 The wedding-guest stood still,
 15 And listens like a three years' child:
 The Mariner hath his will.

5

The wedding-guest sat on a stone:
 He can not choose but hear;
 And thus spake on that ancient man,
 20 The bright-eyed Mariner.

6

"The ship was cheered, the harbor cleared,
 Merrily did we drop
 Below the kirk, below the hill,
 Below the light-house top.

7

“ The Sun came up upon the left,
Out of the sea came he !
And he shone bright, and on the right
Went down into the sea.

25 The Mariner
tells how the
ship sailed
southward
with a good
wind and fair
weather, till it
reached the
line.

8

“ Higher and higher every day,
Till over the mast at noon — ”
The Wedding-Guest here beat his breast,
For he heard the loud bassoon.

30

9

The bride hath paced into the hall,
Red as a rose is she ;
Nodding their heads before her goes
The merry minstrelsy.

35 The wedding-
guest heareth
the bridal
music; but the
Mariner con-
tinueth his
tale.

10

The Wedding-Guest he beat his breast,
Yet he can not choose but hear ;
And thus spake on that ancient man,
The bright-eyed Mariner.

40

11

The ship
drawn by a
storm toward
the south
pole.

“ And now the Storm-blast came, and he
Was tyrannous and strong :
He struck with his o’ertaking wings,
And chased us south along.

12

45 “ With sloping masts and dipping prow,
As who pursued with yell and blow
Still treads the shadow of his foe,
And forward bends his head,
The ship drove fast, loud roared the blast,
50 And southward aye we fled.

13

“ And now there came both mist and snow,
And it grew wondrous cold ;
And ice, mast-high, came floating by,
As green as emerald.

14

The land of
ice and of
fearful sounds,
where no
living thing
was to be
seen.

55 “ And through the drifts the snowy clifts
Did send a dismal sheen :
Nor shapes of men nor beasts we ken —
The ice was all between.

15

“The ice was here, the ice was there,
The ice was all around: [howled, 60
It cracked and growled, and roared and
Like noises in a swound!

16

“At length did cross an Albatross:
Thorough the fog it came;
As if it had been a Christian soul,
We hailed it in God’s name.

Till a great seabird called the Albatross came through the snow-fog, and was received with great joy and hospitality. 65

17

“It ate the food it ne’er had eat,
And round and round it flew.
The ice did split with a thunder-fit;
The helmsman steered us through! 70

18

“And a good south wind sprung up behind;
The Albatross did follow,
And every day, for food or play,
Came to the mariner’s hollo!

And lo! the Albatross proveth a bird of good omen, and followeth the ship as it returned northward through fog and floating ice.

19

75 "In mist or cloud, on mast or shroud,
 It perched for vespers nine; [white,
 Whiles all the night, through fog-smoke
 Glimmered the white moon-shine.

20

The ancient
 Mariner
 inhospitably
 killeth the
 pious bird of
 good omen.

"God save thee, ancient Mariner!
 80 From the fiends, that plague thee thus! —
 Why look'st thou so?" — "With my cross-
 I shot the Albatross." [bow

PART II

21

"The Sun now rose upon the right:
 Out of the sea came he,
 85 Still hid in mist, and on the left
 Went down into the sea.

22

"And the good south wind still blew be-
 But no sweet bird did follow, [hind
 Nor any day for food or play
 90 Came to the mariners' hollo!

23

“And I had done an hellish thing,
And it would work 'em woe :
For all averred, I had killed the bird
That made the breeze to blow.
'Ah wretch!' said they, 'the bird to slay, 95
That made the breeze to blow!' ”

His ship-
mates cry out
against the
ancient Mari-
ner, for killing
the bird of
good luck.

24

“Nor dim nor red, like God's own head,
The glorious Sun uprist :
Then all averred, I had killed the bird
That brought the fog and mist. 100
'Twas right,' said they, 'such birds to slay,
That bring the fog and mist.' ”

But when the
fog cleared
off, they jus-
tify the same,
and thus make
themselves
accomplices
in the crime.

25

“The fair breeze blew, the white foam flew,
The furrow followed free ;
We were the first that ever burst 105
Into that silent sea.

The fair breeze
continues; the
ship enters the
Pacific Ocean,
and sails north-
ward, even un-
til it reaches
the Line.

26

The ship hath
been suddenly
becalmed.

“ Down dropt the breeze, the sails dropt
 ’Twas sad as sad could be ; [down,
 And we did speak only to break
 110 The silence of the sea !

27

“ All in a hot and copper sky,
 The bloody Sun, at noon,
 Right up above the mast did stand,
 No bigger than the Moon.

28

115 “ Day after day, day after day,
 We stuck, nor breath nor motion ;
 As idle as a painted ship
 Upon a painted ocean.

29

And the Alba-
tross begins to
be avenged.

“ Water, water, everywhere,
 120 And all the boards did shrink ;
 Water, water, everywhere,
 Nor any drop to drink.

30

“The very deep did rot: O Christ!
That ever this should be!
Yea, slimy things did crawl with legs 125
Upon the slimy sea.

31

“About, about, in reel and rout
The death-fires danced at night;
The water, like a witch’s oils,
Burnt green, and blue, and white. 130

32

“And some in dreams assured were
Of the spirit that plagued us so;
Nine fathom deep he had followed us
From the land of mist and snow.

A spirit had followed them; one of the invisible inhabitants of this planet, neither departed souls nor angels; concerning whom the learned Jew, Josephus, and the Platonic Constantinopolitan, Michael Psellus, may be consulted. They are very numerous, and there is no climate or element without one or more.

33

“And every tongue, through utter drought, 135
Was withered at the root;
We could not speak, no more than if
We had been choked with soot.

The ship-
mates in their
sore distress
would fain
throw the
whole guilt on
the ancient
Mariner; in
sign whereof
they hang the
dead sea-bird
round his
neck.

“Ah! well-a-day! what evil looks
140 Had I from old and young!
Instead of the cross, the Albatross
About my neck was hung.”

PART III

35

“There passed a weary time. Each throat
Was parched, and glazed each eye.
145 A weary time! a weary time!
How glazed each weary eye,
When looking westward, I beheld
A something in the sky.

The ancient
Mariner be-
holdeth a
sign in the
element afar
off.

36

“At first it seemed a little speck,
150 And then it seemed a mist;
It moved and moved, and took at last
A certain shape, I wist.

37

“A speck, a mist, a shape, I wist.
And still it neared and neared:

As if it dodged a water-sprite, 155
It plunged and tacked and veered.

38

“With throats unslaked, with black lips
 baked,
We could not laugh nor wail ;
Through utter drought all dumb we stood !
I bit my arm, I sucked the blood, 160
And cried, A sail ! a sail !

At its nearer approach, it seemeth him to be a ship; and at a dear ransom he freeth his speech from the bonds of thirst.

39

“With throats unslaked, with black lips
 baked,
Agape they heard me call :
Gramercy ! they for joy did grin,
And all at once their breath drew in, 165
As they were drinking all.

A flash of joy;

40

“See ! see ! (I cried) she tacks no more !
Hither to work us weal ;
Without a breeze, without a tide,
She steadies with upright keel ! 170

And horror follows. For can it be a ship that comes onward without wind or tide ?

41

“The western wave was all a-flame.
 The day was well nigh done!
 Almost upon the western wave
 Rested the broad bright Sun;
 175 When that strange shape drove suddenly
 Betwixt us and the Sun.

42

[bars,

It seemeth
 him but the
 skeleton of a
 ship.

“And straight the Sun was flecked with
 (Heaven’s Mother send us grace!)
 As if through a dungeon-grate he peered
 180 With broad and burning face.

43

[loud)

“Alas! (thought I, and my heart beat
 How fast she nears and nears!
 Are those her sails that glance in the Sun,
 Like restless gossameres?

44

And its ribs
 are seen as
 bars on the
 face of the set-
 ting Sun.
 The spectre-
 woman and
 her death-
 mate, and no
 other on board
 the skeleton-
 ship.

185 “Are those her ribs through which the Sun
 Did peer, as through a grate?
 And is that Woman all her crew?
 Is that a Death? and are there two?
 Is Death that woman’s mate?

45

“ Her lips were red, her looks were free, 190 Like vessel,
Her locks were yellow as gold : like crew!
Her skin was as white as leprosy,
The Night-mare Life-in-Death was she,
Who thicks man’s blood with cold.

46

“ The naked hulk alongside came, 195 Death and
And the twain were casting dice ; Life-in-Death
‘ The game is done ! I’ve won ! I’ve won ! ’ have diced for
Quoth she, and whistles thrice. the ship’s
(the latter) crew, and she
winneeth the
ancient
Mariner.

47

“ The Sun’s rim dips ; the stars rush out : No twilight
At one stride comes the dark ; 200 within the
With far-heard whisper, o’er the sea, courts of the
Off shot the spectre-bark. Sun.

48

“ We listened and looked sideways up ! At the rising
Fear at my heart, as at a cup, of the Moon,
My life-blood seemed to sip ! 205
The stars were dim, and thick the night,
The steersman’s face by his lamp gleamed
white ;

From the sails the dew did drip —
 Till clomb above the eastern bar
 210 The horned Moon, with one bright star
 Within the nether tip.

49

One after
 another,

“ One after one, by the star-dogged Moon,
 Too quick for groan or sigh,
 Each turned his face with a ghastly pang,
 215 And cursed me with his eye.

50

His shipmates
 drop down
 dead ;

“ Four times fifty living men,
 (And I heard nor sigh nor groan)
 With heavy thump, a lifeless lump,
 They dropped down one by one.

51

But Life-in-
 Death begins
 her work on
 the ancient
 Mariner.

220 “ The souls did from their bodies fly, —
 They fled to bliss or woe !
 And every soul, it passed me by,
 Like the whizz of my cross-bow ! ”

PART IV

52

“I fear thee, ancient Mariner!
I fear thy skinny hand!
And thou art long, and lank, and brown,
As is the ribbed sea-sand.

225 The wedding-guest feareth that a spirit is talking to him;

53

“I fear thee and thy glittering eye,
And thy skinny hand, so brown.” —
“Fear not, fear not, thou Wedding-Guest! 230
This body dropt not down.

But the ancient Mariner assur-eth him of his bodily life, and proceedeth to relate his horrible penance.

54

“Alone, alone, all, all alone,
Alone on a wide wide sea!
And never a saint took pity on
My soul in agony. 235

55

“The many men, so beautiful!
And they all dead did lie:
And a thousand thousand slimy things
Lived on; and so did I.

He despiseth the creatures of the calm.

And envieth
that they
should live,
and so many
lie dead.

240 "I looked upon the rotting sea,
And drew my eyes away;
I looked upon the rotting deck,
And there the dead men lay.

57

"I looked to Heaven, and tried to pray;
245 But or ever a prayer had gusht,
A wicked whisper came, and made
My heart as dry as dust.

58

"I closed my lids, and kept them close,
And the balls like pulses beat;
250 For the sky and the sea, and the sea and the
sky
Lay like a load on my weary eye,
And the dead were at my feet.

59

But the curse
liveth for him
in the eye of
the dead men.

"The cold sweat melted from their limbs,
Nor rot nor reek did they:
255 The look with which they looked on me
Had never passed away.

60

“ An orphan’s curse would drag to Hell
 A spirit from on high ;
 But oh ! more horrible than that
 Is a curse in a dead man’s eye ! 260
 Seven days, seven nights, I saw that curse,
 And yet I could not die.

61

“ The moving Moon went up the sky,
 And nowhere did abide :
 Softly she was going up, 265
 And a star or two beside —

62

“ Her beams bemoaned the sultry main,
 Like April hoar-frost spread ;
 But where the ship’s huge shadow lay,
 The charmed water burnt alway 270
 A still and awful red.

63

“ Beyond the shadow of the ship,
 I watched the water-snakes :
 They moved in tracks of shining white,

In his loneliness and fixedness he yearneth towards the journeying Moon, and the stars that still sojourn, yet still move onward; and everywhere the blue sky belongs to them, and is their appointed rest, and their native country and their own natural homes, which they enter unannounced, as lords that are certainly expected, and yet there is a silent joy at their arrival.

By the light of the Moon he beholdeth God’s creatures of the great calm.

275 And when they reared, the elfish light
Fell off in hoary flakes.

64

“ Within the shadow of the ship,
I watched their rich attire :
Blue, glossy green, and velvet black,
280 They coiled and swam ; and every track
Was a flash of golden fire.

65

Their beauty
and their hap-
piness.

“ O happy living things ! no tongue
Their beauty might declare :
A spring of love gushed from my heart,
285 And I blessed them unaware :
Sure my kind saint took pity on me,
And I blessed them unaware.

He blesseth
them in his
heart.

66

The spell be-
gins to break.

“ The selfsame moment I could pray ;
And from my neck so free
290 The Albatross fell off and sank
Like lead into the sea.”

PART V

67

“Oh sleep! it is a gentle thing,
Beloved from pole to pole!
To Mary Queen the praise be given!
She sent the gentle sleep from Heaven, 295
That slid into my soul.

68

“The silly buckets on the deck,
That had so long remained,
I dreamt that they were filled with dew;
And when I awoke, it rained. 300

By grace of the
holy Mother,
the ancient
Mariner is re-
freshed with
rain.

69

“My lips were wet, my throat was cold,
My garments all were dank;
Sure I had drunken in my dreams,
And still my body drank.

70

305 “ I moved, and could not feel my limbs :
 I was so light — almost
 I thought that I had died in sleep,
 And was a blessed ghost.

71

He heareth
 strange sounds
 and seeth
 strange sights
 and commo-
 tions in the sky
 and the ele-
 ment.

“ And soon I heard a roaring wind :
 310 It did not come anear ;
 But with its sound it shook the sails,
 That were so thin and sere.

72

“ The upper air burst into life !
 And a hundred fire-flags sheen,
 315 To and fro they were hurried about !
 And to and fro, and in and out,
 The wan stars danced between.

73

“ And the coming wind did roar more loud,
 And the sails did sigh like sedge ; [cloud ;
 320 And the rain poured down from one black
 The Moon was at its edge.

74

“The thick black cloud was cleft, and still
The Moon was at its side :
Like waters shot from some high crag,
The lightning fell with never a jag, 325
A river steep and wide.

75

“The loud wind never reached the ship,
Yet now the ship moved on !
Beneath the lightning and the moon
The dead men gave a groan. 330

The bodies of
the ship's crew
are inspired,
and the ship
moves on ;

76

“They groaned, they stirred, they all uprose,
Nor spoke, nor moved their eyes ;
It had been strange, even in a dream,
To have seen those dead men rise.

77

“The helmsman steered, the ship moved on ; 335
Yet never a breeze up blew ;
The mariners all 'gan work the ropes,
Where they were wont to do ;
They raised their limbs like lifeless tools —
We were a ghastly crew. 340

78

“The body of my brother’s son
 Stood by me, knee to knee:
 The body and I pulled at one rope,
 But he said nought to me.”

79

But not by the
 souls of the
 men, nor by
 demons of
 the earth or
 middle air, but
 by a blessed
 troop of an-
 gelic spirits,
 sent down by
 the invocation
 of the guardian
 saint.

345 “I fear thee, ancient Mariner!”
 “Be calm, thou Wedding-Guest!
 ’Twas not those souls that fled in pain,
 Which to their corpses came again,
 But a troop of spirits blest:

80

350 “For when it dawned — they dropped their
 arms,
 And clustered round the mast; [mouths,
 Sweet sounds rose slowly through their
 And from their bodies passed.

81

“Around, around, flew each sweet sound,
 355 Then darted to the Sun;
 Slowly the sounds came back again,
 Now mixed, now one by one.

82

“Sometimes a-dropping from the sky
I heard the sky-lark sing ;
Sometimes all little birds that are, 360
How they seemed to fill the sea and air
With their sweet jargoning !

83

“And now ’twas like all instruments,
Now like a lonely flute ;
And now it is an angel’s song, 365
That makes the heavens be mute.

84

“It ceased ; yet still the sails made on
A pleasant noise till noon,
A noise like of a hidden brook
In the leafy month of June, 370
That to the sleeping woods all night
Singeth a quiet tune.

85

“Till noon we quietly sailed on,
Yet never a breeze did breathe :
Slowly and smoothly went the ship, 375
Moved onward from beneath.

The lonesome
spirit from the
south pole car-
ries on the ship
as far as the
line, in obedi-
ence to the an-
gelic troop,
but still requir-
eth vengeance.

“Under the keel nine fathom deep,
From the land of mist and snow,
The spirit slid: and it was he
380 That made the ship to go.
The sails at noon left off their tune,
And the ship stood still also.

87

“The Sun, right up above the mast,
Had fixed her to the ocean:
385 But in a minute she ’gan stir,
With a short uneasy motion —
Backwards and forwards half her length
With a short uneasy motion.

88

“Then like a pawing horse let go,
390 She made a sudden bound:
It flung the blood into my head,
And I fell down in a swoond.

89

“How long in that same fit I lay,
I have not to declare ;
But ere my living life returned,
I heard and in my soul discerned
Two voices in the air.

The Polar Spirit's fellow demons, the invisible inhabitants of the element, take part in his wrong; and two of them relate, one to the other, that penance long and heavy for the ancient Mariner hath been accorded to the Polar Spirit, who returneth southward.

395

90

“‘Is it he?’ quoth one, ‘Is this the man?
By him who died on cross,
With his cruel bow he laid full low
The harmless Albatross.

400

91

“‘The spirit who bideth by himself
In the land of mist and snow,
He loved the bird that loved the man
Who shot him with his bow.’

405

92

“The other was a softer voice,
As soft as honey-dew :
Quoth he, ‘The man hath penance done,
And penance more will do.’”

PART VI

FIRST VOICE

93

410 “ ‘ But tell me, tell me ! speak again,
Thy soft response renewing —
What makes that ship drive on so fast ?
What is the Ocean doing ? ’

94

SECOND VOICE

“ ‘ Still as a slave before his lord,
415 The Ocean hath no blast ;
His great bright eye most silently
Up to the Moon is cast —

95

“ ‘ If he may know which way to go ;
For she guides him smooth or grim.
420 See, brother, see ! how graciously
She looketh down on him. ’ ”

96

FIRST VOICE

“ ‘ But why drives on that ship so fast,
Without or wave or wind ? ’

The Mariner
hath been cast
into a trance ;
for the angelic
power causeth
the vessel to
drive north-
ward faster
than human
life could
endure.

SECOND VOICE

“ ‘ The air is cut away before,
And closes from behind.

425

97

“ ‘ Fly, brother, fly ! more high, more high !
Or we shall be belated :
For slow and slow that ship will go,
When the Mariner’s trance is abated.’

98

“ I woke, and we were sailing on
As in a gentle weather :
’Twas night, calm night, the Moon was high ;
The dead men stood together.

430

The supernat-
ural motion is
retarded ; the
Mariner
awakes, and
his penance
begins anew.

99

“ All stood together on the deck,
For a charnel-dungeon fitter :
All fixed on me their stony eyes,
That in the Moon did glitter.

435

100

“The pang, the curse, with which they died,
 Had never passed away :
 440 I could not draw my eyes from theirs,
 Nor turn them up to pray.

101

“And now this spell was snapt : once more
 I viewed the ocean green,
 And looked far forth, yet little saw
 445 Of what had else been seen —

102

“Like one, that on a lonesome road
 Doth walk in fear and dread,
 And having once turned round walks on,
 And turns no more his head ;
 450 Because he knows, a frightful fiend
 Doth close behind him tread.

103

“But soon there breathed a wind on me,
 Nor sound nor motion made :
 Its path was not upon the sea,
 455 In ripple or in shade.

The curse is
 finally expi-
 ated.

104

“It raised my hair, it fanned my cheek
Like a meadow-gale of spring —
It mingled strangely with my fears,
Yet it felt like a welcoming.

105

“Swiftly, swiftly flew the ship,
Yet she sailed softly too:
Sweetly, sweetly blew the breeze —
On me alone it blew.

460

106

“Oh! dream of joy! is this indeed
The light-house top I see?
Is this the hill? is this the kirk?
Is this mine own countree?

465

And the an-
cient Mariner
beholdeth his
native country.

107

“We drifted o’er the harbor-bar,
And I with sobs did pray —
O let me be awake, my God!
Or let me sleep alway.

470

108

“ The harbor-oay was clear as glass,
 So smoothly it was strewn !
 And on the bay the moonlight lay,
 475 And the shadow of the moon.

109

“ The rock shone bright, the kirk no less,
 That stands above the rock :
 The moonlight steeped in silentness
 The steady weathercock.

110

480 “ And the bay was white with silent light,
 Till rising from the same,
 Full many shapes, that shadows were,
 In crimson colors came.

The angelic
 spirits leave
 the dead
 bodies,

111

And appear
 in their own
 forms of light.

“ A little distance from the prow
 485 Those crimson shadows were :
 I turned my eyes upon the deck —
 Oh, Christ ! what saw I there !

112

“ Each corse lay flat, lifeless and flat,
And, by the holy rood !
A man all light, a seraph-man, 490
On every corse there stood.

113

“ This seraph-band, each waved his hand :
It was a heavenly sight !
They stood as signals to the land,
Each one a lovely light ; 495

114

“ This seraph-band, each waved his hand :
No voice did they impart —
No voice ; but oh ! the silence sank
Like music on my heart.

115

“ But soon I heard the dash of oars, 500
I heard the Pilot’s cheer ;
My head was turned perforce away,
And I saw a boat appear.

116

“The Pilot and the Pilot’s boy,
 505 I heard them coming fast:
 Dear Lord in Heaven! it was a joy
 The dead men could not blast.

117

“I saw a third — I heard his voice:
 It is the Hermit good!
 510 He singeth loud his godly hymns
 That he makes in the wood.
 He’ll shrieve my soul, he’ll wash away
 The Albatross’s blood.”

PART VII

118

“This Hermit good lives in that wood
 515 Which slopes down to the sea.
 How loudly his sweet voice he rears!
 He loves to talk with mariners
 That come from a far countree.

119

“ He kneels at morn, and noon, and eve —
He hath a cushion plump : 520
It is the moss that wholly hides
The rotted old oak-stump.

120

“ The skiff-boat neared : I heard them talk,
‘ Why, this is strange, I trow !
Where are those lights so many and fair, 525
That signal made but now ? ’

121

“ ‘ Strange, by my faith ! ’ the Hermit said —
‘ And they answered not our cheer !
The planks looked warped ! and see those saïls,
How thin they are and sere ! 530
I never saw aught like to them,
Unless perchance it were

Approacheth
the ship with
wonder.

122

“ ‘ Brown skeletons of leaves that lag
My forest-brook along ;
When the ivy-tod is heavy with snow, 535
And the owlet whoops to the wolf below,
That eats the she-wolf’s young.’

123

“Dear Lord! it hath a fiendish look —
 (The Pilot made reply)
 540 I am a-feared’ — ‘Push on, push on!’
 Said the Hermit cheerily.

124

“The boat came closer to the ship,
 But I nor spake nor stirred;
 The boat came close beneath the ship,
 545 And straight a sound was heard.

125

The ship sud-
 denly sinketh.

“Under the water it rumbled on,
 Still louder and more dread:
 It reached the ship, it split the bay;
 The ship went down like lead.

126

The ancient
 Mariner is
 saved in the
 Pilot’s boat.

550 “Stunned by the loud and dreadful sound,
 Which sky and ocean smote,
 Like one that hath been seven days drowned
 My body lay afloat;
 But swift as dreams, myself I found
 555 Within the Pilot’s boat.

127

“ Upon the whirl, where sank the ship,
The boat spun round and round ;
And all was still, save that the hill
Was telling of the sound.

128

“ I moved my lips — the Pilot shrieked 560
And fell down in a fit ;
The holy Hermit raised his eyes,
And prayed where he did sit.

129

“ I took the oars : the Pilot’s boy,
Who now doth crazy go, 565
Laughed loud and long, and all the while
His eyes went to and fro.
‘ Ha ! ha ! ’ quoth he, ‘ full plain I see,
The Devil knows how to row.’

130

“ And now, all in my own countree, 570
I stood on the firm land !
The Hermit stepped forth from the boat,
And scarcely he could stand.

The ancient
Mariner
earnestly en-
treateth the
Hermit to
shrieve him;
and the pen-
ance of life
falls on him.

131

“ ‘ O shrieve me, shrieve me, holy man ! ’
575 The Hermit crossed his brow.
‘ Say quick, ’ quoth he, ‘ I bid thee say —
What manner of man art thou ? ’

132

“ Forthwith this frame of mine was wrenched
With a woeful agony,
580 Which forced me to begin my tale ;
And then it left me free.

133

And ever and
anon through-
out his future
life an agony
constraineth
him to travel
from land to
land,

“ Since then, at an uncertain hour,
That agony returns :
And till my ghastly tale is told,
585 This heart within me burns.

134

“ I pass, like night, from land to land ;
I have strange power of speech ;
That moment that his face I see,
I know the man that must hear me :
590 To him my tale I teach.

135

“What loud uproar bursts from that door!
The wedding-guests are there:
But in the garden-bower the bride
And bride-maids singing are:
And hark the little vesper-bell, 595
Which biddeth me to prayer!

136

“O Wedding-Guest! this soul hath been
Alone on a wide wide sea:
So lonely ’twas, that God himself
Scarce seemed there to be. 600

137

“O sweeter than the marriage-feast,
’Tis sweeter far to me,
To walk together to the kirk
With a goodly company! —

138

“To walk together to the kirk, 605
And all together pray,
While each to his great Father bends,
Old men, and babes, and loving friends,
And youths and maidens gay!

And to teach,
by his own
example, love
and reverence
to all things
that God made
and loveth.

610 "Farewell, farewell! but this I tell
To thee, thou Wedding-Guest!
He prayeth well, who loveth well
Both man and bird and beast.

140

"He prayeth best, who loveth best
615 All things both great and small;
For the dear God who loveth us,
He made and loveth all."

141

The Mariner, whose eye is bright,
Whose beard with age is hoar,
620 Is gone: and now the Wedding-Guest
Turned from the bridegroom's door.

142

He went like one that hath been stunned,
And is of sense forlorn:
A sadder and a wiser man,
625 He rose the morrow morn.

NOTES

RIME:

Etymologically correct ; the commoner form, *rhyme*, introduced in the sixteenth century, comes of the mistaken association of *rime* with *rhythm*, but Coleridge affects the archaic in using *rime*, as in the other words of the title of the version of 1798, as *Ancyent Marinere*.

MOTTO:

“I find it easy to believe that in the universe the visible beings are outnumbered by the invisible. But who shall tell us the nature common to these, their rank, their kindreds, the signs by which they are distinguished, the gifts in which they excel? What is their task? Where is their abode? Close to full knowledge of these wonders, the mind of man has ever circled, nor ever attained the centre. Meanwhile, I trust, it will give us profit to contemplate in the mind, as in a picture, the image of this other world, greater than ours and better, lest our minds, becoming wont to the petty details of daily life, be narrowed overmuch, and sink to paltry thoughts. We must, meanwhile, keep watch, with vigilance, toward truth, preserving temperance of judgment, that we distinguish things certain from things uncertain, day from night.”

ARGUMENT of the first version (1798):

How a Ship having passed the Line was driven by Storms to the cold Country towards the South Pole ; and how from thence she made her course to the Tropical Latitude of the Great Pacific Ocean ; and of the strange things that befell ; and in what manner the Ancyent Marinere came back to his own Country.

TITLE and ARGUMENT of the second edition (1800):

The Ancient Mariner, A Poet's Reverie

How a Ship having first sailed to the Equator, was driven by Storms, to the cold Country towards the South Pole ; how the Ancient Mariner, cruelly, and in contempt of the laws of hospitality, killed a Sea-bird ; and how he was followed by many strange Judgements ; and in what manner he came back to his own Country.

PART I

Stanza 1. It is an ancient Mariner. This introduction is a fine condensation of the type of "Once upon a time there was a Prince," which we have often heard when taken on excursions into fairy-land. The time is thus made indefinite, to allow freedom in the suggestion of the mysterious. The Mariner is too old to be remembered by his individual name, so the poet is without the trammels of historical tradition. He is old enough to be called "ancient," so the "Spirit of Eld" has privileges in the story.

1. long gray beard — glittering eye ; **3.** skinny hand. Chief outward marks of the man that is to tell a strange story.

Note his strange actions: he stops one, holds him, first with his hand and then with his eye.

2. **next of kin.** How near is "next"? Brother? Strongest reason why this guest must not be stopped. All things are ready, and he almost there—"May'st hear the merry din."

3. **graybeard loon!** "Crazy as a loon;" in response to his offering to detain the guest with his skinny hand.

3. **Eftsoons.** An archaism meaning *quickly*.

With the "Hold off! unhand me!" of the wedding-guest, the Mariner's hand dropt, but the other stood still. Under the spell of the glittering eye, he listened like a three years' child.

4, ll. 15, 16. Wordsworth's.

5. **The bright-eyed Mariner.** The wedding-guest seated on a stone and listening like a child, the Mariner became "bright-eyed," and fluent as the movement of stanza 6.

6-8, ll. 21-30. Study this part of the voyage in all that is suggested by the picturesque words, and by the rhythm of the verse.

6 and 9. Contrast these stanzas as to sentiment and movement, and imagine the storm in the soul of the wedding-guest.

11. In the version of 1798:—

"Listen, Stranger! Storm and Wind,
A Wind and Tempest strong!
For days and weeks it play'd us freaks—
Like Chaff we drove along."

11-12. **The Chase.** The Storm-blast is the pursuer. Note how close he follows, and how fast the ship moves. (l. 47.)

13-15. A description of the land of ice and snow.

14. drifts. Driftings.

14. cliffs. Cliffs.

15. swoond. An onomatopoetic word, meaning *swoon*, and suggesting the dire extremity of vessel and company.

16-20. The Albatross.

16. Thorough. Through.

17, l. 67. It ate the food it ne'er had eat. In the version of 1798 :—

“The Mariners gave it biscuit-worms.”

What association of ideas made the Albatross a bird of good omen?

19. vespers nine. There is a connection of thought between this expression and “the pious bird” of the marginal gloss to stanza **20**.

20. Note the kind and depth of emotion on the part of the Mariner, also on the part of the wedding-guest.

20. cross-bow. Consistent with the spirit of the old that dominates the poem.

Review, in all its variety, as regards the reader, the course of emotion evoked by the story of the voyage thus far.

PART II

How long had the ship been sailing north before the Albatross was killed? **18** and **19**.

21-24. Note that gloss says the shipmates make themselves accomplices in the crime.

24. like God's own head. Is not Matthew xvii. 2 suggested? "And was transfigured before them: and his face did shine as the sun, and his raiment was white as the light."

21-25. Follow the vessel in wind and weather till it reaches the Line.

25-31. that silent sea. Observe how the movement of the verse in stanza **24** suggests the speed of the vessel, and how, in explicit terms, it is confirmed in the first two lines of stanza **25**. How significant is "burst"! Contrast in every imaginable particular the phenomena of this silent sea with that of the region of mist and snow.

31. death-fires. Phosphoric lights. Possibly St. Elmo's fires, the electrical balls of light that play about the masts and rigging of a ship; called by sailors "corposants."

32 (gloss). Apropos, in *The Destiny of Nations*, Coleridge philosophizes:—

" But properties are God: the naked mass
 (If mass there be, fantastic guess or ghost)
 Acts only by its inactivity.
 Here we pause humbly. Others boldlier think
 That as one body seems the aggregate
 Of atoms numberless, each organized;
 So by a strange and dim similitude
 Infinite myriads of self-conscious minds
 Are one all-conscious Spirit, which informs
 With absolute ubiquity of thought
 (His one eternal self-affirming act!)
 All his involved Monads, that yet seem
 With various province and apt agency
 Each to pursue its own self-centering end.

Some nurse the infant diamond in the mine;
 Some roll the genial juices through the oak;
 Some drive the mutinous clouds to clash in air,
 And rushing on the storm with whirlwind speed,
 Yoke the red lightnings to their volleying car.
 Thus these pursue their never-varying course,
 No eddy in their stream. Others, more wild,
 With complex interests weaving human fates,
 Duteous or proud, alike obedient all,
 Evolve the process of eternal good."

32 (gloss), the learned Jew. "The influence which the *Timæus* (of Plato) has exercised upon posterity is partly due to a misunderstanding. In the supposed depths of this dialogue the Neo-Platonists found hidden meanings and connections with the Jewish and Christian Scriptures, and out of them they elicited doctrines quite at variance with the spirit of Plato. Believing that he was inspired by the Holy Ghost, or had received his wisdom from Moses, they seemed to find in his writings the Christian Trinity, the Word, the Church, the Creation of the world in a Jewish sense, as they really found the personality of God or mind, and the immortality of the soul." — From JOWETT'S Introduction to the *Timæus*.

It is said of a learned Jew, the head of this "mystical rationalism," that "in language like that which Plato uses in the *Timæus*, he describes how God, an invisible but ever-present Essence, created and ruled the world by means of ministering spirits or potencies, of whom the Word is highest, and second only to Himself."

32 (gloss). Michael Psellus, called the "Prince of Philosophers," was born at Constantinople in 1020. He wrote *Dialogue on Operations of Demons*. See *Encyclopædia Britannica*.

23-24, 32-34. Study the mental and physical condition of the ancient Mariner and his shipmates.

PART III

35. See the effect of repetition. Think of the condition suggested by "glazed eye."

35-47. The Spectre Ship. Note how "a something" becomes "a little speck," then "a shape," and at last "a sail."

37. tacked. Not here used in its nautical sense, but merely to express wayward motion.

38. What ransom did he pay to free his speech to cry "A sail!"? Study the effect upon the crew, and how it was expressed.

39. Gramercy. For *grand merci*, great thanks.

39. for joy did grin. They could not express their joy in a *smile*.

"I took the thought of 'grinning for joy,' from my companion's [Berdmore of Jesus College, Cambridge] remark to me, when we had climbed to the top of Plinlimmon, and were nearly dead with thirst. We could not speak from the constriction, till we found a little puddle under a stone. He said to me: 'You grinned like an idiot!' He had done the same." — COLERIDGE, *Table-Talk*.

40. she tacks no more! What apprehensions are aroused? It becomes a "strange shape," a skeleton ship, a "naked hulk alongside."

44. her crew. The spectre-woman of stanza 45 and her mate. It is asked in the version of 1798:—

“ And are these two all, all the crew,
That woman and her fleshless Pheere? ”

He is then described: —

“ His bones were black with many a crack,
All black and bare, I ween;
Jet-black and bare, save where with rust
Of mouldy damp and charnel crust
They're patch'd with purple and green. ”

When the game is done and she whistles, this same version says further of him: —

“ A gust of wind sterte up behind
And whistled thro' his bones;
Thro' the holes of his eyes and the hole of his mouth
Half-whistles and half-groans. ”

47 (gloss). courts of the Sun. The tropics.

47. the stars rush out: At one stride comes the dark.
Picture the sublime spectacle.

48. What in stanza **47** suggests “ we listened ”? Note the significance of “ looked sideways up. ” What made the stars dim? Why did he fear?

“ It is a common superstition among sailors that something is going to happen when stars dog the moon. ” — COLERIDGE.

48. clomb. An archaism for *climbed*.

48. above the eastern bar. It is consistent with the facts of stanza **47** to call the horizon the “ bar. ”

48. Within the nether tip. 1798:—

“ Almost atween the tips. ”

49-51. The Curse. Think of the suggestions in “ heavy thump, ” “ lifeless lump. ” One can associate the ideas in

“the whizz of my cross-bow” with those of “far-heard whisper” as “off shot the spectre-bark” (stanza 47).

So ended Part I and Part II with something fateful to the Ancient Mariner.

PART IV

52. Compare the wedding-guest's mental state with that in stanza 20. Do the events of the story warrant the Mariner's fear? See gloss. Note additional characteristics of outward appearance.

52. As is the ribbed sea-sand. The wedding-guest, possessed of the thought that he is talking to a spirit, very suggestively conceives his outward appearance to be like the figures of the sea-sand at low tide.

52. ll. 226-227. Wordsworth's.

54-56. The Penance. Note the utter desolation of loneliness.

54. And never a saint took pity on. 1798:—

“And Christ would take no pity on.”

55. And a thousand thousand slimy things. 1798:—

“And a million million slimy things.”

56. I looked upon the rotting deck. 1798:—

“I look'd upon the eldritch deck.”

57. or. Archaic for *before*.

57. *gusht* — *dust*. The suggestions in the words “whisper” and “dry” before we get to “dust” atone for the imperfect rhyme.

58. Study the marvellous agreement of expression with sentiment.

60. Seven days, seven nights, I saw that curse. Read stanzas 55-60 for the picture as a whole.

61-65. His mind diverted from the dead men, there comes the sentiment of "happy living things." Contrast in detail the progress of emotion in these stanzas with that in stanzas 54-60.

62. Like April hoar-frost spread. 1798 :—

"Like morning frosts yspread,"

63. the elfish light — hoary flakes. Note the sense of the mysterious suggested.

66. The spell broken.

PART V

67-74. Sleep, dreaming, awaking.

67. To Mary Queen. Why does the holy Mother bless him? See line 286.

68. silly buckets. Empty.

70. Note waking sensations.

71. the sails — so thin and sere. See line 184.

72. Compare with stanzas 63, 64.

73-74. The wind, rain, and lightning.

75-78. The bodies of the crew reanimated.

78. 1798, two lines more :—

"And I quak'd to think of my own voice
How frightful it would be!"

79. Reason of the wedding-guest's fear?

79. a troop of spirits blest. Read stanzas 80-84, and contrast therewith stanza 51.

80-81. Sweet sounds — darted to the Sun. Read Robert Browning's *Abt Vogler* for description of musical effects.

82. From Coleridge's *Answer to a Child's Question* :—

“Do you ask what the birds say ?

‘I love, and I love,’ almost all the birds say
From sunrise to star-rise, so gladsome are they !
But the lark is so brimful of gladness and love,
The green fields below him, the blue sky above,
That he sings, and he sings ; and forever sings he —
‘I love my Love, and my Love loves me!’”

84. The tune of the sails. Read stanzas **84-86**. Compare with stanza **75**. Why did it stop at noon? See gloss to stanza **86**.

84-85. Between these stanzas occur four stanzas in the version of 1798 :—

“Listen, O listen, thou Wedding-guest!
‘Marinere! thou hast thy will:
For that, which comes out of thine eye, doth make
My body and soul to be still.’

‘Never sadder tale was told
To a man of woman born;
Sadder and wiser thou wedding-guest!
Thou’lt rise tomorrow morn.

‘Never sadder tale was heard
By a man of woman born:
The Mariners all return’d to work
As silent as beforene.

'The Mariners all 'gan pull the ropes,
 But look at me they n'old:
 Thought I, I am as thin as air—
 They cannot me behold.' ”

87-88. Observe how smoothly and quietly the ship sailed on (stanza **85**) till at noon it stood still, “fixed to the ocean,” and how from this stock-still position it was let go like a pawing horse, causing the Mariner to fall in a swoon.

94. This note from Campbell's edition is interesting: “Borrowed half from Coleridge's own *Osorio*, —

‘O woman!
 I have stood silent like a slave before thee;’

and half from Sir John Davies, —

‘For lo the *sea* that fleets about the land,
 And like a girdle clips her solid waist,
 Music and measure both doth understand:
 For his great crystal eye is always cast
 Up to the moon, and on her fixed fast.’ ”

89-97. The Mariner's Trance. See gloss. Note the animus of the two voices, respectively, towards “the man.”

PART VI

93. Why drives on the ship? What is the Ocean doing? Compare the explanation in the gloss with that of the Second Voice.

98-100. See line 409. And penance more will do.

101. And now this spell was snapt.

101-107. Study the drift and variety of sensations.

106. countree. Archaic for *country*.

108-109. The harbor-bay — the kirk.

Between these two stanzas the edition of 1798 has five stanzas:—

“ The moonlight bay was white all o’er,
Till rising from the same,
Full many shapes, that shadows were,
Like as of torches came.

A little distance from the prow
Those dark-red shadows were ;
But soon I saw that my own flesh
Was red as in a glare.

I turn’d my head in fear and dread,
And by the holy rood,
The bodies had advanc’d, and now
Before the mast they stood.

They lifted up their stiff right arms,
They held them strait and tight ;
And each right-arm burnt like a torch,
A torch that’s borne upright.
Their stony eye-balls glitter’d on
In the red and smoky light.

I pray’d and turn’d my head away
Forth looking as before.
There was no breeze upon the bay,
No wave against the shore.”

110-111. Those crimson shadows. Reflections of the seraph-band in the water.

112-114. This seraph-band.

112. rood. Cross.

115-116. the Pilot. — After stanza 115, in the version of 1798, comes this stanza:—

“ Then vanish'd all the lovely lights;
 The bodies rose anew:
 With silent pace, each to his place,
 Came back the ghastly crew.
 The wind, that shade nor motion made,
 On me alone it blew.”

117-119. the Hermit. Note his Chapel appointments.

117. shrieve. Shrive.

PART VII

120. skiff-boat. What does *boat* add ?

121-122, ll. 530-537. those sails. See stanza 71.

122. ivy-tod. Ivy-plant. .

122. owlet. There must be some association in thought with *ivy-tod* through *ivy-owl*, which is the European tawny owl.

125. The ship went down like lead. When the Albatross “fell off” from the Mariner’s neck, it “sank like lead into the sea.”

126. Mariner stunned by the dreadful sound.

127. Upon the whirl — the echoes. Study the scene with accompanying sounds.

128-131. Effect of regaining consciousness upon the Pilot, the Pilot’s boy, and the Hermit.

132-134. What manner of man art thou ?

134. To him my tale I teach. What did he *teach*? Stanzas **136-140.** Effect on the wedding-guest? Stanzas **141-142.**

135. Note the recurrence to the wedding-feast, binding the end of the poem back to the beginning, thus satisfying the artistic sense of unity.

142. of sense forlorn. Deprived of sensibility, or "stunned."

Review the poem with reference to the changing states of mind of the wedding-guest.

Study the course of the mental changes in the Mariner as the narrator of the story.

Re-read the poem, observing the revelling of your own imagination in the rich suggestions of word and phrase and rhythm and rhyme.



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