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*Lyman H. Water*

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ART. I.—1. *The Poetical Works of S. T. Coleridge.* Boston. Hilliard, Gray & Co. 1835.

2. *Aids to 'Reflection* by S. T. Coleridge, with a preliminary essay, and additional notes, by James Marsh, President of the University of Vermont. Burlington: Chauncey Goodrich. 1829.

3. *The Friend: a series of essays to aid in the formation of fixed principles in politics, morals, and religion, with literary amusements interspersed.* By S. T. Coleridge, Esq. Burlington: Chauncey Goodrich. 1831.

4. *The Statesman's Manual, or the Bible the best guide to political skill and foresight:* by S. T. Coleridge, Esq. Burlington: Chauncey Goodrich. 1832.

5. *Biographia Literaria; or biographical sketches of my literary life and opinions.* By S. T. Coleridge. Two volumes in one. New York: Leavitt, Lord, & Co. 1843.

6. *On the Constitution of the Church and State according to the idea of each,* by S. T. Coleridge, Esq., R. A., R. S. L. Second edition. London. Hurst, Ebance, & Co. 1830.

7. *Specimens of the Table Talk of the late Samuel Taylor Coleridge.* In two volumes. New York: Harper & Brothers. 1835.

8. *The Literary Remains of Samuel Taylor Coleridge*, collected and edited by Henry Nelson Coleridge, Esq., M. A., in four volumes. London: William Pickering. 1836.
9. *The Life of Samuel Taylor Coleridge*, by James Gillman. Vol. I. London: William Pickering. 1838.
10. *Reminiscences of Samuel Taylor Coleridge and Robert Southey*. By Joseph Cottle. New York: Wiley & Putnam. 1847.

OF course our readers will not expect in any single article a critical review of this formidable catalogue of books. Nor is it our purpose to give a detailed and complete analysis of any single work in the list. The man who was the author of most of them, and whose life and character are delineated in the residue, was undeniably one of the most remarkable men of his time, whatever opinion may be formed of his merits or demerits. Nor can any one at all acquainted with the present state of literature, metaphysics or theology in Great Britain and especially in this country, doubt that he has left his impress upon them, and that his writings are now exerting, and are destined yet to exert a strong moulding influence upon many of the younger class of educated men among us. Indeed his biographer, Dr. Gillman observes (p. 165.) "The Western world seems to have better appreciated the works of Coleridge, than most of his countrymen: in some parts of America, his writings are understood and highly valued." And his admiring and eloquent posthumous editor, exaggerates, only by putting a partial in the form of a general truth, when he says that the writings of his master have been "melted into the very heart of the rising literature of England and America."

What the character is of this influence thus wide, powerful and permanent upon so considerable a portion of these educated and intellectual classes, who in the end, shape and determine the prevailing opinions in the various ranks of society,—and for these almost exclusively Coleridge wrote—is still sharply contested. Many have been so charmed by the originality, the depth, the vigour, the density, the mingled truth, beauty and magnificence of some of his finer passages, that they are spell-bound, wholly overmastered and enslaved by him. They are perfectly blind to the crudities and errors, by which his works are so seriously deformed. They think of him only to admire

and extol him. They indignantly resent all criticisms which take exceptions even to his grossest faults, and most palpable heresies. They revere him as a sort of oracle, whose all-penetrant mind saw through the universe, into the inmost penetralia of truth, and gave forth not merely the corruscations of genius, but the sure light of inspiration. And hence, no matter how absurd or preposterous any of his statements may be on their face, such will believe and ardently contend, that the absurdity is only seeming to his readers on account of their short-sightedness, and that, if they did but possess the author's "vision and faculty divine," they would see it to be truth sublimed into its purest essence, its most ideal and supersensuous form.

An equal if not larger number have not only justly recoiled from this blind and perilous idolatry, but have also suffered themselves to be repelled to the contrary extreme, which if less perilous, is scarcely less blind. Affrighted by the shadowy mysticism, the abysmal transcendentalism, the occasional leaven now of rationalism, now of ritualism, and other unfortunate idiosyncracies, with which his writings are more or less disfigured, they put them all under the law of absolute, indiscriminate, unrelenting reprobation. They pronounce them not only unprofitable but dangerous. They condemn the temperate, discriminating, independent mastery of his writings, as well as the being mastered by them. The only course of safety, they think, lies in total abstinence. Putting him in the same category with Hegel, Strauss *et id genus omne*, their motto is, *Procul, O procul, este profani*.

While between these two extremes, there are all shades of thinking and feeling, we also will undertake to show our opinion. On the one hand, we call no man, and least of all Coleridge, master. On the other hand, we believe that the cause of truth and religion will be best promoted by giving to all their due, and especially by a candid appreciation of the real merits of any author, who is taking strong hold of the minds of any worthy and respectable class of men. If that blind admiration of him, which swallows and pretends and honestly strives, to digest, the shell as well as the kernel, ought to be repudiated as most foolish and mischievous; on the other hand, nothing so tends to kindle and inflame it, as that equally blind prejudice and denunciation, which refusing to see and acknowledge his eminent, conspicuous and undeniable excellencies, declare all his works no better than

dross, because so much of it envelops or encrusts the silver and gold and precious gems, which every where show themselves in strange profusion and brilliancy. The feeling that such a wrong has been done to a favourite author, to whom they are conscious of being indebted not only for refined pleasure, but for high and lasting benefits to their intellectual being, rouses all their generous sentiments in his defence. It creates a revulsion of feeling, which so far from acquiescing in the injustice, disposes them, if possible, to repair it, not merely by mantling and extenuating obvious faults and errors, but by metamorphosing them into excellencies. A fair and impartial estimate then of an author whose influence is so decidedly felt in the great departments of literature, mental and moral philosophy and religion, is highly desirable. This is what we propose to attempt. For this purpose we have placed at the head of our article his published works, and such memoirs of him as have hitherto appeared, not because we design in form to review any of them, but because we may see cause to quote from them all, in illustration of our views. In what light then are we to regard Coleridge as a genius, thinker, scholar, poet, critic, metaphysician, moralist and theologian, who has won for himself a name as extensive, and probably as enduring as English literature, and who has shown, in an extraordinary degree the power of impregnating that literature with the living gems shot forth from his own mind?

In order to an intelligent answer to this question, and to a just conception of his peculiarities, a brief view of his peculiar early training and developments, and subsequent circumstances and habits, is indispensable. This will be mostly derived from Dr. Gillman's memoir.

Samuel Taylor Coleridge was born at Ottery, England, October 21st, 1772. His father was vicar of the parish, and head master of the King's School, a man of most guileless character, exemplary habits, distinguished alike for his great learning, and his want of worldly tact and common sense. Samuel was the youngest of ten children, all by his second wife, who, though unrefined, had a prudence and energy in domestic concern, which in a good degree compensated for her husband's deficiency in this respect. When the son was nearly seven years old, his father died, and according to a previous arrangement, he was transferred to the guardianship of a friend, who procured for him

admission to the school of Christ's Hospital, the preceptor of which was Rev. James Bowyer, a most admirable instructor, but a most savage and merciless disciplinarian. Previous to this, however, he had been, owing to a freak in the nurse, kept from the society of other children, so that he says of himself, "I was huffed away from the enjoyments of muscular activity, from play to take refuge at my mother's side, on my little stool to read my little book, and to listen to the talk of my elders." . . . "Alas! I had all the simplicity, all the docility of the little child, but none of the child's habits. I never thought as a child, never had the language of a child." On entering the school, he represents himself as being "depressed, moping, friendless, poor, orphan, half-starved," for the food at this establishment was miserably scanty and coarse. Delicate and suffering from disease, the barbarous regimen of this institution must have been unfriendly to his health, and the culture of the genial affections and sympathies. Hence all circumstances conspired with his previous training at home, to lead him to find his recreation not so much in boyish sports, as in gratifying his naturally voracious appetite for books. With a full supply of these he was furnished in a singular way. A gentleman meeting him in the street was so struck by his conversation, that he procured for him free use of a circulating library. "From eight to fourteen," says he, "I was a playless day-dreamer, a *belluo librorum*." Whatever may have been the effect of these things on his intellect, it is obvious how they tended to implant and aggravate those maladies in a constitution naturally morbid, which so greatly embittered his life, and deprived him of that blessing to all scholars so invaluable, of the *mens sana in sano corpore*. This evil was at this period also greatly increased by imprudence in bathing, almost the only recreation out of doors in which he indulged.

Middleton, who afterwards became known to fame, being in a higher department of the school, had often observed Coleridge absorbed with books during play-hours. Inquiring of him on one occasion what he was reading, he found that he was studying Virgil for pleasure, not having yet reached it in the school-course. The attention of the head-master was instantly turned to this extraordinary fact, and he at once conceived the purpose of training him to eminent scholarship. Always at the head of his

class without any desire or effort to be so, or any sense of emulation whatever, he was still incomparably more above his mates in miscellaneous knowledge, or as he himself styles it, "the wide, wild wilderness of useless, unarranged book-knowledge and book-thoughts." Getting his two volumes daily from the library, at all hazards, he describes himself as having been at fourteen in a continual low fever. "My whole being was, with eyes closed to every object of present sense, to crumple myself up in a corner and read, read, read."

About this period, he imbibed infidel sentiments from reading Voltaire's Philosophical Dictionary. Seeing that with such views he could not enter the ministry, and having become weary of his school, he sought to be apprenticed to a shoe-maker in the neighbourhood, who with his wife had become much attached to him on account of the gentleness of his spirit and the sprightliness of his mind, and had in turn won his affection by their kindness to him. When he stated the case to Bowyer, and informed him that he was an infidel, without further parley, this veteran castigator whipped him severely, and thus according to the uniform testimony of Coleridge, exorcised the foul spirit. Indeed he acknowledged that this was the only remedy that would have reached the disease, as all reasoning would rather have flattered his vanity, than convinced him of his error.

But notwithstanding the barbarous, and in most instances, wholly unmerited severities he suffered from this master, who was wont to preface these inflictions by saying that the fundamental maxim of the Peripatetic school was, "*Nihil in intellectu quod non prius in sensu*," and to translate it, "you must flog a boy before you can make him understand;"\* Coleridge ever acknowledged his high obligations to him for the incomparable intellectual discipline he imparted. He not only made his scholars thorough linguists; he also exercised them laboriously in composition, and the cultivation of a just taste. In this, his standard was high and severe. Says Coleridge, (*Biog. Lit.* pp. 11, 12,) "He early moulded my taste to the preference of Demosthenes to Cicero, of Homer and Theocritus to Virgil, and again of Virgil to Ovid. . . I learnt from him that poetry, even that of the loftiest and seemingly wildest odes, had a logic

\* *Lit. Remains.* Vol. iv. p. 148.

of its own, as severe as that of science. . . . In our own English composition, (at least for the last three years of our school education) he showed no mercy to phrase, metaphor or image, unsupported by sound sense, or where the same sense might have been conveyed with equal force and dignity in plainer words."

While we see in these facts how much the most splendid genius owes to faithful academic training, for its subsequent power to realize its own aspirations, there is another less pleasing circumstance, which shows the permanent injury resulting even to the finest minds, from any material defect in early education, while it also illustrates the barbarous caprice which ruled at this school. When commencing Euclid, Coleridge objected to the definition of a line, that it "must have some breadth, be it ever so thin." For this he received a box on the ear, and was sent to his seat. Succeeding no better with his next recitation, he was given over as hopeless in this department, and his mathematical studies were neglected. Coleridge ever regretted this deficiency, and on grounds which we shall hereafter show, we think with reason, although his admiring biographer thinks his natural logical powers were such as completely to make good this vacuum in his education.

During his stay at this school, he wrote occasional fugitive poems, which betokened his future eminence as a son of song. And while yet a school-boy he displayed that passion for metaphysics, by which he was distinguished through life. It was even then his delight, in his holiday excursions, to meet any stranger who would converse with him, and he would quickly turn the interview into discussion upon

"Fixed fate, free will, foreknowledge absolute,  
And found no end in wandering mazes lost."

In 1791, at the age of 19, he was transferred from Christ's Hospital to Jesus College, Cambridge. Here his ignorance and inaptness in money matters at once involved him in pecuniary embarrassments, which afterwards increasing, greatly annoyed him through life. Although an unrivalled linguist, yet his distaste for mathematics and his desultory habits of reading and studying as much out of the college routine as in it, prevented his gaining or even aspiring to, a fellowship, which by a proper concentration of his powers he might easily have won. He was the focus of social companies for conversation upon literature,

on the great topics of the day; and others had no occasion to read the latest pamphlets; for Coleridge having read them in the morning, would repeat them to the company gathered about him in the evening.

While at college he became interested in the trial of a Socinian, which had the effect of leading him to espouse this barren faith to which he adhered till he was twenty-five years old.

Another circumstance which strongly evinces his propensity to yield blindly and passively, to the capricious impulses of the moment, even to the length of the most foolhardy recklessness of consequences, is his enlistment in the army. For the amusing details of this affair we must refer the reader to Mr. Cottle's book, p. 209, et seq. It appears that having been foiled in a love suit, he recklessly left the college and went to London and enlisted in a cavalry company, under the assumed name of Silas Tompken Cumberbatch. His inveterate distaste for bodily exertion, and unequalled awkwardness in every thing of the sort, made his new duties intolerable to him. He at length surmounted his worst difficulty, by bribing a fellow-soldier to groom his restive horse, in consideration of his writing for him love-ditties to send to his sweet-heart. Often tumbling from his horse, the butt of the whole regiment for the sorry figure he made in all martial exercises, he was yet a favourite and a wonder with them, on account of the richness, humour and charm of his conversation. These circumstances being observed by some of the officers, they relieved him from some of his troubles by removing him to the hospital service. This was not more fortunate for Coleridge than for the miserable patients. The charm of his conversation quickly emptied the sick-beds, and attracted their occupants into a group around him, and they said it helped them more than all the doctor's physic. After some months, he was discovered by some of his friends, who extricated him from his sad predicament, so that he returned to Cambridge.

His theological views precluding him from the honest exercise of the office of the ministry in the established church, no arena seemed open to him, but the pursuit of literature. For this purpose he left Cambridge, and in 1794 went to Bristol, where with Southey, and a small coterie of enthusiastic literary youths, he warmly espoused, if he did not originate, the visionary project of forming a colony, composed of themselves and such con-

genial spirits as they might induce to join them, which was to emigrate to this country and set up a new social organization on the banks of the Susquehannah, called Pantisocracy. Here they were to rid themselves of the social and political evils which have so long scourged our race, and regain that Paradisaic felicity of which it has so long been despoiled. It appears that all that determined them to the selection of this spot, was the romantic beauty of the name. Southey's good judgment soon cooled his zeal in the enterprise. Coleridge's enthusiasm was more enduring; but poverty disabled him from following its impulses, till he saw its folly. At this time he supported himself by delivering popular lectures on various topics, political, literary, moral and religious, by some income derived from poetry, and in some degree by the generosity of friends, on which through life he was sadly dependent. Here he published the "Watchman," a weekly periodical, which, if for no reason but his own sluggish irregularity and failure to issue it according to his engagement, speedily expired, as did every such enterprise in which he engaged; and involved him in serious pecuniary loss.

In the year 1795, he married Miss Sarah Fricker, the sister of Southey's wife, and domesticated himself in a rural cottage in the vicinity of Bristol, with the expectation of supporting himself by writing poetry, for which his publisher agreed to pay him at the rate of a guinea and a half for every hundred lines. His habitual tardiness and delinquency in fulfilling his engagements, however, still clung to him, and brought him in arrears. But through the kindness and forbearance of an attached publisher, and the munificence of numerous friends who had been enchanted by his brilliant productions and matchless conversation, his wants were supplied. In all circles, in all positions, in the society of the most eminent men, his prodigious intellectual power displayed itself and won for him not vulgar, but choice admirers and most devoted friends. All, however, soon found that his want of method, punctuality and fidelity to his engagements, was equal to his genius, and that in the strong language of Southey, "no dependance could be place upon him," (*Cottle*, p. 301.) Whether he announced a lecture, or pledged himself to furnish matter for the press; or accepted an invitation to dine, he was exceedingly liable to fail, and gave tokens thus early, of

what became a besetting sin, and grievous injustice to himself through life.

About this period, the Socinians hearing that he was of their faith, and felicitating themselves on so important an accession of strength to their cause, made arrangements with him to preach in one of their chapels. Great was the eclat with which they heralded the appearance of this extraordinary genius in their pulpits. A meagre assembly however, convened. And the sermons were feeble repetitions of two lectures he had previously delivered in Bristol, one on the "Corn Laws," and the other on "Hair Powder Tax." *Cottle, p. 71.*

But it appears that not long afterward he began to be agitated with doubts, and to yearn for a more life-giving system. "I was at that time," says he, (*Biog. Lit.*, p. 103,) "though a Trinitarian, (i. e. ad norman Platonis) in philosophy, yet a zealous Unitarian in religion." And again, (*ib.* p. 117) referring to a later period, "Doubts rushed in, broke upon me from the fountains of the great deep, and fell from the windows of heaven. The fontal truths of natural religion, and the books of revelation alike contributed to the flood; and it was long ere my ark touched on Ararat and rested."

While his religious opinions were in this fermenting and chaotic state, he was enabled by the munificence of two affluent friends to repair to Germany to complete his education. He went to that country in the year 1798, and besides acquiring the language, studied some of the great authors of the country, especially the writings of Kant and Schelling, and became highly enamored of that Transcendentalism, for which he was predisposed by the native bent of his mind, although he had previously been for a time so fascinated with Hartley and other writers of an opposite school that he named his first born after him. And the influence of his new metaphysical views is palpable in all his subsequent writings. In politics, criticism, morals and religion, his doctrines and reasonings, whether true or false, are always, as far as possible, shaped in the mould of the Transcendental philosophy, sometimes brightened and glorified by the poetry and eloquence in which he arrays it, sometimes modified by his English feelings and prejudices, and his Christian belief, and sometimes in all its naked abstractness,

and barbarous nomenclature, lowering upon us with "darkness visible."

After an absence of fourteen months he returned to England, and took charge of the literary and political department of the *Morning Post*, a leading London Journal. He consented to undertake it, on condition that the paper should be conducted on fixed principles, previously announced, not deviating from them out of regard to persons or parties. Some specimens of the prodigious power displayed in his articles, may be found in his analysis of the character of Pitt, and report of one of his speeches which Canning afterwards said "did more credit to the author's head than his memory." (*Gillman*, p. 195, et. seq.) In such labours for this Journal, and afterwards for the *Courier*, he was occupied several years, during "the prime and manhood of his intellect." Nor was his influence unfelt. Even Buonaparte marked him as a victim, having been stung by the caustic of his Anti-Gallican articles; and sent an order for his arrest when he was visiting Italy for his health, which he narrowly escaped. After his return, he published the "Friend" in periodical numbers, or rather printed it, since it scarcely retained enough subscribers, or at the time, gained enough readers, to make it fairly a publication.

Little is brought to light concerning him for the four or five succeeding years. There is every reason for the conjecture that he was to a great extent paralyzed during this period, by that most fatal habit, which it must not be concealed was his blackest stain, and which it was his highest honour that he renounced, as he saw the crisis at hand, when further persistence in it would have rendered death inevitable or life intolerable. We need not say that we refer to his enormous opium-eating; of the extent, and debasing and withering effects of which upon this prodigy of genius, and of the monitory example thus furnished, it is due to the fidelity of Mr. Cottle that the world does not remain ignorant. We do not find in any of the biographical notices, or of Coleridge's confessions, information as to the time when he began the practice which he afterwards carried to extreme intemperance. But the following passage in a letter to Mr. Wedgwood one of his benefactors, in the year 1800, excites the suspicion that he had already been accustomed to it, and that it probably commenced early in life. "Life were so flat a thing

without enthusiasm, that if for a moment it leaves me, I have a sort of stomach sensation attached to all my thoughts, *like those which succeed to the pleasurable operations of a dose of opium.*" (Cottle, p. 319.)

His own account of the origin of the wretched practice is as follows: "I was seduced into the accursed habit ignorantly. I had been almost bedridden for many months, with swellings in my knees. In a medical Journal, I unhappily met with an account of a cure performed in a similar case, or what appeared to me so, by rubbing in of laudanum, at the same time taking a given dose internally. It acted like a charm, like a miracle! I recovered the use of my limbs, of my appetite, of my spirits, and this continued for near a fortnight. At length the unusual stimulus subsided, the complaint returned,—the supposed remedy was recurred to—but I cannot go through the dreary history." (Ib. p. 272.)

This was in the year 1814, when his old friend and patron Mr. Cottle, to whom this disclosure was made, first learned, although many of his friends had long been painfully aware of the real cause which had made his body a very incarnation of disease, paralyzed his will into utter impotence, thrown his conscience into alternate fits of apathy, bewilderment and remorse, and reduced his intellect to a mere capacity for wild, capricious and abortive effort. This was the darkest crisis of his life. At times he felt that he must die in a week; and yet, such is the infatuation of intemperance, he felt constrained to ward off the supposed danger, by larger doses of the drug which had caused it, and the continued use of which, he knew would aggravate it! It is with no pleasure that we depict this melancholy self-degradation of one of the loftiest minds ever bestowed on man. But it is material to a just estimate of the man and his works. It had much to do with his mental idiosyncrasies; with the incomplete and fragmentary character of his published writings; and beyond a doubt, aggravated those fitful and desultory intellectual habits, which we have already seen, were inherent in, and ever fostered by him. Nor were the effects of this intemperance, either on his mind or body, ever wholly obliterated, even after after he abandoned it.

We have another motive, the same which governed Mr. Cottle in making the fearful disclosure. This case is a terrific

warning to all who may be venturing on this species of sensual indulgence, on any pretext whatever, which should be held up in all its odiousness, in these days, when, as we are informed, Turkish and other tobacco prepared with an infusion of opium, is becoming fashionable either as an addition to, or a substitute for, the more vulgar means of intoxication, among youth in some literary institutions, and doubtless elsewhere! And we think that Mr. Cottle did but discharge a solemn duty to the cause of letters, morals and religion, when he divulged the revolting truth, not regarding the temporary sensitiveness of relatives, friends, extravagant admirers, and servile disciples.

We must therefore proceed to disclose the worst of this matter. According to a statement of Southey, (Cottle, p. 276), at one time his "ordinary consumption of laudanum was, from *two quarts a week* to a *pint a day*." To this was added "a frightful consumption of spirits." (p. 279.) Describing attempts made by himself to abandon it, Coleridge says that his spirits rose, "till the moment arrived, the direful moment, when my pulse began to fluctuate, my heart to palpitate, and such falling abroad as it were, of my whole frame, such intolerable restlessness, and incipient bewilderment, that in the last of my several attempts to abandon the dire poison, I exclaimed in agony, which I now repeat in seriousness and solemnity, 'I am too poor to hazard this.' Had I but a few hundred pounds, but £200, half to send to Mrs. Coleridge, and half to place myself in a private madhouse, where I could procure nothing but what a physician thought proper, and where a medical attendant could be constantly with me for two or three months (in less than that time life or death would be determined,) then there might be hope. Now there is none!! O God! how willingly would I place myself under Dr. Fox in his establishment. For my case is a species of madness, only that it is a derangement, an utter impotence of volition and not of the intellectual faculties. You bid me rouse myself: go bid a paralytic in both arms to rub them briskly together and that will cure him. 'Alas,' he would reply, 'that I cannot move my arms is my complaint and my misery.'" (Cottle p. 273.)

To these humiliating confessions of bondage and impotence, must be added the still direr out-breakings of REMORSE, which he elsewhere declares, "the implicit creed of the guilty." He

says in this same letter, "for ten years the anguish of my spirit has been indescribable, the sense of danger staring, but the consciousness of GUILT worse, far worse than all!" In another, "you have no conception of the dreadful hell of my mind, conscience and body." In yet another, "conceive of a poor miserable wretch, who for many years has been attempting to beat off pain by a constant recurrence to the vice that reproduces it. Conceive of a spirit in hell, employed in tracing out for others the road to that heaven, from which his own crimes exclude him! In short, conceive of whatever is most wretched, helpless and hopeless, and you will form as tolerable a notion of my state as it is possible for a good man to have. . . . In the one crime of opium, what crime have I not made myself guilty of! Ingratitude to my Maker! and to my benefactors—injustice! and unnatural cruelty to my poor children! self-contempt for my repeated promise—breach, nay, too often, actual falsehood!

"After my death, I earnestly entreat that a full and unqualified narration of my wretchedness and its guilty cause, may be made public, that at least some little good may be effected by this direful example." (*Cottle*, p. 292.)

While we have here the fullest warrant for spreading out the whole of this painful case, we see clearly intimated the cause of his separation from his wife and family. This drug poisoned domestic and conjugal affection at its fountain. It consumed his income, costing him, according to Southey, some twelve dollars a week, and indisposed and disabled him for any systematic and lucrative literary effort. His wife and three fine children were wholly neglected by him. He did not even write to them or open their letters to him. They were taken in and mostly provided for by Southey at his own home. And we can scarcely wonder at or censure the indignation of the latter at Coleridge's mad persistence in this suicidal vice, as he vents it in the following terms. "He leaves his family to chance and charity, with good feelings and good principles as far as the intellect is concerned, and an intellect as clear and as powerful as was ever vouchsafed to man, he is the slave of degrading sensuality and sacrifices every thing to it. The case is equally deplorable and monstrous." (*Cottle*, p. 286.)

The completeness of this bondage is seen in another circumstance. As the idea continued to haunt him, of going to a mad-

house to obtain the assistance requisite to reformation, a friend, a Mr. Wade, took him into his family, procured for him the constant attendance of a physieian, and (when he had so long abstained, and so far recovered from the consequent prostration, that it was deemed prudent for him to walk abroad,) also hired a respectable man to attend him in his excursions, and prevent him, when tempted, from procuring the fatal drug. Despite all this, he dexterously contrived to procure it by stealth, while apparently reforming, and taxing the generosity of his friends to ensure his reformation. (*Cottle*, p. 284-5.)

It is not surprising that the patience of Coleridge's friends expired with their hopes. And while numerous opulent admirers were ready to contribute to any extent needful for his relief, comfort and usefulness, they became tired of benefactions which were only abused to his own harm and ruin, in ministering to this degrading appetite.

But we now come to a more pleasing part of the record, which should efface that already past, were it not that the good of others, and the right eomprehension of Coleridge as a public man, demanded its preservation. He at length became satisfied, that there was no ray of hope for him, except in utterly and forever abandoning the dire poison. For this purpose he sought admission to the family of an intelligent physician, who could prescribe judiciously for his ailments arising from the stoppage of his opium doses, without permitting a recurrence to them, and who by taking a friendly interest in his case, and engaging in conversation with him, could mitigate the severity of the experiment, and relieve the dreadful ennui to which he was exposed. A gracious Providence led him to Dr. Gillman, a flourishing physician in a village in the vicinity of London. This gentleman and his lady were at once fascinated with the splendour of his genius, the brilliancy of his conversation, the gentleness and sweetness of his spirit, while they compassionated his infirmity, and sympathized with his desires, and were ready to second his efforts, for deliverance from it. They welcomed him to their hospitable home, where he went to reside in April, 1816, and continued till his death, which occurred July 25, 1834. Here he conquered his dreadful habit. And it was owing to the constant kindness and devotion of these new friends, their generous provision and untiring ministries for his comfort and welfare, prolonged through

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near twenty years, most of them years of disease and exquisite pain, when he needed the laborious attentions required in sickness—and which their unmixed love and admiration of him, alone could have prompted—that he was both enabled to rise from his degradation, and send forth most of those important productions by which he has left his impress on the world. Soon after his resort to their house, he published the *Biographia Literaria*; then, though whether in this precise order of succession we are uncertain, the *Friend* revised, the *Aids to Reflection*, and the *Church and State*. Here too he uttered, in magnificent discourse, his *Table Talk*, which was given forth impromptu, much of it from a sick couch, without any thought of publication, during the visits of his admiring and accomplished nephew, who wrote it out and published it after his death. Here he composed a large part of the contents of his *Literary Remains*, amounting to four large volumes. Hence Dr. Gillman became his biographer, and with his posthumous editor, and the author of the “Reminiscences,” has acquired a notoriety in the world of letters, which is wholly borrowed from the splendours of that great luminary; for some of whose beams they became the medium of transmission. Like Boswell, these satellites will have a celebrity as lasting as that of the fixed stars in the firmament of letters, about which they revolve.

And we think our readers will agree with us that there must be elements of matchless power and transcendent superiority in the productions of a man, who notwithstanding his great and glaring infirmities native and acquired—infirmities beyond all others adapted, and actually working, to prevent his doing justice to his own faculties, has made for himself a name coextensive with English literature, and waked an interest in his character and writings, which raises from obscurity to fame, those who, however accidentally, are able to shed a fresh ray of light upon either. Johnson once said, “no man was ever written down but by himself.” Coleridge was incessantly ridiculed and lampooned by the reviewers of all grades, from the ephemeral scavenger to the “dirty passions” of the vulgar, to the authoritative censors of the Edinburgh and Quarterly. It was observable, however, that their tone of bitterness and unmitigated contempt gradually softened during his life, as, despite their assaults, his reputation, friends, and admirers increased, while, after his death, it passed

into unmeasured eulogy of him, as a genius altogether peerless and unique. But whether it had changed or not, there must have been some vitality in that which, after being thrice slain, still rose before them in full vigour, and provoked renewed attacks. Or, as he himself expresses it, "there must be something more than usually strong and extensive in a reputation, that could either require or endure so long-continued and merciless a cannonading."

And yet, these causes explain, if they do not justify, the strongly variant and opposite views which have been, and are still, to some extent, entertained and expressed in regard to Coleridge. That he has great, and in his own way, unrivalled merits; that in power and richness of imagination; in depth and energy of thought; in mastery over language; in the originality and force with which he has brought out new, or previously unnoticed or unregarded principles, or illuminated old and familiar truths, he has had few compeers in this or any age, few who have carefully studied him, will question. This accounts for the extraordinary and enthusiastic admiration, often resulting in blind servility, which he has often excited, in many of the finest, especially, of youthful minds.

On the other hand, these excellencies are in strange and grotesque combination with faults equally prominent and glaring. These faults, except when they arose from or consisted of, errors of opinion, arose from what we shall venture to call (we hope his admirers will take no offence) the *undisciplined* state of his intellect. In saying this, we mean no more than what his posthumous editor has more felicitously expressed, when he represents him as having been "mastered by his genius, instead of mastering it." He had no command over his stupendous powers, but was rather at the mercy of their spontaneous and fitful workings. Hence he delivered the vagary, the dream, or the inspiration of the moment. And true inspiration it very often was; but alas, scarcely less often it was a dream, a crudity, a perfectly baseless and not seldom unintelligible conceit. Hence too his essays and disquisitions, as well as his poems, are for the most part unfinished; they are fragments, germs of grand thoughts, or reasonings which he had projected, and which required to be expanded and perfected, before they were published, if the author would do justice to himself, or his subject.

Hence, too, there is little pains-taking or elaboration in his writings to adapt them to the common mind, or even to the ready comprehension of educated men. Hence his passages of beauty, and power, and unmarred and unmatched excellence, which are scattered in heedless profusion through his writings, are found in the most awkward intimacy with the strange, the crude, the fantastic, the bewildering, the unintelligible, the absurd. In truth his writing was extemporaneous, the outbursting of what entered his mind at the moment; and his conversation was discourse, scarcely less sustained, brilliant, and perfect than his composition, as his Table Talk under all the disadvantage of coming to us filtrated through a reporter, abundantly shows. There was in it, for those who listened intelligently to it, a strange enchantment. It seemed like inspiration. His writings were all *improvisations*. His *improvisations* would seem to have been previously meditated, were it not, that during their delivery, one could see the living and formative processes of their conception, birth, and growth going on in his mind. Hence the comparison we have somewhere seen between him and Sir James Mackintosh, his only rival as a converser, was undoubtedly just. Sir James brought forth his thoughts from a repository in which they had been previously stowed away, assorted, and labelled for this very purpose. And when he presented them, they were most apt and beautiful, but they seemed like dried specimens taken from a *hortus siccus*, where they had been previously laid up and numbered for the occasion. But in Coleridge though there was less of fluency and promptness, there was manifest, the originating and forming process. One saw the actual birth throes of genius, and was overcome by the mighty spell. It was quickening; it was electric; it was creative.

And from this great mental infirmity—great in proportion to the greatness of his powers—of having his mind in no sense under the control of his will, but his will a mere passive thing swayed absolutely by the spontaneous and wayward flights of his mind, and moods and impulses of feeling, another serious defect arises to deform some of his finest compositions. He would often be seduced from the main topic of his discourse, or essay, before he had proceeded any length with it, to some collateral, or even unrelated subject, and instead of that perfect development of the first topic, which he intended or perhaps promised at the

starting point, the reader finds himself treated to a series of passages on different topics, crowding upon each other like wave upon wave. Into these divergencies he would be led by following out an illustration, and forgetting the thing to be illustrated, or by some fortuitous association of ideas, or by the mere capricious dartings of his thoughts in another line. His warmest admirers have partially acknowledged, while they partially deny this representation. Thus the editor of the *Table Talk* in his preface (p. 10,) speaks of the "seeming remoteness of his associations, and the exceeding subtlety of his transitional links," in discourse or reasoning, as interfering with his intelligibility. So Mr. De Quincy, as quoted by him on the same page, says that Coleridge "to many people seemed to wander. . . . They continued to admire the separate beauty of the thoughts, but did not see their relations to the dominant theme." Yet while we have given our own solution of this fact, we do not wonder at theirs, which is that in all this he had "a logic of his own," of the highest and severest kind, but which could not be detected by ordinary listeners or readers, without protracted meditation. We are glad to believe that this was sometimes so. But we believe that much also must be put to the account of his want of mastery over his intellect, and that in too many such instances, there was no real logical concatenation between the parts of his discourse. We think with Sir Humphrey Davy his early friend, and in another department, an intellectual compeer, who speaking of Coleridge in 1803, said, "His will is less than ever commensurate with his ability. Brilliant images of greatness float upon his mind, like images of the morning clouds upon the waters. Their forms are changed by the motion of the waves, they are agitated by every breeze, and modified by every sun beam." (*Cottle*, p. 218.)

Hence we see why it is, that, while Coleridge shows as much creative power as any man of his age, and while there is the most profuse affluence of magnificent imagery, and profound, original, soul-stirring thoughts, there is so much that is crude, shadowy and obscure: that when from the electric light he flashes upon one in the opening of his disquisition, his expectations had been raised of a masterly clearing up of a subject that ever before baffled him, he is disappointed either by finding it suddenly dropped with the introduction, or *in medio*: or ex-

changed for some glorious excursion into another realm of thought, or perhaps for some flight into those nebulous altitudes when the various objects are too remote to be distinctly seen by poor mundane mortals, unless their vision can be armed with that transcendental telescope, which none can borrow from the master, but those who catch his *esoteric* inspirations. Hence too the great number of his projected works on the *prima philosophia*, in which he proposed to reduce the *omne scibile* to unity and harmony, and to which he so often refers his reader as about to appear, and contain a fuller explication of a topic of which he thus takes leave, works which however were never completed or published; although his accomplished editor observes, that all his prose works actually published were "little more than feelers, pioneers, disciplants, for the last and complete exposition of them." In all these circumstances too, we find the secret of the aversion, amounting in many cases to absolute disgust and contempt, which has so extensively been shown toward his works, the feeling which is just toward particular portions and qualities of them, being transferred to the whole indiscriminately.

And this faulty habitude of his mind is both explained and confirmed by the great points developed in his biography. We shall not here stop to recite his own confessions and lamentations and explanations regarding this great defect. He however often speaks of his want of self-control, his feebleness of will in failing to execute the dictates of conscience and reason, as not only the great cause of his moral faults, but of his failure to realize that fame and emolument, which his genius was capable of commanding. But his philosophy of the fact, (see *Biog. Lit.* p. 25) showing that such a tendency is among those traits of genius which distinguish it from mere talent, is such assuredly, as it must have taken a genius to invent. We think, however, that this weakness of will as compared with his emotive, intellectual, and imaginative powers, is shown by his whole biography to be a native quality, fostered and aggravated by his whole subsequent training and habits. We see it not only in his frequent suicidal yielding to the shapeless impulses of the moment: but as it vitiated his intellect, in that huge mass of undigested reading in which he run wild, to the neglect of methodical mental discipline and self-control, both in early and later life. But this deficiency was greatly aggravated by that almost entire

omission of mathematical studies which unfortunately characterised his education, a discipline which beyond all else, marshals the faculties into subjection to the will of their possessor. His prodigious natural logical acumen, was no offset to this *one-sidedness* in his education. As well might it be said that the want of a classical education would have been balanced by his native insight into language. What Coleridge was deficient in, was not penetration, or logical acumen, or the power to exhibit these with a skill and felicity unsurpassed by uninspired man, in detached passages and insulated trains of thought; but he wanted the power of chaining his mind to any single subject, point, or work, as well of poetry as metaphysics till he had finished what he designed to do, according to his original projection of it. This is just that power which the study of mathematics, besides training the logical faculty, imparts. The very nature of every exercise in mathematics is such, that the mind must stick to it with dogged perseverance, till it masters it completely. There is no stopping place between this "rapturous EUREKA" and utter failure. Lastly, we need not stay to show, how that bewitching narcotic which so long enslaved him, by causing paroxysms of phrenzied and preternatural intellectual excitement to alternate constantly with utter prostration and flatness of mind, contributed to aggravate a pre-existing mental defect, into utter deformity.

And yet we believe it is owing to this very peculiarity, that Coleridge has obtained his most powerful hold, and wrought most effectually upon the minds of men. These incomplete fragments which he poured forth so profusely both in writing and conversation, contained embryonic thoughts, so powerful, so splendid or so novel, that they would seize as with a vice-grasp, inquisitive and thoughtful minds. Yet being imperfectly developed, represented too by the author conscious of this fact, as the mere vestibule of the great temple of truth, which yet remained to be entered and explored, the reader would at once be excited to thought, and study, and every sort of tentative effort, to track out the germinant thought to its full proportions, and realize all the hidden treasures it embosomed. It shot into his mind the dawn of a new idea; he cannot rest till he has clarified that twilight apprehension or imagining, into meridian clearness. Now this operates at once as the effective stimulus and discipline

of the intellect. And provided only that it does not lead to a servile adoption of the author's tenets, its influence is every way salubrious and invigorating; and a vastly higher benefit is gained by studying such a writer, than one who does not awaken such mental strivings to work out for ourselves the problem that he has rather suggested than solved. And those who have, especially in youth or opening manhood, received such a lofty impulse and incalculable benefit from any author, will not soon forget their obligations to him, whatever they may think of his specific or peculiar doctrines. In strict consonance with this view of the secret of his power over other minds, his most important work, that by which he first became known and felt in theological circles in this country, is constructed and named. It is entitled "Aids to Reflection." And this is its precise character. Its contents are styled "Aphorisms," of which, with notes and comments upon them it wholly consists. It is really, as it is avowedly, rather an excitant of reflection and study upon various doctrines, than a systematic and thorough defence of them. Hence it was a performance well fitted to set forth in strong relief the author's distinctive excellencies, without attracting attention to his faults. But the fact is, that all those portions of his prose-writings that have laid an abiding grasp upon the minds of men, are aphorisms, fragments, "aids to reflection." They are so many scions, immense in number and variety, that have inserted themselves in other minds, and in various degrees shaped them after their own individual forms, and made them to bear fruit after their own kind. The sort of growth and fruit produced has been according to the particular scion from among the manifold diversity, which happened to be engrafted, and the sort of stock in which it was set, in any given instance. Here, too, we have the solution of that amazing diversity of sentiment which marks those who profess to have derived their incipient tendencies from Coleridge, from the baldest Swedenborgianism to the narrowest Ritualism. Here, too, we can hear the answer which he occasionally makes to the charge of wasting his powers, that he had done more by conversation to waken and mould the finest intellects, than most authors had done by their publications, might be just, and probably was so. We can understand and sympathise with him when he says, "I have laid too many eggs in the hot sands of this wilderness, the world, with

ostrich carelessness and ostrich oblivion. The greater part, indeed, have been trod under foot, and forgotten; but yet no small number have crept forth into life, some to furnish feathers for the caps of others, and still more to plume the shafts in the quivers of my enemies; of them that unprovoked, have lain in wait against my soul." (*Biog. Lit.*, p. 34.)

That intellectual wealth, which despite such thriftless and wasteful management, still continues to give celebrity to its author in both hemispheres, a celebrity that brightens with time and spreads as his parasitic admirers grow fewer and more temperate in their eulogies, cannot be contemptible or insignificant. And while he has dealt it out to us in the crude ore and scattered fragments for the most part, not perfected and enchased by art, yet this method as we have seen, has not been without its advantages; especially as it has been in a form more facile and safe for others to work up and appropriate, whether by digestion and assimilation, or by downright plagiarism, it is not always easy to determine. Any one familiar with the writings of Coleridge, will have observed in them the germs of the principal productions of a numerous circle of review writers and anniversary orators and sermonizers, who have quite astounded the public by their ORIGINALITY. But we are happy to conclude this branch of our subject, with a word of confirmation from so high an authority as Lord Bacon. He says, (*Adv. of Learning*, Dove's ed., pp. 175-6,) "Aphorisms, except they should be ridiculous, cannot be made but of the pith and heart of sciences: . . . therefore no man can suffice, nor in reason will attempt to write aphorisms, but he that is sound and well grounded. . . . And lastly, aphorisms representing a knowledge broken, do invite men to inquire further; whereas methods which carry the show of a total, do secure men as if they were at farthest."

We perceive that the pressure of our thoughts in regard to this wonderful man threatens to crowd us beyond the utmost tolerable limits of a review article, and therefore will omit much that we intended to say respecting the poetry of Coleridge, as not being so much within our immediate province. We may say, however, that if he had published nothing but his poetry, his name would probably have been imperishable in English literature; so exuberant and splendid is he in his imagery, so profound and original in his thoughts, so tender and sweet, and

ofttimes devotional in sentiment, so compact and chaste, yet smooth and mellifluous in his language and versification. If we were to criticise at all, our complaint would be that of Sir Walter Scott, "on account of the caprice and indolence with which he has thrown from him as in mere wantonness, those unfinished scraps of poetry, which, like the Torso of antiquity, defied the skill of his poetical brethren to complete them." And yet, like his prose works, they interest, "by what they leave untold," and give us,

"Sweet echoes of unearthly melodies,  
And odours snatched from beds of amaranth."

*Religious musings.*

Nor can we question the great services which Coleridge has rendered in the department of literary criticism, a subject also at which we can scarcely glance. It will be at once perceived that all his mental habits were suited to this occupation; since criticism of books, in the nature of the case, consists of fragmental observations upon them, and upon detached passages in them. Then his reading was immense not only in his own, but other languages, and his memory as retentive as his intellect was capacious. And he was familiar with all departments of literature. Then he had a thoroughly reflective and philosophic mind, and was himself a distinguished author. Moreover he was led to give special attention to the true principles of criticism, in consequence of the savage injustice meted out to himself by its then recognized tribunals. Accordingly, in his *Biographia* he propounded what he esteemed the true principles of the art, and illustrated them by actual specimens especially in reference to Wordsworth, who had shared with himself, and on similar grounds, much of the merciless abuse of the critics. His celebrated passage upon Shakspeare and Milton, which want of space only prevents us from reprinting entire, may safely be pronounced, in its own way, without a rival in the language. (*Biog. Lit.*, pp. 185-6.) From the publication of this work may be dated a new era in criticism. It is more principled, philosophic and liberal than before. Moreover, his "Aids" are but a continuous criticism upon Leighton and other eminent divines of England. His *Literary Remains* are but an immense repository of criticism on different authors literary and theological, and his prose works abound in them. And one effect pro-

duced by them has been, that a large body of the choicest writers in literature and religion, that had sunk into unaccountable neglect and oblivion, are now appreciated, and have found their way into the libraries of scholars and clergymen, and to some extent have become current among the "reading public."

After all, it cannot be doubted, that Coleridge's favorite field, was metaphysics, whether considered as a separate science by itself, or in its applications to politics, morals, and eminently, to theology. In these "quicksilver mines" as we have already seen, he instinctively began to delve in early youth; to them he consecrated his later life and maturer efforts: with these subjects his prose works are chiefly occupied. This constitutes the theme of his great posthumous work, which is understood now to be in the process of completion by another hand, in order to future publication; even his poetry becomes at times condensed into metaphysics, and satirizes the sensual school as,

"Themselves they cheat  
With noisy emptiness of learned phrase,  
Their subtle fluids, impacts, essences,  
Self-working tools, uncaused effects, and all  
Those blind Omniscients, those Almighty slaves,  
Untenanting creation of its God.—(*Sibylline Leaves*.)

By these most obviously he expected to confer the most lasting benefits, and make the most durable impression, upon mankind.

It is due to Coleridge and to a just understanding of his productions in this department, especially in metaphysical theology, toward which all his other metaphysical labours converged as their ultimate end, to say distinctly, what otherwise would be to our readers matter of inference merely, that he not only gave up his Unitarianism, but embraced most of the great doctrines of the evangelical system, before he was thirty years old: that his writings abound in expressions of Christian feeling of the purest and loftiest kind, set forth in his own inimitable beauty and force of style; and that as he advanced in life, and approached the grave, these expressions became more accordant with the language of the saints in all generations. All this is true and should be duly appreciated, however difficult it may be to reconcile his utterances with each other, or to harmonize the conflicting accounts of his reporters, or to account for his allowing so much error to remain in his acknowledged works.

We think also, that in approaching this part of the subject, it deserves consideration, that Coleridge possessed the separate and opposite powers of the poet and metaphysician, in a degree which is seldom, if ever, paralleled. There have been as great and greater poets. There have been as great and greater metaphysicians. But we do not now remember the instance of one who was so extraordinary both as a poet and metaphysician. By some these two opposite qualities, are deemed not only opposite, but contradictory, or at least repugnant, to each other. It was quite natural that Coleridge should deem them mutually auxiliary and complete. "No man," says he, "was ever yet a great poet without being at the same time a profound philosopher." However this may be,—and we shall not stop to discuss it—the effect of this equipoise of the imagination and ratiocinative powers in Coleridge, was, not only, as we have seen, sometimes to render his poetry metaphysical, but still more frequently, to render his metaphysics poetical. This characteristic combining with that waving, fragmentary habit of mind, of which we have before spoken, often results in a sudden or gradual breaking away from a most close, rapid, iron-linked argument, which promised to conduct the reader to the most satisfactory conclusion, and running into a poetical digression, at once both *finis* and climax, and which though beautiful in its place, serves here only to vex the logical inquirer, who had been tantalized, by so admirable a beginning. Hence too, it often occurs, that the driest and abstrusest doctrines of metaphysics are set forth in the most sublime and thrilling strains, of poetic eloquence, for some gorgeous specimens of which, let the reader consult the "Statesman's Manual." (pp. 30—45.) Hence also it sometimes happens that his subtlest metaphysical lucubrations are the mere creations of what he rightly names the "philosophic imagination," and elsewhere "the shaping and modifying power;" mere phantoms, now fairy and now grotesque, but like saponaceous bubbles, vanishing into utter vacuity, as soon as we attempt to catch and grasp them, by any act of distinct intellection. For examples of this, let the reader, *inter alia*, look at the appendix to the aids to reflexion, and we will venture to add, at some of his processes for proving *a priori*, that the doctrine of the Trinity is necessarily evolved from the very idea of God. (*Lit. Remains*. Vol. III. pp. 1—3.) Nevertheless, there are certain great doctrines u

metaphysics and theology, which Coleridge deemed of unalterable importance, that are almost always presupposed in his writings, and which, in different ways, and with great frequency and earnestness, he attempts to vindicate and enforce. Upon these we will now bestow, what, if it must be a cursory, we hope will be a candid notice.

And first, of his metaphysics. These were reputedly and avowedly Transcendental. But this is no certain designation. For Transcendentalism itself has undergone so many modifications, at the hands of successive masters, each of whom has constructed some new system out of the fabric reared by his predecessors, as jugglers are wont to spin ribbons out of nut-shells, that the word conveys no definite meaning. The most that can be understood by it is, that it is a system whose birth-place and proper home is Germany, at the opposite pole from that of Locke and Hume, ideal rather sensual, Platonic rather than Aristotelian. These traits undoubtedly marked Coleridge's system. So far he was a Transcendentalist. But although thus explained, he deserves and claims this title, it would be the rankest injustice, to put him in the same category with Hegel, Strauss, or others whose very names suggest the loathsome triad of scepticism, pantheism, and every other *ism* that saps the very foundation of religion and morals: heresies against which he contended earnestly and manfully all his days. In his (*Biog. Lit.* p. 143.) he describes pure philosophy to be transcendental, because it results from that artificial self-knowledge which the metaphysician gains by laborious philosophic self-inspection, and which therefore *transcends* the natural spontaneous consciousness of mankind. We have tried to give his idea in our own language. In this sense, every metaphysician must by the necessity of the case, be a transcendentalist. On the other hand, he says that "those flights of lawless speculation, which, abandoned by *all* distinct consciousness, because transgressing the bounds and purposes of our intellectual faculties, are justly condemned as *transcendent*. He thus distinguishes *toto coelo* between a *transcendental* and a *transcendent* philosophy. But we fear that allowing him the utmost benefit of this distinction, not a few of his own rhapsodical, poetico-metaphysical flights must fall under his own definition of the latter kind, and, as such, be "justly condemned." On the other hand, he clearly indicates in the same

work (p. 90,) that he early rejected the sceptical element in Kant's philosophy. His most ruinous avowals are those in which he speaks of a "genial coincidence" between himself and Schelling; and when (pp. 153-4,) he speaks of the "philosopher as being compelled to treat as nothing more than a prejudice," the belief "that there exists things without us," and to regard such existence of things without us, as "one and the same thing with our immediate self-consciousness." This, with some other mystic utterances in the same chapter, show that his mind was for a time warped by the influence of these Germans, to a leaning towards sceptical idealism. But as the general tone of his writings is at war with this scheme, so the chief evil of these passages is not in any power which they possess in themselves, they are so few and indistinct, but only as they may lead, here and there, a hoodwinked votary to follow up their obscure suggestions by the study of the German originals, keeping his bandages still over his eyes, that he may not fail of being led by such eminent guides. But even in so doing, he would violate the counsel of his master who a few days before his death made the following declaration.

"The metaphysical disquisition at the end of the first volume of the "Biographia Literaria" is unformed and immature. It contains the fragments of the truth, but it is not fully thought out. It is wonderful to myself to think how infinitely more profound my views now are, and yet how much clearer they are withal. The circle is completing; *the idea is coming round to, and to be, the common sense.*" (*Table Talk*, Vol. II. p. 169.)

In short, Coleridge's metaphysical system was German transcendentalism, tempered by his intense English partialities, modified by his faith in Christianity, and the established church, adorned and perfumed with the "blossom and fragrance" of his poetry, and chastened with the advance of age.

The great tenet derived from the transcendentalists on which he ever insisted as being fundamental to all just conclusions and reasonings in Ethics and Theology, was that of the distinction between the REASON and the UNDERSTANDING. And this view of the paramount importance of this distinction to all sound Metaphysics and Theology, was earnestly and skillfully advocated in the "preliminary essay" prefixed to the "Aids to Reflection," by Dr. Marsh, by far the most distinguished of Cole-

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 ridge's American followers, and most efficient in introducing his works to public notice in this country. And so far as we have seen, such is the sentiment of all who adopt the Coleridgeian or German metaphysics. Now, though we should grant some such distinction in the powers of the human mind, we do not understand how such vast consequences hang upon the recognition of it, as these persons imagine. It is doubtless good to know the truth, and the whole truth. But then all truths are not equally important, as this school virtually confess, by the incomparable importance which they attach to this. Well, if these faculties exist, may they not do their proper office with all promptness and celerity, whether we have in form drawn the line of demarcation between them or not? Does our faculty of vision depend upon our knowing scientifically the various lenses and humours of the eye? And do they not see equally well, who never surmised that their eye-balls were not one, identical, undistinguishable substance? And do not they rightly remember, and compare, and judge, and reflect, and obtain knowledge by sensation and intuition, who never once heard or dreamed of a classification of the faculties of the mind into those of memory, judgment, etc? The case is too plain to require an answer. How then can this or any other analysis of the faculties of the mind be so fundamental to a just insight into the truths of religion? Is reason the organ of the "supersensuous," by which we discern spiritual truth, and does it belong to all men, as this school contends? Be it so. And may it not, and will it not see the truths of religion when they are exhibited to it, whether it have, in the mind of the beholder, been scientifically, distinguished from the understanding or not? A truce then, to this favourite dogma of Transcendental, Pelagian and Metaphysical theologians, that there can be no just understanding of the Bible, without an antecedent critical analysis of the faculties of the mind of man, to which it speaks.

Nor do we think Coleridge more fortunate in his attempts to impress the older divines and metaphysicians of Britain into the support of this distinction. Who supposes, for example, that Milton was not speaking with poetic license rather than philosophic precision, when he penned the lines so often quoted by our author and his followers in this behalf:

•  
 "Give both life and sense,  
 Fancy and understanding; whence the soul  
 Reason receives. And reason is her being,  
 Discursive or intuitive."

It is not in direct contradiction to the views of these writers, that "reason" is in any sense derived from the fancy and understanding? Thus, too, in quoting Leighton as authority for it, he is obliged to torture his language, so as to make "supernatural faith" stand for reason, and "natural reason," for understanding, (*Aids*, p. 135). In a like way, in a passage quoted from Harrington for this purpose, he is obliged to make "Religion" mean reason, and "reason," understanding, (*Friend*, p. 130.) Indeed he acknowledges that "though there is no want of authorities, ancient and modern, for the distinction of the faculties, and the distinct appropriation of the terms; yet our best writers often confound the one with the other." This indeed is his constant complaint in his reviews of the elder, and even the Platonic divines, whom he most admires. And as to the "authorities" he speaks of, we have not seen the first one cited by him, out of Germany, that is at all in point. And is it so, that a just comprehension of Christian doctrine is impossible, without the knowledge of a distinction, of which the great masters of English theology have been ignorant?

But what is the alleged distinction? "Reason," says Coleridge, "is the power of universal and necessary convictions, the source and substance of truths above sense, and having their evidence in themselves." (*Aids*, p. 137.) Now that there is a faculty by which we see some truths, above sense in their own self-evidencing light, it is to be presumed none will dispute. It cannot be denied by any who do not hold that the soul is originally a mere blank, a *rasa tabula*. Nor do we now know of any reputable theologian who carries the maxim, "*Nihil in intellectu, quod non prius in sensu*," so far as to deny the existence of original, intuitive, self-affirmed beliefs in man, which so far from being products of reflection or argument, are themselves the ultimate proofs and tests to be appealed to, in all argument. Nor should we trouble ourselves to contend with any who think that reason may with propriety and advantage, be employed to designate the organ by which we obtain these intuitions. But how the organ can be likewise the "substance" of such truths, is not so evident. What is understanding, according to this school?

This is variously described, as the "faculty judging according to sense," the "faculty of reflection," the "faculty of selecting and contriving means to ends," the faculty of intelligence which animals have in common with us. Now none will question that the human mind has such a faculty, or such faculties as are thus described. But the question is, is there aught in them, which renders it necessary or important, that the word should be applied to denote them and them exclusively? And has Coleridge or any one else so clearly drawn the boundary between the respective provinces of Reason and Understanding, that there can be no apology in future, for that confusion of the words, which he so fervently deploras in the past? If so, we confess, that after no small study of his profuse and eloquent reasonings on the subject, we have been unable to trace it with certainty. We are aware that the fault will be imputed to ourselves. No matter whose it is. The fact itself is reason enough, why we should leave the subject.

Kant finding himself urged by his system over the precipice of scepticism, invented the "Practical Reason," in addition to the Speculative, in order to escape this dread consequence. This he contended was the organ of moral and religious truths, or convictions, and that it commanded us unconditionally to attribute reality to its objects and revelations. Coleridge has adopted this part of his system. He speaks, (*Aids*, p. 115,) of "the Practical Reason of man, comprehending the Will, the Conscience, the Moral Being with its inseparable interests and affections." Now that we have a will and conscience and moral being, who will dispute? But what good ground has he assigned, or can any man present, for naming these, the "Practical Reason?"

Passing now to those moral and religious truths, which Coleridge prominently inculcated and enforced, and whose due vindication he supposed greatly to depend on the preceding distinction, we come first to the grounding principle in morals, the nature of righteousness. And here he brings all the resources of his mighty intellect to bear with crushing annihilating force upon Paley's doctrine of general consequences; or that righteousness consists in following the dictates of an enlightened self-love, and doing those acts which promise on the whole to be the best expedient for promoting our own highest happiness. On

moral

this system, righteousness is not an ultimate good in itself. It is simply a means of procuring happiness; wholly secondary and auxiliary to happiness. Nay, according to a famous Doctor of this school, the very word itself has its origin in this fact! Righteousness is the RIGHT way to the highest happiness. Upon this heresy, Coleridge bears down with an overwhelming torrent of "red-hot logic," and excoriating invective, in one of the noblest essays in our language, (*Friend*, p. 273, *et seq.*) He pronounces it one of his chief aims in the "Aids to Reflection" to inculcate the doctrine that "Moral Goodness is other and more than Prudence or the Principle of Expediency;" and in all his works contends for the "love of the Good as Good, and of the True as True." He well argues that the desire of happiness "can never be made the principle of morality," and that otherwise than as a regulated, and of course therefore, a *subordinate*, propensity, it can never be fulfilled or realized," (*Aids*, p. 259.) Again, "Pleasure I say, consists in the harmony between the specific excitability of the living creature, and the exciting causes correspondent thereto, considered therefore exclusively in and for itself, the only question is, quantum? not, quale? How much on the whole? . . . The quality is a matter of taste." (*Ib.* p. 24.) This is undeniable, and shows unanswerably the necessity of regulating the desire of happiness, by subordination to a higher principle, viz. the love of righteousness. But what is this righteousness? asks the sapient metaphysician, bent on explaining away the plainest dictates, nay, the very ground and possibility of conscience. How do you define it? We ask in turn. How do you define white and black? Do you say that these are simple ideas, and therefore undefinable, because derived from, and therefore resolvable into, nothing beyond themselves? So we say of the idea of righteousness, holiness, moral goodness. It is simple, uncompounded, intuitive and self-evidencing. For him who does not understand it without definition, no definition can make it intelligible.

It is obvious then, that on Coleridge's system this is one of those truths that enters the mind through the reason as distinguished from the understanding. And believing as he did in the importance of a recognition of this distinction, in order to a just perception of self-affirmed truths; and feeling the magnitude and preciousness of the truth here at stake, bearing as it

does on the very nature and essence of morality and religion, we can scarcely wonder at the estimate he puts upon this distinction. And yet as he himself observes, the fallacy of the whole scheme of a morality based on general consequences, had been previously shown by Bishop Butler and others, who were utter strangers to it. We think, however, that Coleridge's writings on this subject have accomplished great good in our country. They have contributed to render gross utilitarianism odious, and to exorcise it from many superior minds. They have helped to foster a pure and elevated tone of moral principle and feeling, an honourable, generous, disinterested, self-sacrificing spirit, with a scorn and detestation of the selfish, the mean, and the base. They have done much to counteract that self-love scheme of morals, which is distinctive of what was a popular system of theology, and vitiates the entire circle of Christian doctrine and experience. Had he written nothing else, he would have been entitled to the gratitude of the friends of truth and righteousness. With regard to the divine origin and authority of the scriptures, Coleridge insists with great eloquence, on the importance and efficacy of the internal evidence of their truths in opposition to that class of men who rely on miracles and the historical argument exclusively. He urges eloquently (*Friend*, p. 381,) that the doctrine must show itself to be worthy of God, in order to vindicate the miracle and distinguish it from a "lying wonder," before it can be authenticated by such miracle. He allows and insists that miracles are necessary in their place, but claims that true faith sees an "in-evidence" in the truths themselves, of their divine original. This view we regard as substantially true and highly important. This is the doctrine of the soundest theologians, and of the Reformed confessions. And on what other ground, could the scriptures command all to whom they come, to believe them instantly on pain of eternal death, if they did not bear upon themselves the palpable impress of divinity, and "speak as never man spake"?

This doctrine, however, if liable to gross perversion, unless it be connected with another, viz: the need of illumination by the Holy Spirit, in order to a right discernment of spiritual truths, a doctrine assuredly taught in scripture, and maintained by evangelical divines. What Coleridge's views on this point were does not distinctly appear. Sometimes they seem scriptural, and some-

times tainted with rationalism. Probably his sentiments were unsettled and vague. But it is obvious, that if the human understanding be set up as the infallible judge and arbiter of Christian truth, or of what it is competent and becoming for God to reveal as truth; and if men feel authorized to reject or explain away whatever does not harmonize with their own predilections, or pre-conceived opinions, no embankment remains to hinder the most devastating inundations of the rankest rationalism. Theodore Parker and Hegel ask for nothing more. The Bible is no longer a divine revelation, an authoritative guide to man. Instead of coming to amend and perfect him, it comes to be amended and perfected by him. But, it is asked, does not the Bible address itself to the mind of man, and must not this mind trust its own perceptions, in order to be capable of receiving, or of crediting it? And if so, where shall it stop short of accepting what appears to it reasonable, and rejecting the residue? We answer, that the mind undoubtedly must and will trust its own perceptions to a certain extent; but it may, and it ought, in this process, to learn its own short-sightedness and obliquity of vision; its need of a better light and a purer vision—of precisely such aid and illumination as the Bible affords in itself or directs us to seek from above. Certainly we act reasonably, when trusting our bodily eyes, we nevertheless conclude that they need the help of optical instruments to see aright, the remote, the vast, and the minute; or of artificial lenses to make amends for their own decays, infirmities, or mal-formations. And surely do we not place a just and rational confidence in our own understanding of the Scriptures, when we learn from them to distrust our own faculties in regard to the things of God, except as they are divinely clarified and guided, because they are originally too narrow to span the infinite, and have been too much perverted and blinded by sin to appreciate fully the beauty and the demands of holiness and justice? The Bible teaches nothing more explicitly and abundantly than the blindness and folly of the mind of fallen man in things pertaining to God. And therefore it demands of men that they be disciples, learners. TAKE THE YOKE AND LEARN OF ME, says Christ. If any man will be wise, let him become a fool, that he may be wise. This being so, we see at once the hollowness of that boastful philosophy, which undertakes to sit as an umpire in judgment upon the scriptures, instead of being meekly guided

by them. We believe indeed in philosophy; but at the same time, we think it must be a "regenerate philosophy," and not the product of man's native wit alone, else it will prove not a handmaid to our faith, but a proud mistress over-ruling it. THE WORLD BY WISDOM KNEW NOT GOD.

We accept, too, Coleridge's favourite maxim, that "Christian faith is the perfection of human reason;" not, however, because it conforms to the reason as it is corrupted and darkened in unregenerate man, but because it purifies and restores this into harmony with God, the Supreme Reason. We appreciate the high aim of those who are labouring to "justify the ways of God to man." But we fear that in many cases their efforts are dangerous, because one-sided. They will surely be led off upon a false scent unless they have a still higher zeal and anxiety as to the way of JUSTIFYING MAN BEFORE GOD. For the tendency of exclusive efforts to obviate the objections which man may raise to the gospel and its author, is to dwarf and attenuate God to our own model; to make Him "altogether such an one as ourselves." It makes man the standard, and runs into anthropomorphism. But, in truth, God is the only standard of perfection. All else must be measured from its relations to Him. Man has fallen. The great end and effect of the gospel is to restore in him the lost image of his Maker. It is the work of heathenism, not of Christianity, to "change the glory of the incorruptible God into an image of corruptible man."

While Coleridge deals out frequent and ponderous blows upon Socinians, and all others who pick and choose their faith out of the Bible, virtually disowning its supreme authority, and accepting its teachings only so far as "it is an echo of their own convictions." We think that he at times attributes too great infallibility to reason as distinguished from understanding, and forgets that it has shared in the lapse of our nature. Certain it is that he questions or denies the canonicity or inspiration of some of the books of scripture, and of portions of others. (*Table Talk*, vol. i. p. 109. *Lit. Remains*, vol. iii. p. 161, iv. 410.) He also denies verbal inspiration. (*Table Talk*, vol. ii. pp. 18, 19.) His most objectionable passages of this kind appear in his *Posthumous Works*. But as they consist of assertion and suggestion merely, without proof or argument of any moment, they admit of no answer. In another posthumous work, entitled

"The Confessions of an Inquiring Spirit," which we have not been able to find, it is said that his views on this subject are more fully set forth. He was fond of stigmatizing the common veneration for the letter of the Bible, as *bibliolatry*. But the details of exegesis were wholly alien from the habits of his mind. He never made it a systematic study. And we have no doubt of the justness of the suggestion of Arch-deacon Hare, that the study of Eichhorn's Lectures in Germany, gave a bias to his mind on these subjects from which he never fully recovered. Certain it is that no portion of his writings display more numerous and intolerable crudities, than his occasional interpretations of texts and passages of scripture.

But his capital error in this department, was in his claim that the scriptures teach the transcendental philosophy. Thus he says, (*Aids*, p. 96), "What the eldest Greek philosophy entitled the *Reason* (ΝΟΥΣ) and *Ideas*, the Philosophic Apostle names the *Spirit* and *Truths spiritually* discerned." Again, (p. 324), and often elsewhere he styles the Apostles *φρονηματα της σαρκος* or carnal mind the understanding. It is scarcely necessary to remark upon this and much else like it. Its statement is its confutation. There is not the smallest reason for supposing that the Apostle, in using these terms, had the slightest allusion to any distinction between reason and understanding. Perhaps the doubts which he intimates, but scarcely defends, in his posthumous writings, of the personal existence of Satan, and of the sanctity of the Sabbath, may be properly mentioned under this head, though they require no refutation.

But let us proceed to the doctrines which he deduces from the scriptures. What are his views of original sin and grace? What he has to say of free-will is so interlinked with these topics, that it may be best noticed in connection with them. From sundry vehement expressions which he utters, affirming the self-determining power of the will, and in condemnation of Edwards as a fatalist, it would at first be inferred, that his system must turn out to be unmitigated Pelagianism. But on further scrutiny, we find the reverse true. His doctrine is, that the will, in order to be responsible, must originate its own acts, that to be capable of this, it must be a spirit, and that whatever is under the law of cause and effect, is nature, as contradistinguished from spirit. (*Aids*, pp. 41, 105, 273). Thus con-

trusting the will to nature, he makes it "the supernatural in man"—proof enough, that the profession of supernaturalism in these days, is no test of a man's attitude towards the doctrines of grace. As to his round assertions of the fatalism of Edwards, it will be in time to answer them when they are sustained by a solitary proof or quotation. Meanwhile we observe, and appeal to all acquainted with Edwards' treatises, who will read what follows, if the observation be not just, that all that Edwards contended for, was a will possessing such properties as did not render utterly impossible such truths respecting sin, providence and grace, as we shall now show that Coleridge fervently and often ably maintains. And it was simply because the very nature of the will as a self-determining power was alleged to be incompatible with the doctrines of grace, that he wrote his masterly "Inquiry," which after the lapse of a century, still seems to live, although scarcely a year passes, in which some new assailant does not undertake to slay it.

Coleridge argues (*Aids*, pp. 42-3-4), for the possibility of "a pre-disposing influence on the will from without," which shall not impair its freedom, in order to remove objections to the doctrine that the Holy Spirit may work *in* it, without infringing on its liberty. On the other hand he insists, (p. 163), that man by the fall, has admitted a nature into his will, thus subjecting it to the law of cause and effect, and destroying its power to become truly good, without the inworking of the Spirit. Still further, we find the following memorable passage:

"The elements of necessity and free-will are reconciled in the higher power of an omnipresent Providence, that predestinates the whole in the moral freedom of the integral parts. Of this the Bible never suffers us to lose sight. The root is never detached from the ground. It is God everywhere; and all creatures conform to his decrees, the righteous by performance of the law, the disobedient by the sufferance of the penalty." *Statesman's Manual*, p. 42.

Again, (*Aids*, p. 185), he represents obedience as following from faith and love, "by that moral necessity which is the highest form of freedom." This is sufficiently near Augustine's view of the nature of liberty, as given by Neander, viz: that "on the highest point of moral elevation, freedom and necessity coincide." We think, indeed, if Coleridge had carefully exam-

ined Edwards, he would have found that he contended for no other than a "moral necessity" in the acts of the will, and that this was "the highest form of freedom." That view of the will which admits of its so becoming enslaved to evil, or attempered to goodness, as to sin or obey, by a "moral necessity," which is compatible with a predestinating Providence, to whose decrees "all creatures conform," the righteous and the wicked, is quite as high a style of Necessitarianism as has ever found favour among any reputable Calvinists or Edwardeans.

Our readers are prepared by this time to find Coleridge an advocate of the doctrine of original sin in some form. No theologian ever affirmed more strenuously or uniformly than he, the universal moral corruption of mankind, and their need of renovation by supernatural grace, or more valiantly met all classes who impugn it. He gets from the Germans his method of explaining and vindicating it, which he thinks puts it on a vastly higher vantage ground than the common methods of theologians.

He names it *Original Sin*, because every man *originates* it for himself by the act of his own will. According to his view, if it had any other origin, its possessor could have no responsibility or guilt on account of it. (*Aids*, p. 173). Hence he regards the account of the fall given in Genesis as an allegory, in which the serpent represents the understanding, appealing to the desire represented in its turn by the woman, and thus seducing the will, representing the "manhood" of our nature, from its allegiance to the reason! Thus every man falls for himself, Adam being no otherwise the representative of mankind than as he was first in the historic chain of instances! This surely would seem to be ultra-Pelagian. And yet he says:

"Now let the grounds, on which the fact of an evil inherent in the will is affirmable in the instance of any one man, be supposed equally applicable in *every* instance, and concerning all men; so that the fact is asserted of the individual, *not* because he has committed this or that crime, or because he has shown himself to be *this* or *that* man, but simply because he is *a* man. Let the evil be supposed such as to imply the impossibility of an individual's referring to any particular time at which it might be supposed to have commenced, or to any period of his existence at which it was not existing. Let it be supposed that the subject stands in no relation whatever to time, can neither

be called *in* time nor *out* of time. \* \* \* Let the reader suppose this, and he will have before him the precise import of the scriptural *doctrine* of original sin; or rather of the fact acknowledged in all ages, and recognized, but not originating, in the Christian scriptures." (*Aids*, p. 173).

It is obvious that he considers the true solution of this doctrine to be found, in placing it among those transcendental "ideas of the reason" which admit of no explanation beyond themselves. How then does this surpass the orthodox mode of handling this doctrine? In no respect whatever that we can see. Both agree, that the will of man in every period of his existence before regeneration is enslaved to evil. And the Westminster confession, as well as Coleridge, makes this a consequence of man's "being left to the freedom of his own will." But they differ, as the latter accepts the scriptural solution, according to which the race fell in the fall of its progenitor and representative; while he rejects the scriptural history as a myth, and attempts to find the origin of human corruption in a transcendental, timeless, incomprehensible fiction of his own, and not obscurely intimates that the true solution is to be found in "a spiritual fall or apostacy *antecedent* to the formation of man." (p. 177). Surely this explanation of original sin needs no further comment from us. While he thus maintains a just view of the actual corruption, and bondage of human nature, coupled with wholly visionary explanations of its origin, he presses one view of the subject with great prominence, and, as we think, with high advantage to the cause of Christianity in its conflict with those who would assail it with entangling objections derived from this doctrine, viz: that sin exists in all its direness and universality independently of all revelation, and that the Bible has no peculiar concern with it, except as it is connected with that redemption from it, which is the great article of Christianity. "Beware of arguments against Christianity, that cannot stop there, and consequently ought not to have commenced there." (pp. 176-7.)

With this view of the enslavement of the will, we are prepared to find him, as he is, uniformly sound, and earnest, on the necessity of spiritual regeneration, and the insufficiency of human nature to attain true holiness without it. On this subject we will barely cite a passage from the "Aids to Reflection," which,

soon after its publication, met the eye of a young theological student who had begun to be captivated by the Pelagian speculations of the day, and started a most beneficial revolution in all his views of theology.

“Often have I heard it said by the advocates for the Socinian scheme—True! we are all sinners; but even in the Old Testament God has promised forgiveness on repentance. One of the fathers, (I forget which) supplies the retort. True! God has promised pardon on penitence; but has He promised penitence on sin? He that repenteth shall be forgiven; but where is it said, he that sinneth shall repent? But repentance, perhaps, the repentance required in scripture, *the passing into a new mind*, into a new and contrary principle of action, this *METANOIA*, is in the sinner’s own power? at his own liking? He has but to open his eyes to the sin, and the tears are at hand to wash it away! Verily, the exploded tenet of *transubstantiation* is scarcely at greater variance with the common sense and experience of mankind, or borders more closely on a contradiction in terms, than this volunteer *transmentation*, this self-change, as the easy means of self-salvation.” (pp. 82-3.)

We believe indeed, that Coleridge has done a good service in counteracting the Pelagian tendencies of many young men, in a state of mind, in which they would have given no respectful heed to any reasoner, who did not gain their attention, by making high pretensions to new discoveries in metaphysics and metaphysical theology. As a consequence of his principles already exhibited, he holds “that the doctrine of election is in itself a necessary inference from an undeniable fact; necessary at least for all who hold that the best of men are what they are through the grace of God.” (p. 113.) At the same time he gives some just and valuable cautions against the practice of overlooking the practical bearings and uses of this and similar truths, and of pressing them into all the possible logical consequences, detrimental to religion, which may seem to flow from them, in our imperfect comprehension of the premises they furnish. This faulty mode of treating this doctrine, is the real secret of the repugnance to it, felt by many good men. They thus encumber it with monstrosities which are no part of it, and mistake their abhorrence of these for abhorrence of the doctrine “once delivered to the saints.”

Coleridge also (p. 203,) repudiates the doctrine of baptismal regeneration, and indeed seemed to go the extreme length of questioning the scriptural grounds for Infant Baptism, although he allowed and practised it, as lawful and edifying.

We are sorry to find, along with this orthodoxy on correlative doctrines, the grossest error respecting the atonement, the central doctrine of the Bible. He distinctly denies its vicarious nature. Here is another foul residuum of his Unitarianism, that clung to him through life. He disposes of all those scriptural phrases which represent it as vicarious, by making them mere metaphorical descriptions of its beneficial effects upon the sinner, and not at all indicative of its nature. Here again he illustrates the aptness and the need of his transcendental "ideas of reason." He describes the act of Christ which causes our redemption, as "a spiritual and transcendent mystery that passeth all understanding," and "the effect caused, as the being born anew," (p. 200,) and again as "a regeneration." (p. 193.)

Now that one great result of Christ's death, is the regeneration through the Spirit, of those who partake of its efficacy, cannot be doubted. But as a condition of this, and especially of its resulting in salvation, we hold it to have been requisite that our sins should be expiated, by the transfer of their penalty to another, suffering in our stead, and accepted of God for this purpose. And we hold that no doctrine is taught in the Bible with greater clearness, frequency, and force, than the necessity of vicarious suffering by others in order to the pardon of sin. Clearly imaged forth in all the sacrifices of the ancient ritual, more fully announced in the distincter unfoldings of prophecy, implied in all the figurative descriptions of the atonement, as a ransom, a payment of a debt, or purchase, it is most explicitly asserted in all formal statements and reasonings on the subject which the Bible contains, especially in Rom. iii. iv. v. which Coleridge has not even noticed. Moreover it is just that provision which the conscience stricken sinner needs, and without which he can neither obtain peace nor hope. For his conscience assures him that his sin must awaken the abhorrence of a righteous God, and likewise require a manifestation of that abhorrence, in the award of proportionate penal suffering. And he sees no way of escape from this, except in the transfer of it to an accepted substitute, who bore our sins, and suffered the just for the unjust. We are

atonement

happy to find that Coleridge, when he utters his own practical feelings as a Christian, so often and so fervently speaks in the common Christian dialect on this subject; thus illustrating his own favourite maxim, that a right heart often neutralizes and cures speculative errors; that "Christianity is not a theory, or a speculation; but a *life*. Not a *philosophy* of life, but a life and a living process." (p. 131.)

It is a sufficient reply to his arguments against a vicarious atonement, that they all proceed upon two assumptions, 1. That it is the "payment of a debt," in the commercial and literal sense; and 2. That it procures the justification, but not the sanctification of those who are saved by it. They of course demand an answer from those only, if any there be, who adopt such views of it.

We think that his later works indicate a growth in Coleridge of that peculiar mood, which it has become fashionable in various quarters to laud as the "churchly feeling." He evidently came to attribute a high life-giving energy to the church and the eucharist. How far this was connected with his theory of the atonement, as having a purely quickening and regenerating virtue, we cannot say. We know however that there is a school of "churchly" theologians, who are no strangers to Coleridge and the German transcendental theology, and who descant largely upon the office of Christ as a quickening, or according to their more expressive rendering a "life-making" spirit. These hold that this quickening virtue is deposited in the church, and comes forth to men in the sacraments. And they profess to occupy some mid-point between the Romanists and Protestants on this subject, though it is not always easy to find the boundary that separates their view from the Papal. Coleridge clearly occupied similar ground respecting the eucharist, as he has "defined his position" in his posthumous works. He says (*Table Talk*, Vol. I. pp. 102-3,) "That sacramentaries have volatilized the eucharist into a metaphor; the Romanists have condensed it into an idol." In his *Literary Remains* (Vol. III. pp. 78, 336, 391,) he shows that he does not deem the Romish theory encumbered with any absurdity, and that the Protestant arguments against it are unsatisfactory. A body according to him, consists of its visible, or "phenomenal" particles and its invisible substrate or "noumenon." And in his view there is no absurdity in suppo-

sing that the visible material and form of the bread should remain unchanged, while its invisible substrate is removed, and its place supplied by that of the body of Christ. These views it is true he does not defend. But whether they may not have been put forth as "feelers and pioneers" to prepare the way for further progress, is a question. It is not a question however, whether they have not acted as such upon some who were pre-disposed this way, and started them on their march towards that extreme ecclesiasticism, which scarcely knows how sufficiently to vent its disgust at Puritanism. We have merely indicated the route by which we suppose some, once styling themselves Coleridgeians, have been conducted to ultra-ritualism.

Some other crude conceits, uttered but not defended, and many other fine thoughts upon religion, scattered throughout his writings, might with great propriety be noticed, if we had room. We have however accomplished our main design. We have attempted to furnish our readers the means of forming a fair estimate of Coleridge as a man and as an author, especially in those departments, which are more particularly within our immediate province. We have not been unaware of the difficulty and delicacy of the task, which none can understand, so well as those who undertake it. That our labour should satisfy *all* is not to be expected. If it shall enlighten *any*, our brightest hopes will have been realized. We trust we have made it evident that his works abound in "thoughts that breathe and words that burn," to an extent that will render them precious to the lovers of mental, moral and theological science, of poetry and elegant letters. On the other hand, they are so incomplete, so deformed by large mixtures of error, of crude, extemporaneous conceits, of dreamy, transcendental mysticism, that to become a servile follower or imitator of Coleridge is a degradation; an injury for which all the advantages gained by the study of him is no compensation. So far as they have led our young preachers and theologians to profounder studies, to a more generous culture, to a broader acquaintance and more intimate communion with the noblest authors, to a more robust mental discipline, to the adoption of a pure and lofty standard in morals, and cordial belief in the necessity of grace in order to realize that standard, their influence has been good. So far as they have raised up a distinct Coleridgeian, German, or transcendental school of blind ad-

mirers or eulogists; so far as they have given birth to a set of conceited and scornful sciolists, bandying the barbarous phrases of this school of metaphysics, and belabouring those for their shallowness, who do not understand it, despising "every thing but their own contemptible arrogance;" so far as they have trained up a race of preachers, who in place of the kindly verities of the gospel, deliver chilling and icy literary or metaphysical essays however brilliant, so far they have wrought evil. Coleridge though furnishing the richest treasures with which to stock our mind, if only he be mastered by, instead of mastering us, has faults so numerous and gross as utterly to disqualify him for being a model. These however are relieved and even dignified by their conjunction with his amazing genius and mighty intellect. But misproportions which are endurable in a giant, become insufferable in a dwarf. The transition from the great master to the miniature Coleridges, making a show like him of

" Piercing the long-neglected holy cave,  
The haunt obscure of old philosophy,"

is a complete plunge from the sublime to the ridiculous, and presents us all "the contortions of the Sibyl without its inspiration."

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ART. II.—*A History of Virginia, from its Discovery and Settlement by Europeans, to the present time.* By Robert R. Howison, Vol. II. Containing the History of the Colony and of the State from 1763 to the Retrocession of Alexandria, in 1847, with a Review of the Present Condition of Virginia. Richmond: Drinker & Morris. New York and London: Wiley & Putnam. 1848. 8vo. pp. 528.

NOTHING is easier than to say how a history ought to be written, and nothing harder than thus to write it. It is easy to say that a history ought to give a graphic picture of the inner life as well as the outward progress of a nation; that it ought to conduct us to the firesides and wardrobes of a people as well as to their courts, their cabinets and their battle-fields; that it should lay bare the great causes that gave shape to a nation's destiny, and deduce the great lessons that are taught by a nation's fate; that it should compress the facts and reasonings