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doctrine; he must be familiar with it; familiar not simply with its general principles but also with its details, with its arguments, its controversies, its remote relations. He must have such a mastery over its recondite problems as will give him a power of writing *down* upon them, instead of making an ever confused and confusing effort to write *up* to them. He must live in the truth as Uriel stood in the sun, and must diffuse its radiance around him in ever diverging lines. He must draw the gospel out into his life, and be an impersonation of the duties which he abstractly commends. He must be fascinated with his work, must watch with eagerness and patient hope for the right times and the right modes of influence, must live as a stranger in the world from which he is to keep himself unspotted and for which he is to give himself up to prayer and fasting. He must not forbear to enrich his mind, through fear that his heart will be impoverished, but he should aim to make his intellectual wealth a mere tributary to his spirit of devotion. Above all he should never so misapprehend his nature as to neglect the cultivation of his piety through fear of weakening his mental powers, but should know that *bene orasse est bene studuisse*, that "greater is he who ruleth his spirit than he who taketh a city," and that a sound and healthy moral growth, as it may be a consequent, should also be and will and must be an antecedent of the most vigorous intellectual development. As the body without the spirit is dead, so the intellect without the heart is destitute of its highest life.

ARTICLE VI.

COLERIDGE AND HIS AMERICAN DISCIPLES.

By Rev. Noah Porter, Jr. Professor in Yale College.

THE name of Coleridge is already splendid and world-renowned. Wherever English Literature is known, there Coleridge is known as a poet, critic, scholar, philosopher, and theologian. As a poet, he has not merely attained the highest fame among those with whom he has measured himself in the accustomed orbs of the poet's flight; but he has created for himself new

circles in which to fly, and borne himself through them with a strength and grace, that compels applause. Indeed there are single poems of his, which for splendid yet appropriate imagery, for purity of sentiment refined almost above the attainment of the holiest mortal, for the use of language at once as hard and polished as the sculptured gem and as liquid as flowing oil, and for their sustained and consistent perfection to one harmonious and strong impression, are unsurpassed by any productions of the sons of song. As a critic, Coleridge benefited his own generation, and has left his impress on English literature, by introducing to notice a class of writers who had been strangely neglected and forgotten. He has given to the study of literature a high and a peculiar interest, by showing its relations to all the noblest interests of man, and its capacity to serve in his culture for this life, and to his training for heaven. Above all, by applying powers such as his, capable of *creating*, to the humble office of interpreting the works of others, he has left behind him critiques which are as wonderful as his own poems, and which combine the peculiar interest which pertains to two minds, the original creator and his no less gifted commentator. As a scholar, Coleridge is remarkable for the extent, the thoroughness and the variety of his studies in so many departments of human knowledge, and perhaps more than all else for the high moral aims, and the exciting, invigorating influence of his various productions. Animated by his example and labors, thousands of youthful scholars have widened their range of study, have been inspired to a more laborious and yet more cheerful diligence, have turned their studies to a genial and purifying influence upon their own souls, and have brought with willing steps, the first and the choicest fruits of their toils as an offering for the altar of God.

In respect to the merits of Coleridge as a theologian and philosopher, there is a diversity of judgment among those in whose opinion, on such subjects, men are accustomed to confide. None, it is believed, deny that force and acuteness of intellect, are displayed in his writings on these subjects. Much less, would any be so daring as to deny, that these writings have exerted a decisive and lasting influence in England and in this country. But as to whether these writings are to be sought or should be avoided, and whether their actual influence has been good or bad, opinions are various and warmly opposed to each other.

A writer who proposes to himself as a theme, "Coleridge's Theology and Metaphysics," may with reason consider himself

committed to a somewhat formidable undertaking. His position becomes not a little more unpleasant, when he considers the various receptions which his views must meet with, whatever they may be. Of Coleridge's philosophy one party can say nothing too laudatory and good. Another party can say nothing too bad. Another party will say nothing definite, but are content to use it when it is convenient for their party-purposes. As to his influence on theology and philosophy, in the views of some, it has been wholly healthful; in the judgment of others, altogether deleterious and deadly. Some will doubtless judge that the theme should never again be broached in a theological journal, because "Coleridgism" has worked itself through already. Others will think that the time has not yet come, for it has not worked itself far enough to its results. Some will think that the essay comes too soon, others that it is too late, others that it had best not come at all.

One advantage however comes from this peculiar position of things in the religious and theological world. It lays upon the adventurer in this turbid and unquiet sea, the necessity of being considerate and fair, an obligation which is too rarely heeded in theological discussion. The sacredness of this obligation the writer of this essay is happy to recognize. If he shall succeed in being mindful of it, he will satisfy himself, better than he expects to satisfy the retailer of religious gossip or the prejudiced theological partizan.

To do justice to Coleridge as a philosopher, it is necessary to study Coleridge as a man. To appreciate the merits and the defects of his theological system, one needs to acquaint himself intimately, with his living and personal self, and to know both his personal and mental history. We can always understand a man's writings and opinions better, for having seen and known him. Much more can we do this to better advantage if his system seems dark or peculiar, or if its merits have been involved in sharp dispute.

Samuel Taylor Coleridge¹ was born at Ottery St. Mary, Devonshire, Oct. 21, 1772, and died at Highgate, July 25th, 1834. His father was a clergyman of great learning and purity of mind, but of little worldly wisdom. His mother possessed an affectionate disposition, and more knowledge of the affairs of this life than

¹ See *Life of S. T. Coleridge* by James Gilman, London, 1838, of which one volume only has been published. See also *Recollections, etc. of S. T. Coleridge* by Joseph Cottle.

her husband. Their son gave tokens from the earliest childhood, of a singular precocity, abstractedness and force of intellect, of an imagination so absorbing as to make him a day-dreamer, and of a most gentle and affectionate disposition. He says of himself "I was in earliest childhood huffed away from the enjoyments of muscular activity in 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. I never played except by myself, and then only acting over what I had been reading or fancying, or half one, half the other, with a stick cutting down weeds and nettles, as one of the seven champions of Christendom. 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." Soon after the death of his father, Coleridge was sent to Christ's Hospital in London, being then only seven years of age. Concerning this he exclaims, "Oh the cruelty of separating a poor lad from his early homestead! How in my dreams would my native town come back, with its churches and trees and faces!" Here "he was depressed, moping, friendless, a poor orphan half-starved." His constitution was originally delicate, and by excess in bathing, a foundation was laid for "those bodily sufferings which embittered his life and rendered it little else than one of continued sickness and suffering."¹ From eight to fourteen, in addition to his school studies, in which he might have been passed off for as "pretty a juvenile prodigy as was ever emasculated and ruined by fond and idle wonderments," he indulged his appetite for reading to an enormous extent. Before he went to the university, he earnestly sought to be apprenticed to a neighboring shoemaker, for whom he had contracted a liking, and had been very soundly flogged for setting himself up as an infidel, on the reading of Voltaire's Philosophical Dictionary. At the age of nineteen he was entered at Jesus' College, Cambridge. "He left school with great anticipations of success from all who knew him, for his character for scholarship and extraordinary accounts of his genius had preceded him." "His first step was to involve himself in much misery, which followed him in after life." Being ignorant of university customs, he trusted the furnishing of his lodgings to a private upholsterer, who involved him at a stroke,

¹ "Sickness 'tis true

Whole years of weary days, besieged him close

Even to the gates and inlets of his life."

A Tombless Epitaph by S. T. C.

all without means as he was, in a debt of a hundred pounds. It was the vexation from his college debts, and the despair of obtaining a Fellowship and of attaining to the honors and ease of a university life, through his distaste for the mathematics, that drove him from Cambridge in agony and desperation, in 1793, after a career brilliant in the studies and pursuits which were congenial to his taste. He went to London and enlisted in a regiment of dragoons, under the name of Comberbacke. The story is well known of his being restored to his friends, and of his return to Cambridge. Here he did not remain long, but left the university without a degree. While at the university he became a Unitarian in religion, and a Hartleian in philosophy, by the influence of a fellow collegian by the name of Freud, and as it would seem, under the same impulses by which college students so readily become anything that is antagonistic to the influences about them. This effectually prevented his taking orders in the church of England, and he resolved upon literature as his profession for life.

He associated himself with Southey, and their joint residence was in Bristol and its neighborhood, from 1794 to 1798. It was at Bristol that his dream of Pantisocracy, or a millennial social State on the banks of the Susquehanna, was matured and shattered. It was here that his zeal for the new era which the French revolution promised, was most ardent, and was then dashed forever by the bitter disappointment in which thousands of the generous youth of England sympathized. It was here that he was known as a political lecturer and a Unitarian preacher. It was here too, that his political powers revived and brought forth buds and flowers of so glorious promise. It was here also, at the foot of the Quantock,¹ that his philosophical and religious opinions underwent so entire a revolution, and the foundations were laid of his new views in theology and metaphysical science.

In 1798 he went to Germany with Wordsworth, where he resided fourteen months. He returned with a knowledge of German and of the Kantian philosophy. After his return he was

¹ "I retired to a cottage in Somersetshire at the foot of the Quantock, and devoted my thoughts and studies to the foundations of religion and morals. Here I found myself all afloat. Doubts rushed in; broke upon me 'from the fountains of the great deep' and fell 'from the windows of heaven.' The fountal truths of natural religion and the books of Revelation alike contribute to the flood; and it was long ere my ark touched on an Ararat, and rested."—*Literary Life*, 2d Am. ed. p. 117.

employed with Southey and others to write for the *Morning Chronicle*, and resided awhile at Keswick and Grasmere. His health requiring the change, he set sail for Malta in 1802, from whence he returned to England in 1806. From this time till 1816 he had no fixed home. During this interval he published the first edition of *The Friend*, and in 1816 the *Biographia Literaria*.

It was not far from the time of his return from Germany, 1799, that he was led to the habit of using opium to excess. He began it with entire ignorance that it was opium which he took, and remained for some months in the simplicity of this ignorance. His constant ill-health was the continued occasion, arising from a complication of internal maladies, "the cause of which was the organic change slowly and gradually taking place in the structure of the heart itself." To the evil of this practice he became terrifically alive before he broke himself from its bonds. He confessed its sin and its shame, in letters written during the period of indulging it, and by a deliberate record in the review after his emancipation.¹

It was as a patient laboring under this infirmity that he came to the residence of Dr. Gilman, Highgate, in the year 1816. Here he remained till his death, a cherished inmate, with friends in every way fitted to appreciate and soothe him. His efforts at self conquest were effectual, and Coleridge gained an entire victory over the appetite, which to a man whose frame was disease itself, must have presented the strongest and the most plausible solicitations to be gratified.

We shall not stay to speak of the genius of Coleridge. The extent of his reading, the ease with which he saw the secret of every subject, the splendor of his imagination, the force and fire of his language, are most obvious to every reader. There was one feature, however, which deserves a distinct recognition, as the key to the marked idiosyncrasy of his intellect and character. This was his entire inability to comprehend or adapt himself to the minds of other men. The richness and force of his own mind, seemed to absorb him altogether, and to shed itself like a bewildering glare over every man and thing which came near him. He imagined, or seemed to imagine, that the intellectual world of other minds moved in unison and harmony with his own; that they saw with his insight, and read with his reading, and were transferred so entirely into his consciousness, that what was to

¹ Gilman's Life, pp. 246—251.

him method and demonstration, was method and demonstration to them. This intellectual characteristic always pertains in a degree to every great mind, which is so borne forward by the strong stream of its own native force, or is so occupied with its own movements, as to misjudge in respect to the impression which it makes on others. But in Coleridge its development was out of all reasonable proportions; it was in very deed *monstrous*. First of all, his disposition was childlike, nay it was almost infantine, gentle, affectionate and confiding; he never dreamed of instructing others by authority, but would as soon sit at their feet to learn of them, as to place them at his own. It was only by slow experience, learned by numberless painful lessons, that he came at last to know, that all men were not like himself either in capacity or in teachableness. Then, too, Coleridge was never forced, by the routine of any profession or employment, to adapt his own mind to the workings of other minds. He was never, so to speak, interlocked and caught into the movements of the intellectual world around him.¹ In the school and the university, the ebullient and rejoicing tide of his own strong spirit, broke over all the barriers, which were fitted to guide and regulate its flowing. Domestic life, for whose fault we know not, failed to lead him by its gentler and more gradual guidance, into the ways and habits of the social world. He hardly assumed, and if he assumed, he never could fulfil the responsibilities of any regular engagement or service.

This is not all. He had good reason to be careless of the opinions of other men, and even to despise the works and ways of the generation with which he lived, especially during the earlier period of his literary life. No one who knows anything of the degeneracy of the true life of England, during the first twenty-

¹ Coleridge, in early manhood, was intimate with Mr. afterwards Sir Humphry Davy. Perhaps at that moment there were no two young minds in England, more alike in their original endowments for poetry and science, than these two young men, who were perhaps gifted with a more splendid genius than any two men of their age. This is proved by the entireness of their sympathy with each other. Their later history as we follow them in their wide divergence from each other, in respect to the movement of their minds and the positive results of each to science, is a fine comment on the difference between a man who makes his impulses his law, or in other words is a lawless rover in the intellectual world, and one who attaches himself to the minds of others, and by bending to their wants and sympathies, yields and commands his generation. In the dialogues entitled "Consolations in Travel," by Davy, there is hardly a page that does not suggest the thoughts of Coleridge, both by similarity and contrast.

five years after Coleridge appeared, can doubt, that much of his impatient contempt of his contemporaries, was honorable and only honorable to himself. His own fervent and indignant words fitly describe this condition of things, and his own feelings in respect to it. "Oh holy Paul! Oh beloved John! full of light and love, whose books are full of intuitions, as those of Paul are books of energies. O Luther! Calvin! Fox with Penn and Barclay! O Zinzendorf! and ye too, Francis of Sales and Fenelon; yea, even Aquinas and Scotus! With what astoundment would ye, if ye were alive, with your merely human perfections, listen to the creed of our, so called, rational religionists! Rational! They, who in the very outset deny all reason and leave us nothing but degrees to distinguish us from brutes;" [who apply figurative interpretation "to rot away the very pillars, yea, to fret away and dissolve the very corner stones of the temple of religion"]. "Oh place before your eyes the island of Britain, in the reign of Alfred, its unpierced woods, its wide morasses and dreary heaths, its blood-stained and desolated shores, its untaught and scanty population; behold the monarch listening now to Bede, and now to John Erigena; and then see the same realm, a mighty empire, full of motion, full of books, where the cotter's son, twelve years old, has read more than archbishops of yore, and possesses the opportunity of reading more than our Alfred himself;—and then, finally, behold this mighty nation, its rulers and its wise men, listening to—Paley, and to—Malthus! It is mournful! mournful!"¹

Nor was it for a superficial philosophy and a shallow religionism alone, that Coleridge had reason to be offended with the men of his time. In literature, too, as we should expect, their tastes were wholly at variance with his. With the exception of Burke and Cowper, how vapid and unsatisfying was the literature of England till the Lake school of poets, with their associate prose writers, fought themselves into popularity and changed for the better the current of English thought and feeling. Let any one compare the best writers in England, at the present moment, with what they were fifty years since, and how vast is the change for the better in respect to the worthiness of their themes and the manner in which they are treated.

In effecting this change Coleridge was most active. In order to effect it, he was obliged to contend against fixed habits, inveterate prejudices, acute and masterly criticism, and savage satire

¹ Southey's *Omniana*, 1812.

which gave no quarter to his own vulnerable points, and these were not a few. It is not surprising that the necessities of this contest aggravated his indifference and contempt for his contemporaries. Besides, he was treated with manifest, and it would seem, with malicious injustice, where his real excellencies demanded high praise. His mystical and extravagant metaphysics might justly have been criticised as out of place; the *strain* so often to be seen in his eloquence and poetry and the want of adaptation to the minds of others, might both have received strong and deserved rebuke, if there had been a disposition to do him homage as one of the greatest men of his own or of any age. But this was not shown. The Edinburgh and Quarterly Reviews, then the sole administrators of public justice in the literary world, showed by their treatment of Coleridge, that it was their function to obey the public taste, quite as much as to command and control it. The one honored him with a vulgar and savage ridicule. The other 'damned with its faint praise,' his noblest works.¹ Let this be remembered, as a palliation that his sensitive and wronged spirit, kept itself apart from the minds of his time.

We have dwelt upon this peculiarity in the man Coleridge, because, without being distinctly aware of it and without keeping it strongly before the mind, it is impossible to do justice to the merits or the defects of his philosophy and theology.

When we open the prose writings of Coleridge and search after his opinions, we are attracted and repelled by their peculiarities of thought and of language. The glow, the freshness and force of detached passages, surprise and delight us. While the endless digressions, the remote allusions and the wild strangeness of the whole, half bewilder and distract us. Here a fairy grotto half intoxicates with its wondrous revelation, glittering with gems, and illuminated by an enchanted light, as we look in upon its long withdrawn recesses. Then a yawning cavern opens wide upon us its dark and damp mouth, into whose metaphysical recesses, frightful and bewildering, the eye seeks in vain to penetrate, and the foot fears to follow.

The fact is that these writings are, with few exceptions, strictly and literally *improvisations*. Coleridge was the greatest talker of his day, and he talked as he wrote, and wrote as he talked.

¹ It is an amusing and instructive study to follow through these Reviews, the notices, and neglect too, of Coleridge's several works, as these notices appeared or did not appear from time to time, and to contrast them with the high respect and perhaps the eulogy of these journals, when Coleridge's name is now adverted to.

He once asked Charles Lamb, whether he ever heard him preach. "I never heard you do anything else," stammered out the poet, half unconscious of the tremendous truth he uttered. When we read the writings of Coleridge, we are to take them, as coming directly and suddenly from his mind, without elaboration into method and without revision. Hence we should not be surprised to find, here a principle on which he had reflected for years, matured and ready to be plucked from the tree, and there, a mere guess or fancy that had struck him for the first time as possibly true. Nor should we be offended that his writing all seems to be framed on the basis of his own reading, so that provided a principle appears to his mind to be true, he asks not whether the argument by which he sustains it, will be understood by the recipient, and whether the illustration will or will not shed darkness and bewilderment rather than light. We must look for long and impassioned digressions, in which the mind of the *improvisateur* is given up to the passion of the moment, and sometimes for a wandering so far from the starting post that when he bethinks himself, it is too late even for the inspired one himself to find his way back.

It is allowed on all hands to be especially unfortunate for a teacher of anything, to take it for granted, that his pupil knows all that he does about the subject; especially is it unfortunate, if he also seems to think, that this knowledge lies before your mind in the same method in which it lies in his own; that it has been gathered from the same writers, and illustrated by the same facts, and is interesting from the same associations; more especially is it unfortunate, if the subject matter be subtle metaphysics or deep theology; and most especially, if the metaphysics be new, the theology novel, and the nomenclature Kantian, Platonic, Scholastic and Coleridgian. But all these *infortunissimæ* are to be encountered by the student of Coleridge.

One thing more and we shall have done with our premising. Coleridge is a poet and an orator as well as a metaphysician. Far be it from us to object this against him. A vivid imagination with its elastic force, and its warm glow, and its perpetual fount of striking illustrations, is no mean appendage to the theologian and philosopher. It is only inconvenient, when instead of argument we are served with a striking simile, and when after being conducted through a course of subtle distinctions and refined analysis; after having been convinced *ad nauseam* that the old dogmas are superficial and hollow, and all things are brought to

converge on the revelation of some great truth, and we are just about to spring forward to grasp it, we find in its place a *stop-gap* of some eloquent apostrophe, one fourth eloquence, one fourth poetry, one fourth philosophy and one fourth *opium*! But all this we find in the writings of Coleridge. In saying this, we do not abate in the least from the honest homage which we render him as a philosopher and theologian, but rather yield the higher homage which we owe to the truth. When we speak of the elated exhilaration, which was natural enough to an imagination so wondrous as his, as having been aggravated by the use of this drug, we do but confess our conviction of its permanent influence on the mind of one, whom we believe strove against and overcame, its unlawful dominion. There are more men than there ought to be, about whose goodness and greatness the world are less divided in opinion, than they are in respect to Coleridge, who have suffered in the soundness and reliability of their intellects from the same cause.¹

In attempting to criticise Coleridge as a Christian philosopher, it has seemed to us that his merits may be best considered under the three divisions of his general influence upon the science and study of theology, his scheme of positive opinions and his transcendental metaphysics.

First we shall consider his general services. Under this head we name first of all, the assertion to theology of its true dignity. Lord Bacon speaks of Christian theology "as the haven and sabbath of all man's contemplations;" and there have been times in the history of England when theology held this place in the estimation of her educated men. Carlyle speaks the literal truth of the times of king James I, when to be learned in theology "was not then ridiculous but glorious to be. More glorious than the monarchy of what we now call literature would be; glorious as the faculty of a Goethe holding visibly of heaven; supreme skill in theology then meant that. To know God, *Θεός*, the *MAKER*, to know the divine laws and *inner* harmonies of this universe, must always be the highest glory for a man! And not

¹ We must confess our surprise, that when Coleridge is arraigned before the public on his religious and his theological character, it is deemed sufficient to procure his condemnation to say, that he used opium, with no inquiry on the part of the writer, too often, and apparently with neither knowledge nor disposition to know whether there was any disease to make it necessary, as was the case with Robert Hall, who used enormous quantities; or whether he did or did not abandon the habit, or whether the triumph might not have been itself the noblest testimony to the excellence of the man and the resource of his faith.

to know them, always the highest disgrace for a man, however common it be."¹

Such was the estimation in which theology was once held in England's literature. But it had sadly fallen from this high place, especially when Coleridge began to write. Theology had not only been degraded from her position at the head of the ranks in respect to human science, but seemed to have been turned out of the ranks of science altogether. This was partly the consequence of the reigning infidelity and shallow religionism, which had infected England to its very core, in the church and out of it. It was partly owing to the impotency and cowardice of many who called themselves theologians, partly to the spirit of the cloister which has ever made her abode in the English church, and which stands ready to turn the revived intellect and zeal of that church into the monkish spirit, in order, as it would seem, to do the largest and most effectual service to prevailing unbelief.² With the decline of theology, as must of necessity be the case, mental and metaphysical science had also declined, and in their place appeared too often the acute pettifogger in the service of infidelity, or the simpering waiting-maid in the service of what ought to have been the science of Christianity. And some of the theologians who did appear for the defence of the truth in a manly armor, cut themselves off from the world of literature by their clownish and unmannerly style, their narrow and unscientific spirit, their technical formality, their scholastic distinctions, the cast-off clothes of another generation; or were repressed in their better aspirations by the frown of church authority, and the sanctimonious horror of learned but monkish bigots. Theological sci-

¹ Letters and Speeches of Oliver Cromwell, Introd. Chap. IV.

² "Of the English divines in general, this was his [Dr. Arnold's] deliberate opinion; 'Why is it,' he said, 'that there are so few great works in theology compared with any other subject? Is it that all other books on the subject appear insignificant by the side of the Scriptures? There appears to me in all the English divines a want of believing or disbelieving anything, because it is true or false. Butler is indeed a noble exception.' As he excepted Butler among the divines of a later period, so among those of the earlier period, he excepted Hooker, whose Ecclesiastical Polity, as a whole, he regarded with great admiration, though with great dislike of parts of it. 'I long to see something which should solve what is to me the great problem of Hooker's mind. He is the only man that I know, who, holding with his whole mind and soul the idea of the eternal distinction between moral and positive laws, holds with it the love for a priestly and ceremonial religion, such as appears in the Fifth Book.'"—Life and Cor. of Dr. Arnold, Chap. VIII. p. 296 1st Am. ed. See also Arnold's Misc. Works, 'The Oxford Malignants.'

ence was avoided as a dry technicality, or rejected as a stupid mystery, or mocked at for its conscious impotence and its whining solicitations for the public regard.¹

It was no slight service that Coleridge rendered to theology when he stepped into this arena, to restore to her proper place on the highest throne of human science, the honored mistress of his heart. He himself having explored all the departments of

¹ We are aware that to many these remarks may, at first sight, seem to be disrespectful of worthy men, and able writers, as well as in their general tone exaggerated and sweeping. We yield to no one in the fervor of our regard, for those eminent men in the church and among the dissenters, who labored as preachers and writers, against the infidelity, the rationalism, and latitudinarianism of their time, and who left their impress upon their generation. It is not in the order of nature, however, when a great reform in the religious life of a people occurs, after so great a degeneracy, as that which prevailed in England during the 18th century, that it should commence in the high places of literature and theology. The intellect of a people declines with its piety, and piety must first be enkindled before the intellect is invigorated. Able preachers and practical writers will appear before eminent Christian writers and thinkers.

It would however be more than affectation to conceal the opinion we hold, that owing to the fatal genius of the English church, blighting and misdirecting the highest gifts of piety and talent within its pale, and starving and overawing the dissenters out of it, that scientific theology, or manly and earnest thinking on the great themes of revelation, has been discountenanced and discouraged on English soil. In consequence, English literature and English theology have suffered and continue to suffer, in spite of all the ability which is active at this moment, to bring it back to its allegiance to God.

We add also that we speak not of this or that sect, but of the whole of England, and of necessity of that large body of thinking and cultivated men who are trained in the universities, and nurtured in the church, and to whom English theology so long owed a fearful debt through her apathy and negligence. We speak with the ideal in mind, of what the literature of a Christian nation ought to be, so rich in culture and so abundant in genius; how reverent towards the word of God, how believing and fervent in its spirit, how elevated and purifying in its tone, while yet it should not in the least for all this, fail to fill its appropriate place as literature. This ideal we contrast with the *reality* forced upon our convictions, in the actual state of English literature, during the period in question. We speak with the standard in our eye, of what ought to have been the place which Christian theology should hold in the literature of a great Christian empire like England; of what ought to have been the manliness and severity of the discipline of its youth in mental and moral science at its universities; and of what ought to have been the intellectual power and the commanding sway of its theologians whom it trained in its cathedrals and cloistered halls, and whom it sustained by princely revenues. But enough; we began in the tone of apology, remembering a Horsley and a Hall, Warburton, a Berkeley and Campbell, whose memory we would not dishonor; we check ourselves, lest our apology become a sharper invective, excited by the evil in the case.

human knowledge, having shown himself a master of the highest culture in literature, exalts theology as the end of all study, the Bible as the noblest of all books, and an earnest and even passionate devotion as the proper inspiration and aim of every thinking man. In doing this, Coleridge may have said many things gratuitously obscure, he may have made himself ridiculously brave and contemptuous, through his devotion to the truth, but he certainly spoke to the intellect and wants and hearts of his generation, and gained a hearing and a homage for Christian philosophy. Coleridge had too strong a hold on the literary world to be denied a hearing. He compelled that world to listen, notwithstanding the long and fierce outcry of his opposers, and the foolish occasion which he too often gave for that outcry. He spoke with words so charmed and powerful that they could not but listen, and as they listened they felt, that the words were not the words of a priest and a bigot, but of a man and a thinker. It is sad that professed theologians have not more carefully studied the minds of the men of their day, and sought to be heard for the truth by the mass of the educated, in a language which is common to the republic of letters, instead of talking always like preachers and in the technics of the pulpit.¹ Channing knew and did better; and hence his reputation and his influence; a reputation which must decline, when at a review, the world becomes aware of the poverty and fewness of his ideas, the impotence of his logic, with his want of severe science and of a satisfying theology.

Another service which Coleridge rendered theology, was the assertion of the indispensable importance to the theologian of a sound and scientific philosophy of man. Indeed it is on the field of mental and moral science that Christian theology joins herself to the world of thinking men, and commands their attention and secures their homage. It was by awakening their dissatisfaction with the narrow range of the philosophy current in England and its superficial spirit, and by seeking to introduce a better system, that he rested his hopes for a thorough vindication of Christian truth. We can hardly credit or do justice to the low state of the-

¹ Of living theologians, Chalmers may be named as the most illustrious exception to these remarks, and hence his power and usefulness. We lament that the career of the truly great Edward Irving, did not fulfil his early aims and brilliant promise, not so much in respect to severe theology, as to the eloquent and powerful enforcement of Christian truth on the cultivated men of his time.

logical science in the English church, at this period. Its natural theology might be comprehended in the proposition, "design proves a designer." Its defence of the Christian revelation, in the assertion, "men supernaturally commissioned have wrought miracles," and its dogmatic theology might be summed up in a few hackneyed common-places, and proof-texts slavishly transmitted from other generations, with hardly a scrutiny of the justness of their interpretation.

In opposition to this dead sea of heartless and lazy belief, Coleridge boldly and truly asserted, that Christianity was its own best evidence, and for this he gained the reputation of being a sad infidel. But without greatly regarding this, he declared likewise that Christianity to be seen to be true, must be thoroughly scanned as a system of truth and of provisions for the wants of men. But in order to be seen as such, man must be known in his nature, his capacities, his guilt, and certain great truths concerning God which are known to man by the reason and assumed by him as the basis of all his moral judgments and of his religious faith. These are to be studied, earnestly and in the spirit of true science, in order to prepare the way for a vindication of Christian truth. When, too, we proceed to inquire what are the particular doctrines of this revelation, we are to carry into the investigation the most acute analysis, the most rigid adherence to logic in definition and argument, and the purest love of scientific truth. Theology pursued on such principles, he rightly judged, would first of all be respected, and instead of uttering apologies to the learned classes, would give to them laws. The thoroughness of its processes would invigorate the intellect and give tone to the moral sentiment of the educated, while the startling truths which are revealed in man's being, and the solemn verities which a scientific philosophy unveils, would quicken and convict the conscience and prepare it to greet the revelations and assistances of the Christian faith.

That this view of the subject is correct, we have not the least doubt. Still there has existed a strong fear of all scientific or philosophical theology as hostile to the simplicity of the truth as it is in Jesus. Many grave cautions have been uttered on this subject. We would that every one who utters them could feel *not merely that they are anile, for then they would be harmless, but that they do a positive mischief, and are the direct producers of a contemptuous infidelity.* For first, it is the plainest of all facts, that these declaimers against philosophy in

religion, do in the same breath hug the remnants of an old philosophy in the shape of definitions or arguments. Secondly, the true way to cut off theology from its hold upon thinking men, is to deny its connection with and its allegiance to science at large; and thirdly, the attempt to do without science, is suicidal and vain. The very arguments against its use will be found to be scientific. The attempt to define your opinions, to frame your definitions and to construct your arguments, will lead you at once to philosophizing, so that the only alternative is either not to think at all, or to think strongly and boldly. It is but too evident that some of the declaimers against philosophy give themselves up to the former alternative, with a very meek submissiveness.

But theology to be scientific must be bold and free. In imposing upon it the obligation to be philosophical, Coleridge asserted for theology the privilege to be free. He did not encourage it to be rash or irreverent or libertine, but he demanded for it the right to derive from every premise the conclusions which were involved in that premise, and to make reasoning in theology follow the laws of reasoning in anything beside. He could not but despise the hollow subterfuges, the unfair expedients, the reasoning to the ear rather than the mind, and the special pleading by which the theology of the *routine* fills up so many deep gulfs and dodges the force of so many cogent arguments.

But while his theology was free, it was eminently conservative, or because it was conservative, it could afford to be free. It was conservative, in laying broadly and deeply its premises in the moral nature of man, or as he would call it, the practical reason, by asserting the degeneracy and ruin of this nature, not indeed by propounding absurdities, but by probing deeply into the wound. On this basis with his grand and worthy justification, on grounds of reason, of the moral glory of a reigning God, he could not but provide for a Christian theology, which in its practical essentials was true. Having done this he could afford to leave non-essentials which were questioned, to be thoroughly discussed, and could afford also to do justice to the difficulties of every such matter. It is such theologians as seem not to recognize the difference between a cobweb and a corner-stone, who cry:

"Touch not a cobweb in St. Paul's,
Lest the whole dome should fall."

It was conservative and liberal, too, from the principle asserted so often by him, that "Christianity is not a scheme of philosophy

but a life; that it is not a philosophy of life, but a life and living process." While the student is to be instructed, in the schools, in all that pertains to the science of theology, he is sent out of the schools to learn what Christianity is as a practical system. The bread of life may be analyzed in the laboratory, but it is to be eaten at the table. So the novice in theology is not suffered to content himself with the highest attainments or the most dexterous mastery of logic, but is sent to another school for the highest and best of learning. How many zealous defenders of orthodoxy are slow to adopt this distinction. To admit it would be to lower the estimate of their favorite opinions, would be to admit that these forms of words are not the very gist and essence of the inspired word. How carefully do such make the existence of piety to depend upon the reception of their *formula*, and make the rejection of their theory a test and evidence of depravity. While then for the appropriate objects and ends of theology proper, Coleridge made theology scientific and free, he made her secondary to the greatest and the immediate object of the Christian revelation. Not only did he do this, but he made the living experience of the Christian to be a most important source of instruction as the material of theology, giving reality to its speculations, presenting things in place of theories, and causing the living and present joys and sorrows, hopes and fears of the man himself to contribute interest and materials to his reasonings. Thus did he make the piety of the Christian subservient to the highest accomplishments of the student.

This distinction between the speculative and practical views of the theologian, while it was congenial to the growth and culture of ardent piety, was also used by him as the basis of a charitable toleration. It enabled him to conceive that a man's speculative system might be sadly deficient and false, while yet his practical views might be just and safe. It was a favorite saying of his, that "Unitarianism could not be Christianity, but Unitarians might be Christians;" for no man can tell what view of religious truth another might take when he applied it to his own use, nor under what ignorance or prejudice or unhappy associations an important doctrine of the creed might be so clouded, as to be rejected without moral depravity as the cause.

This distinction is very different from that liberalism, which rather deserves the name of libertinism,¹ which makes all forms

¹ His protest against the indifference to religious opinions which was so prevalent in the higher literary circles, and which was fostered with a daring

of faith indifferent, because it is equally heartless towards all. It provides for the most earnest vigilance against every false statement and insufficient explanation, as being, if not an immediate, yet a slow poison to the life of the church. It inculcates the most earnest zeal and the most active energy in the propagation of our own opinions, while it forbids us to judge unfavorably of the character of the man who differs from us. The adoption of it by the differing theologians of the day, would give them new zeal and diligence in the discovery and propagation of what they believe to be the truth, while it would secure to them all a sweeter temper towards their neighbors.

We name another service which Coleridge has rendered to theological science, the assertion of the following principle, which we give in his own language. "The following may, I think, be taken as a safe and useful rule in religious inquiries. Ideas that derive their origin and substance from the *moral* being, and to the reception of which as true *objectively*, (i. e. as corresponding to a reality out of the human mind,) we are determined by a *practical* interest exclusively, may not like theoretical or speculative positions be pressed into all their possible *logical* consequences."—*Aids to Reflection*, pp. 108, 9. The same principle is differently applied by him in the following words. "From these premises I proceeded to draw the following conclusions. First, that having once fully admitted the existence of an infinite yet self-conscious Creator, we are not allowed to ground the irrationality of any other article of faith on arguments, which would equally prove that to be irrational, which we had allowed to be *real*. Secondly, that whatever is deducible from the admission of a *self-comprehending* and *creative* spirit may be legitimately used in proof of the *possibility* of any further mystery concerning the divine nature."—*Lit. Life*, p. 120, 2nd Am. ed. We should express the principle thus: That when we are fully possessed of the pre-

that to a man, familiar with things as they are now, might seem almost incredible, was earnest and passionate, so earnest and passionate, as to have been one of the principal causes of his great unpopularity. Of himself and his position he says:

" 'Tis true that passionate for ancient truths
And honoring with religious love the great
Of elder times, he hated to excess,
With an unquiet and intolerant scorn,
The hollow puppets of an hollow age,
Ever idolatrous, and changing ever
Its worthless idols."—*Tombless Epitaph*.

mises in regard to any point, we may push those premises to their legitimate and logical conclusion. There is no danger in logic, then, but it is to be followed wherever it may lead us. But wherever we are not masters of the premises, we may reason only from what we know. If what we know is determined by a moral necessity and is an act of faith, we may not push that of which we are not masters to any conclusion, nor may we admit objections which are directed against what we do not thoroughly know. This principle would silence every objection against the doctrine of the Trinity, on the ground that we are perfectly aware that in regard to the subject matter, about which we reason, i. e. Deity, there are difficulties, yea, so-called contradictions as great as any which this doctrine presents, but which we are forced to set aside, by a higher necessity of evidence. We believe in God because we must be true to evidence in spite of these objections and almost impossibilities. On sufficient evidence then we may affirm of the same existence, Tri-unity. This principle would rule out of court all *metaphysical* objections against the sovereignty and electing purpose of God, if it were needed for this service. So also it would greatly limit the freedom and range of our speculation in respect to the origin of evil, and make them, as they ought to be, negative and hypothetical. Its operation might be unfortunate in its influence on some New England speculations, and might dissipate some fears of fatal error in respect to points which are placed forever out of the reach of positive science.¹

¹ The quotations which we have given, must be seen in their place and read in their connection, to be appreciated. The first relates to metaphysical reasonings in respect to election, the second to the doctrine of the Trinity. The fact is not often sufficiently heeded by theologians, that in regard to the grounds of our faith and the fundamental truths of all religion, there is never evidence strictly demonstrative, but it is always moral. Indeed, to one who understands logic in its largest sense, it is clear it must be so. Demonstrative reason presupposes a premise, and is deductive from that premise. Demonstration in theology, is possible in reasoning to its *dependent* and *secondary* truths. But in proving its first truths, we are as it were, seeking our premises, and of course our reasoning is *inductive*. Of most of these religious truths, it is found to be true that they are attended by difficulties, and in resting upon them we make as it were our choice of evils. We are Theists, rather than Atheists or Pantheists, strictly speaking, not because there are no arguments for Atheism and Pantheism, but because there are more and higher for Theism. Hence the possibility and the duty of faith.

When we rest on the conclusion that there is a God, we find on reflection, that we have received a truth which it is utterly impossible for us to conceive

It should be observed, however, that it gives no license to theology to be inconsistent with itself, to affirm one thing in the premise and to deny it in the conclusion. In respect to all subjects, on which consciousness furnishes the facts, as in respect to the nature of sin, the competence of man to do all that God requires of him, and the fact of human freedom, definitions are to be respected, and a rigid logic is to be enforced, because the definitions are complete and logic is appropriate. Sin and duty and freedom are quite within the reach of human reasoning, and here reasoning should hold to a strict account those who would transgress her rules and dodge her influences.

We refer this distinction to Coleridge, not because it has not been acted on by other philosophers, but because we have nowhere seen it so clearly stated, and so strongly conceived, as by him. Were it rigidly enforced; could its lines be drawn deep and inefaceable through the whole domain of metaphysical theology, it would bring to pass most healthful and far-reaching consequences. The mysteries of this theology would cease to perplex us, not because we should have mastered them, nor because we should have been forced to retire in disgust and disappointment after many a trial, but because we should know *why* and

of in all its parts, nay, the instant we attempt to reason on the parts of the conception, and neglect to keep in mind that there are parts of it which we cannot compass, we are led to conclusions which destroy and render impossible the existence about which we reason. Existence in all our knowledge of it and notions of it, involves the beginning to exist. If we reason in respect to existence, as predicated of the Deity as involving this conception, as we shall be likely to do, if we reason at all, we can in an instant prove that there not only does not, but that there cannot exist such a being as God, i. e. a God existing without beginning to exist. It is with the highest reason, then, that we conclude that a being whose *existence* contradicts and shocks all our previous conceptions of existence, may have that existence in a Tri-unity, even if existence in this peculiar way, does also contradict and shock our previous conceptions; that the God in respect to whom we understand not, how *he exists*, may *also exist* in a way which we do not understand. And if the poverty of human language, or rather the poverty of human conception, as the stuff out of which language is made, forces God to reveal this doctrine, and man to speak of it in propositions which in one way may be shown to be contradictory,—is that man a philosopher who asks, whether three can be one and one can be three, and makes that the beginning, middle and end of his argument against the Trinity? *Why* does he not ask as well, whether a being can exist, and not begin to exist? If for the difficulties of the case he is an *Anti-Trinitarian*, why not for the difficulties in the case be an *Anti-Theist*? We suppose that the positive proof is sufficient, and that our objector says, as is so often said, the doctrine is *impossible* under any amount of evidence.

how far they were beyond our reach. On the other hand, those truths which we can compass would be boldly canvassed and strongly affirmed.

Coleridge again deserves high credit for having seized the right method in theological inquiry, especially in conducting the argument for the truth and divine origin of the Christian revelation. We have already hinted at this method. It seeks to vindicate Christianity from its very nature and essential principles, as adapted to man. Of course it first learns what that nature is, what are its relations to God, what is its guilt and what are its wants. In raising these questions, it supposes that they are capable of being answered, of being answered satisfactorily, of being strongly and urgently answered. Then it supposes, that that which claims to be Christianity, is capable of being clearly understood, as a practical system, in the living realities which it declares, in the premises which it proffers, and in the mere experiencing its consolations and its power, whose words it records and whose hearts it opens to view. It would first settle the question whether it meets these wants of man, and steps in to supply his need before it would raise any other. The other questions in respect to its historic truth, the credibility of its miracles and the nature and proof of Scriptural inspiration, it would leave alone, for the time, or rather it would gather light and aid to all these, from what Christianity is proved to be in itself. These questions depend for their strongest evidence upon the nature of the truth about which they are concerned. This truth gives them their interest and adjusts their claims.

Coleridge had learned this from his own experiences. He himself had struggled through the "reign of chaos and old night," oppressed by its darkness and stifled by its thin and deadly air. From an irreligious and almost atheistic Socialism, through a vapid Humanitarianism, and a still more dreary metaphysic Pantheism, he had become reconciled to the truth as it is in Jesus, and embraced it with the total energy of his soul. This truth he had justified to himself by the method described, and having threaded and cut this path for himself through the snare of thorny speculation, he commended it to others with impassioned fervor. "Evidences of Christianity! I am weary of the word. Make a man feel the *want* of it; rouse him, if you can, to the self-knowledge of his *need* of it; and you may safely trust it to its own evidence, remembering only the express declaration of Christ: No man cometh to me unless the Father leadeth him."

The justice of this reproach, and the earnestness with which Coleridge strove in the defence of this method of proof, can be appreciated by those only who understand the views then current in the church of England.

Two parties then divided the church, the Old Churchman, to whose mind the final cause of the revelation of the Old and New Testament, was the establishment of the church of England and the three orders of the ministry, and who limited the moral revelation of the New Testament, to the assertion of the doctrine of a future state, which was confirmed by miracles, and a title to which was to be attained by baptismal regeneration, and assured in the eucharist. This class of men holding in their Christianity views of morality and religion, which a Platonist or Stoic would have rejected for their contemptible shallowness, would of course reject those views of natural religion, which Coleridge propounded, as being more than they believed revelation to include. They branded him as a mystic, for his piety, and as an infidel, for denying that the Bible did not reveal, but presupposed the doctrines of immortality, and that of man's responsibility. On the other hand were the evangelical school, men faithful and true in their place, but many of them too busy to make a thorough examination of the difficulties of infidelity, or too contemptuous of infidels as a "graceless crew," to do justice to their wants, or too unscientific to care for method and science in theology. Both together were a degenerate race, when compared with the heroes of the days of Elizabeth and of James.

In our own country the degeneracy was not so great. A better theology was with us. Other views of the nature of Christianity here prevailed, and far higher and more thorough methods of defending Christian truth. But even here, there was too little knowledge of the true method of defending the gospel. We have not depended on Coleridge for all that has been learned on this subject. Our own New-England theology is in its nature metaphysical and scientific, and has never forgotten that a thing to stand, must have something to stand upon; that Christianity supposes a conscience and a moral nature. But even with us, while a fearful rationalism is eating away at the very heart of society, accomplished in its culture, extensive in its reading, acute in its detection of fallacies and prompt to expose them, and laying hold of much of the literary taste and talent among us, it is mournful to think how few who call themselves theologians, know or care anything about it. They will not care, be-

cause it is easier to cry infidel, than it is to vanquish the infidel. They will not know, because it would make their heads ache to study Spinoza and Strauss. And so they easily resign the whole affair to the interposition of heavenly grace; forgetting that when this grace overthrew the Pharisaism of the Jew, and the philosophism of the Greek, it was by the logic of Paul, as he argued with both, and overcame them too.

The actual influence of Coleridge against the infidelity of his day, was greatly impeded by the studied neglect, the bitter contempt, and the ignorant prejudices which were arrayed against him in the church and out of it. But that it wrought a good work, we do not doubt. He records himself as hearing, that an eminent man who had read his views of the argument for miracles, leaped up in ecstasy, exclaiming: "Thank God, I am forced to be an infidel no longer." He speaks also of his intensely painful regrets, on hearing that Shelly in the last months of his life, when troubled with conflicting thoughts and fears, had expressed the belief that no man but Coleridge could resolve his doubts, and guide his mind aright. To the influence of Coleridge's conversations and his writings, may be traced much of the dawn and progress of a better theology and philosophy, among the educated classes of England.

Indeed, with all the drawbacks to his influence from circumstances and from his own modes of thinking and writing, he could not but be felt. He was a man of commanding genius, a poet of splendid fame, and eloquent as a writer of prose. He was a layman, with no preferment to covet or to win, and writing as a man to his fellow man, with whom he would cherish the strongest sympathy, as with a fellow inquirer concerning God and eternity. He had that peculiar charm, and power in these reasonings which he so often lacked in others, of putting himself in the place of those with whom he reasoned, of understanding their difficulties and sympathizing with their feelings. He showed the spirit of a philosopher, fair, open, conceding, boldly facing all real difficulties and taking no *theological* advantages, and yet the ardor of a seraph asserting the dignity of holiness, the emptiness of *sin*, the weakness and guilt of man, the hollowness of his self-wrought system of righteousness, and the divine fitness of Christianity as a gift worthy of God, and a blessed boon to man.¹

¹ Dr. Arnold writes thus to Coleridge's nephew: "I have just got the fourth volume of your uncle's literary remains, which makes me regard him with

We might specify other general services rendered by Coleridge to theology. Here we think was his great strength. But we must proceed to the next division of our inquiries.

We are now to consider Coleridge as a theologian, properly so called; i. e. as an expounder and defender of the doctrines of the Christian Scriptures. Here we might anticipate that he would fail; at least we might expect that he would not fulfil the high anticipations, raised from his splendid and various genius. We have already remarked of him, that he never produced finished works, that all his products are *improvisatory*, with a mixture of genius and guessing, of thoughts comprehensive, striking and true, and of fancies, wild, unfounded and capricious. What he *might* have produced, had he given himself time, and subdued his power to the yoke of self-suspecting patience, of a scrutinizing analysis and of an elaborate revision, is quite another matter.

The aim of Coleridge as a theologian was noble. It was to justify the ways of God to man. It was to show that "the Christian faith is the perfection of human reason," or in other words that all its truths fall in with reason, as far as she is competent to judge, and that when Christianity presents new truths, it is only when reason is at loss, and feels her wants and rejoices in the assistance of a guide and helper. He would approach Christianity as a philosophical inquirer, recognizing all the facts in man's condition—his moral nature in the rigor and severity of its demands, his guilt, his conscious weakness, all as justified by and enforced upon his convicted reason, and by this means would lead philosophy to find herself, before she should know it, "hanging out signals of distress as she approached the borders of a continuous theology." This last was all that Coleridge proposed to attempt in the "Aids to Reflection," his only strictly theological work. He had proposed to do more before he should die—to prepare an elaborate work, in which Christianity should be positively affirmed rather than defended negatively; but the comple-

greater admiration than ever. He seems to hold that point which I have never yet been able to find in any of our English divines, and the want of which so mars my pleasure in reading them. His mind is at once rich and vigorous and comprehensive and critical; while the *θεος* is so pure and so lively all the while. He seems to me to love truth really, and therefore truth presented herself to him not negatively, as she does to many minds, who can see that the objections against her are unfounded and therefore that she is to be received; but she filled him, as it were heart and mind, imbuing him with her very self, so that all his being comprehended her fully and loved her ardently; and that seems to me to be true wisdom."—*Life and Correspondence*, Chap. IX.

tion of this work was one of the many things which he never achieved.

The error of Coleridge as a theologian, which we first name, was that of seeking in the Scriptures truth strictly and appropriately philosophical. It is one thing to seek to express and to justify philosophically the truths which the Scriptures reveal, and quite another thing to maintain that the Scriptures use certain terms in the same strict and scientific sense in which you employ them. No man can take the first step in the study of theology without doing the former. Every scheme of theology proposes it. Every theological professor makes the attempt. However much he may decry philosophy in theology, and however unskilfully he may mingle reasoning and assertion, science and proof-texts, he does yet attempt to be a philosopher. This philosophy must progress. For as the knowledge of man advances, so will the truths of Christianity receive new light and illustration. As the nomenclature of moral and mental science is widened and made more precise, so will scriptural truths be translated into these technical terms. But on the other hand, the carrying philosophy into the Scriptures, by foisting scientific terms into the place of figurative and popular language, or by dexterously or violently thrusting under a word which is spelled with the same letters, a term strictly metaphysical, this is to spoil the Scriptures, if it is not to spoil the man through "philosophy and vain deceit." This was done by Coleridge in a singular inconsistency with certain maxims of his own to the contrary. This was done by President Edwards not a little. We crave the pardon, while we say this, of those zealous Edwardeans who never read Edwards, and who of course will think that we do him injustice. So did Emmons with a high hand. It is almost impossible that any metaphysician should wholly avoid it. Through his familiarity with abstract phraseology, it seems to him as plain as a popular language, so that he unconsciously interchanges the one for the other. When a philosopher reads the Scriptures he can hardly avoid doing it through his metaphysical eye-glass.

We contend as earnestly as Coleridge ever did, for a most thorough philosophical training, in order to form an accomplished theologian.¹ We respond most heartily to all that the accom-

¹ This necessity would arise if from no other cause, from the fact, that every thinker will endeavor to make all his knowledge consistent with itself, and to justify his religious belief, whatever it may be, with his belief in respect to mental and physical phenomena. If perchance he should adopt views in re-

plished editor of Coleridge has said on this subject in his Preliminary Essay. But when he says that "the apostles John and Paul were, in the view of this system of philosophy, the most rational of all writers, and the New Testament the most philosophical of all books" we must deny the truth of his statement, in the sense in which he and Coleridge would understand it. The New Testament, so far from being a philosophical book, has not, so far as form and style are concerned, a particle of philosophy in it. This is its glory, its beauty, its adaptation to universal man, and one of the most convincing evidences of its divine origin; that uttering truths the most profound, and in such wonderful profusion, every one of which has been for ages and is still a problem for science and a study for a life, it has revealed them in popular phraseology, and addressed them to the popular mind.¹ There is hardly a

spect to man or nature, which render it impossible that the Scriptures should be true and these views also; or which forbid him to receive certain doctrines of the Scriptures, he will be strongly inclined to reject the Scriptures; much more strongly than to review and correct his philosophy. The most effectual and often the only possible way, to prepare him to weigh again the revealed truths to which you would gain his faith, is to show him that his philosophy is deficient and false. In this way in all ages and especially in the present age, the saying of Tucker is illustrated, that "the science of abstruse learning, when completely attained, is like Achilles' spear, that healeth the wounds it had made before; so this knowledge serves to repair the damage itself had occasioned." To one who has had any actual experience by conversing with infidels of philosophic minds, and who has observed how inveterately their fondly cherished systems become intertwined with their entire intellectual being, or to one who has noticed what a fearfully cold shadow, a shallow and animal philosophy, and a mysterious metaphysic Pantheism, are now casting over large sections of Christendom, this negative service of philosophy would not be lightly esteemed. To one, however, who believes that all truth is harmonious, and consistent as God is, and that the effort to understand all truth scientifically, is not merely the dignity but is the duty of the reflecting believer, all argument on such a subject is "a grand impertinence."

¹ We think the distinction here made sufficiently obvious, yet to avoid the possibility of being misunderstood, we add: the Scriptures use the words conscience and heart, spirit, to choose, to will, and other terms which philosophers also use, though it is to be observed that just in proportion as the term is abstract, just in that proportion is it sparingly employed. But they use these terms in that breadth and "generalness" of meaning which a child can comprehend, and yet utter truths in respect to these things, which a philosopher after analyzing and comparing to his utmost power, finds something remaining to be done on the morrow. But when the philosopher, instead of regarding the fact that these terms are used in the popular sense, after defining conscience and heart in metaphysic phrase, dexterously or by a blunder finds these terms in the Scriptures as he defines them, then does he make the Scriptures philosophical.

philosophical term or expression in the New Testament, while the majority of its terms are so far from being scientific that they are strongly and vividly figurative. But the disciple of Coleridge or any other philosopher guilty of his error, will say: 'Does it teach no philosophical truth? Does it teach nothing? Will you evaporate from it all its meaning by turning it into a series of strained hyperboles or of oriental imaginations?' To this we reply: The New Testament teaches much truth, and truth the most positive, relating to matters, too, in respect to which philosophy concerns herself; but it reveals no truth in a philosophical shape and method, and to justify the fact that this may be so, and yet the Scriptures be still most true, we have only to avail ourselves of the most excellent distinction drawn by your great master, between Christianity and the philosophy of Christianity. The one is a life nourished by a belief in Christian truth, as it is revealed to universal man; the other a justification of this truth to reflecting man. Thus much on this point. The instances in which Coleridge has committed this error, we shall adduce in their place.

A prominent aim with Coleridge was, to justify the peculiar truths of Christianity. It was not to give a body of divinity, nor to consider at length the subordinate topics in the Christian system; nor was it merely to prepare the way for the topics of Christian theology, by an orderly discussion of the truths of natural theology; but it was to vindicate what he considered the truths which make Christianity a peculiar system, to vindicate them from objections, and to excite in them positive interest and hearty faith by reflection. In doing this he desired to shake off the dead weights that had been hung upon its neck by two classes of theologians, the low Arminian and the ultra Calvinist. The one degraded man by a sensual and shallow philosophy, in order to justify its miserably formal and meaningless Christianity. It would hardly allow him the anticipation of a future state, or the possession of a conscience, that it might provide something for Christianity to reveal. The other shocked the reason of man by its iron fatalism, and offended his conscience by making him so wicked as not to have the capacity of being guilty. Against the one Coleridge contended, that man's nature was of a far nobler capacity than he would allow, and that his spiritual wants were far deeper; and of consequence, Christianity was given for a different purpose, than to make a church establishment possible as a means of keeping the people in order. Against the other, that man in his deepest guilt was still himself the offender and the

guilty; that this was possible because his nature was spiritual and therefore *free*; and that the interposition of God for man was in the line of that high nature and in consistency with all its faculties. Coleridge's *Aids to Reflection* is not in form controversial, but it is so *in fact*; intensely and earnestly controversial, and against the systems already named, the Infidel, the Arminian and the ultra Calvinistic. Unless a man keeps in mind that it was in a community possessed by these schemes and submerged by them that Coleridge wrote, he cannot understand him. Unless he reads his writings from this point of view, he cannot read them aright.

The ground of these three erroneous systems was in his view one and the same; low views of man as capable of spiritual knowledge and a spiritual life, and low views of the universe both physical and intellectual as a vast structure of dead forces, rather than a glorious world of life animated by living laws. As introductory to his views of Christianity, he contends for higher views of man as capable of science and of faith, by the endowment of reason, speculative and practical; and as capable of spiritual influences, by having a will, which must be the spiritual in man, if there be any such thing. And as the active forces of nature act conjointly, yet in secret, to develop and sustain the mysterious life of the plant, so may the spiritual force of the higher universe act in and by and with the spirit in man. Had it been the object of Coleridge to argue in this way against one class of objectors, or that system of philosophy common to all of them which would exclude the doctrine of spiritual influences, a doctrine so plainly revealed in the Christian system, the object would have been good and the argument, as a popular argument, legitimate. But when he makes this assertion of the Spirit to be the peculiar doctrine of Christianity, and indeed to be the whole of Christianity, he takes a ground which is unauthorized by the Scriptures, and which vitiates his whole scheme of Christian doctrine.

But the provision of the Spirit's influences for man with its effects and operation on the believer, Coleridge makes to be Christianity, as far as it is a peculiar system. To make these influences possible to man, was the object of the sufferings and death and resurrection of Christ; "these all were essential and effective parts of the great redemptive act, whereby also the obstacle from the corruption of our nature is rendered no longer insurmountable."—*Aids to Reflection*, pp. 127, 128 1st, Am. Ed. The writings of John are the books in the New Testament in which

Christianity is nakedly and strongly stated, without figure or imagery. "He used to say," says Gilman, "in St. John is the philosophy of Christianity, in St. Paul the moral reflex."—*Life*, p. 317. v. 1. We call the attention of our readers distinctly and strongly to the fact that this, in the view of Coleridge, is the central or rather the one doctrine of Christianity. We do not make quotations, or multiply references. There is no need that we should. But it is necessary that the fact should be kept in mind by the man who would understand the Christian theology of Coleridge.

We assert again, that this view is wholly unauthorized by the Scriptures. First and foremost of all, there is no passage in the Scriptures where this is said to be the great, much less the sole object of the incarnation, etc. Of this more anon. Secondly, Coleridge has no right to confine himself to John as the philosopher of Christianity rather than Paul. If either is to be preferred as the philosopher, Paul should have the preference, from all the habits of his mind. Then, they are neither of them philosophers in the sense in which Coleridge would make John to be, that is, they neither of them assert scientific truth, much less in scientific phrase. John does indeed give greater prominence to the doctrine of the Spirit, his influence and his effects, though no greater than does Paul in parts of his writings. But to find in the various and figurative language of the 6th, 14th, 15th, and 16th chapters of his Gospel and in the whole of his Epistles, the terms life, spirit, etc., used in the precise and determinate sense in which Coleridge uses them, or to contend that here is the philosophy of Christianity, when the Epistles to the Romans and the Hebrews are set aside as such, is contrary to the laws of interpretation.

We would add, also, that there is an oversight in respect to the attitude in which Christianity finds man, and in which it ministers aid to him. Christianity finds man a guilty being, actively and personally guilty, not merely in single acts and by separate and individual offences, but guilty in his heart, guilty in his character. As such it deals with him, by the revelation of an incarnate God, to move him by this display of love, to provide for a way of pardon consistent with the holiness of Jehovah. It reveals an influence divine and spiritual, which leads him to repentance, and sustains and aids him in his struggles with his sinful self. It is in its moral relations to man that the doctrine of the Spirit is revealed. Not as bringing back a part of man necessary to any moral life, nor as sustaining it with him, as the vital air invigorates and gives life to the inspiring lungs. With those who choose to af-

firm, that these influences are essential to any holiness or moral perfection, we will not contend. But it is not in this office or this relation that the doctrine of the Spirit is revealed, but as a remedial agent to a sinful being.

To one who would still argue that without this spiritual *substratum* or ground, as the condition of acceptable holiness, religion is nothing more than morality,¹ there being nothing peculiar to religion; we reply, that a being like man, under a commanding and supreme purpose to be all and to do all to God and man of which he is capable, to love God with all his soul, might, strength, and his neighbor as himself, would have both religion and morality enough to satisfy the ideal of a reasonable philosopher. Whether there is needed a spiritual influence or not, as the physical or moral condition of such a character, is a question of fact, to be argued in its proper place and by its proper evidence. It is not required to find a place for religion as a commanding principle. The commanding force of religion comes from the commanding character of the truths, or rather the Being, which religion reveals, and of the affections which these truths inspire.

It ought not to be surprising that Coleridge, with these views of the Scriptures as teaching metaphysical truth, and of the revelation of the spirit as the central doctrine of Christianity, should have proved himself strangely weak and unworthy of confidence as an interpreter of particular passages of the Scriptures. Strange it is indeed that one with a mind so gifted, able to enter into the spirit of the sacred writers as a critic, as he manifestly was, and so acute and masterly as he showed himself to be in many of his criticisms on the false interpretation of others, and with so much of the knowledge requisite, should have failed so entirely when he came to the service of directly discerning the sense of the sacred writers and of drawing from them the leading truths which they reveal. A Platonizing father of the third or fourth century could hardly make worse mistakes, than Coleridge has done in many instances. With all the sense and acuteness, which he shows often in single comments, it is most surprising that he should have originated and sustained so deliberate and apparently so honest a subjection of the Scriptures to his notion of the spiritual, pressing the term into his metaphysical notion of it, as being free-will and the reason, and making it swallow and absorb that which is the main doctrine of the New Testament.

We come now to consider particularly Coleridge's views of the

¹ Coleridge asserts and implies this throughout the *Aids to Reflection*.

doctrine of redemption. We must keep in mind the theologians whom Coleridge had in his eye, and from whom he would defend his own views. First, the Church Arminian, who believed that Christ died to rise again, in order that all baptized persons might have a comfortable belief of their own immortality. Against these he argued, that the truth was believed already, and to make this the only end of the incarnation, the sufferings and death of the Redeemer, was to do the most shocking injustice to the solemnity of the transaction itself, and to the scriptural descriptions of it; that its import was immensely higher and more sacred than this.¹ Secondly, he argues against the ultra Calvinists, or rather against one view held by such, that the redemptive act consisted in payment of a debt due to the divine justice. This is the only theory of the atonement against which he argues in form, and he demolishes it effectually, if indeed it needed to be thus "thrice slain."² But he advances principles in respect to the interpretation of the Scripture passages, which are very sweeping, and which if received in all their length and breadth, would destroy every doctrine of the atonement, properly so called. "Now the article of redemption may be considered in a twofold relation; in relation to the antecedent, i. e. the Redeemer's act as the efficient cause and condition of redemption; and in relation to the consequent, i. e. the effects in and for the redeemed. Now it is the latter relation in which the subject is treated of, set forth, expanded and enforced by St. Paul. The mysterious act, the operative cause is *transcendent*, FACTUM EST; and beyond the information contained in the enunciation of the FACT, it can be characterized only by the *consequences*." "The learned Apostle has drawn four principal metaphors, by which he illustrates the blessed *consequences* of Christ's redemption of mankind. These are: 1. Sin-offerings, sacrificial expiation. 2. Reconciliation, atonement, *καταλλαγή*. 3. Ransom from slavery, redemption,

¹ "Yes, fervently do I contend, that to satisfy the understanding that there is a future state, was not the *specific* object of the Christian dispensation; and that neither the belief of a future state, nor the *rationality* of this belief, is the *exclusive* attribute of the Christian religion. An *essential*, a *fundamental* article of *all* religion it is, and therefore of the Christian; but otherwise than as in connection with the salvation of mankind from the terrors of that state, among the *essential* articles peculiar to the Gospel creed, (those, for instance, by which it is *contra-distinguished* from the creed of a religious Jew), I do not place it."—*Aids to Reflection*, pp. 207, 208. See also the entire note from which this passage is taken.

² *Aids to Reflection*, pp. 195—200.

the buying back again, or being bought back, from *re* and *ema*.
 4. Satisfaction of a creditor's claims by a payment of the debt. To one or other of these four heads, all the numerous forms and exponents of Christ's mediation in St. Paul's writings may be referred."—*Aids*, pp. 192, 193. If the reader will remember that the central truth of Christianity, according to Coleridge, is the revelation of the Spirit, he will not be surprised to hear him affirm that this *transcendent fact*, about which nothing is known, relates to the providing of the Spirit. Or in his words: "Now John, the beloved disciple, who leaned on the Lord's bosom, the Evangelist, *κατὰ πνεῦμα*, i. e. according to the *Spirit*, the inner and substantial truth of the Christian creed—John, recording the Redeemer's own words, enunciates the fact itself, to the full extent in which it is enunciable for the human mind, simply *and without any metaphor*, etc. In the redeemed it is a *regeneration*, a *birth*, a spiritual seed, impregnated and evolved, the germinal principle of a higher and enduring life, of a *spiritual life*."—*Aids*, pp. 193, 194.

This is the doctrine of redemption according to Coleridge, and this his argument in his own words. In regard to it we observe, first: It is true, that this work of Christ and its relations to man are described, under several terms taken from objects already familiar. It is equally obvious, that as several different methods are used to reveal and apply this work, they cannot all be literally true. If various methods of representation are used, *all* certainly cannot be equally literal and exact. *One* may be the thing, while all besides are *metaphors*; but *all* cannot be. He who selects any one of them for the exact and naked truth, is bound to show, why it receives this pre-eminence. The man who adopts the cleansing blood, the reconciling efficacy, the buying off from evil, the satisfaction of a debt, or the imputation of righteousness, as the thing mainly designed and effected in the redemptive work, is bound to show why it is adopted as the literal explanation in preference to the others as only figurative. This is just and legitimate, and as far as Coleridge's argument tends to this result, it is forcible and to the point. Coleridge, as we have seen, sets them all aside, as metaphorical, because he finds another explanation, or "rather the fact itself" enunciated, "simply and without any metaphor." That fact is, "the *re-generation*, a *birth*, a spiritual seed impregnated and evolved," etc. We ask, by what authority? What good reason does he give, why this term *re-generation* is a fact and not a metaphor, describing a truth indeed, but still a *metaphor*. How is it shown that when a man is

said to be born again and to partake of a new life, more *literalness* of expression is employed, than when he is said to be cleansed by the blood of Christ, or ransomed or translated from the kingdom of darkness into the kingdom of God's dear Son? It may be true, but Coleridge has not shown it to be true. But we ask again, admitting this enunciation to be invested with an importance purely and decisively oracular, where is the authority, in reason or the Scriptures, for making this fact the great and only end of the redemptive work of Christ? Is it said that the new birth of man must certainly be the object of this work, as its final end? Very true; but there may be many steps to the process, and the part borne by the sufferings and death of Christ, may be only at one of these points, and to satisfy but one of these conditions. But where is the testimony of the Scriptures that connects this efficiency with the redemptive work particularly? Coleridge does not adduce this testimony; he does not even indicate the way to it; he does indeed quote the passage, "the last Adam was made a quickening spirit," but if this quotation, utterly irrelevant as it is, and only admissible by the widest liberty or laxness of accommodation, is a specimen of his proof-texts, it is well for his own credit that Coleridge quoted no more. Indeed, it seems to us palpable, as has already been remarked, that Coleridge is most unhappy in his interpretation of particular passages of the Scriptures. His general views are often striking and magnificent and true; but in the solution of individual passages, the place where the accomplished theologian should be the strongest, there is Coleridge the weakest. His injustice to the scriptural representations of the atonement is obvious. He confines himself mainly to the argument in the Epistle to the Hebrews, a book which, as he justly says, was written to show the superiority of Christianity, and in which of course the redemptive office of Christ would be illustrated in accommodation to views already familiar; and he leaves out of view the epistle to the Romans, which he also says was written to prove the necessity of Christianity, and where we should expect, if any where, a literal exposition of the redemptive act. This is the more remarkable, when we find in this very epistle to the Romans an argument in respect to Christ as the *regenerator* and *sanctifier*, and then another argument strictly literal and without metaphor—if there be any part of the Scriptures such—and *severely* philosophical, (we speak *relatively*); and this argument professing to explain the death of Christ, and giving to it an additional service and object to that

contemplated by Coleridge. This argument declares that it was to provide for the justification of man, and asserts that it was because it provided for this, that it is "the power of God unto salvation." This argument, it deserves to be noticed, occurs in the former part of the epistle, as an exposition of the need of the gospel. What must be the carelessness or the hardihood of the interpreter, who finding the object which he claims to be the great and only object of Christ's death, fairly recognized and fully set forth, and side by side another object asserted and reasoned out, should say that the one object which he assigns to it, is the only one?

To this it may be replied, that Coleridge would not interpret the five first chapters of the epistle to the Romans, as the objector does. Very possibly he would not. But as an expounder of the doctrine he was bound to notice the argument in them, to interpret them in some fashion, and to justify his interpretation. Especially when they are without metaphor and are naked, straightforward reasoning. He has argued, it is true, against the view, that justification is the payment of a debt; but this is not the only view which can possibly be given. It may be said, too, that he has dismissed all the possible methods of defending a forensic justification, by the principle that analysis drawn from human law-courts, and "the coarse but bungling contrivances" of judicial procedure, can be but the merest analogies, and can have no relation to the ways of the Eternal. This is all the recognition or argument in respect to that view of the death of Christ which represents it as an awful but affecting declaration of the holiness of the Eternal, and as thus providing the way by which God can be just and yet justify the believer. This is not to be dismissed by a remark such as the one we have quoted. Coleridge himself has furnished too many noble views of the capacity of man to be under law, and of the sacred majesty of law as adapted to man, to allow us to forget the truth, or to esteem it as of little value in explaining the object of the death of Jesus. We have looked with care through the writings of Coleridge, but have nowhere been able to discover the justification, as contemplated in the incarnation, or any notice of it, except in the way described; that as the sinner was justified by the law of Moses, so this, by a metaphor, well and strikingly describes the *greatness*, not the *nature* of the deliverance wrought by Christ. The term is rarely used by him, and only in an incidental way. To the fact he gives no distinct recognition, and much less does he dwell upon it to defend, illustrate and enforce it.

"But it is inconsistent with the distinction between a person and a thing." "How could that be demanded by justice, whose very first principle is, that the guilty should bear his own iniquity?" This principle holds against the notion of a literal transfer of righteousness. But none but a denier of the incarnation can urge it against the apostolic view of justification. The Socinian, when he urges it and triumphantly asks, how can the sufferings of the innocent Jesus vindicate the holiness of God, which by their very nature they dishonor and disgrace, forgets who this Jesus is, in the view of his opponent, and *argues* as though he were a meek and unoffending martyr, and not "God manifest in the flesh," laying down the life which he had the power to take again. The objection is furnished by his view of Jesus as extraneous and objective to God, a *receiver* of suffering as a created being, rather than an *assumer* of it, as one who could assume it by the mystery of his incarnation. So hard is it for men to do justice to the arguments of their opponents, or to look at religious truth from their point of view.

We offer another remark on Coleridge's scriptural argument. He loses sight in it of the truth, that the sacrificial system of the Jews had a high moral significance, dim and imperfect, but still real to those rude men and to the heart of universal man, and thus foreshadowing the reality of which it was but the symbol. This is of course fatal to his argument, when he classes illustrations drawn from debt, etc., with those derived from justification by sacrifice. For if there is more than a metaphor here, if, according to his own distinction, there be a *symbol*, i. e. a showing forth not merely of the *consequences* but the *nature* of the redemptive act, then his entire argument, as far as analogies drawn from these sacrifices is concerned, falls to the ground. Coleridge considers these sacrifices as being sacred in the eyes of the Jews, and as thus furnishing the basis of a striking and strong illustration of the consequences of the redemptive act. But whence their power to furnish this illustration, if in themselves there was nothing expressed? Whence, above all, their power to hold the conscience of a guilty race for centuries, and to speak peace to the burdened soul of the devout, except that they spoke to that conscience and had a voice for that heart? The guilty Jew, when he laid his hand upon the unoffending lamb, that was to suffer because he had sinned, could not fail to feel that sin was a *serious thing* in the judgment of him who had ordained that without the shedding of blood there should be no remission. When

he heard the death-groan of that innocent victim, and saw the flesh quivering in agony and convulsed in the last spasm, he could not fail to feel that God spoke to him. And when a nobler victim suffers and groans and dies, and nature is convulsed in sympathy, and he knows that all this is that he, the sinner, may be pardoned, the reality utters the same truth in accents louder, more distinct and more impressive indeed, but still the same truth that had been speaking for centuries, day unto day, when the smoke of the morning and evening sacrifice was seen to ascend from the brazen altar and slowly to go up from over the courts of the temple.

From these views we cannot but conclude that Coleridge's theory of the atonement is defective and unscriptural. His practical estimate of Christ, the high place which he gives to his sufferings and death, as efficient in man's salvation, and the ardor and totality with which he would have him hold the affections of the believer,¹ strikingly illustrate his own maxim, that a man may have a defective theology concerning a religious doctrine, and yet practically receive it. His own reception of the truth does not, however, render his theory concerning it at all less false or less fraught with evil consequences.

We come next to consider Coleridge's views of Original Sin. We recognize here the presence of the two classes of theologians, of whom we have spoken, the Arminian and the ultra-Calvinistic. The one makes sin to be a very superficial matter, hardly predicating it of the character at all, but only of single and separate acts; and the other shocks man's convictions of right, by making the corruption of the will, a fatal necessity to sin, entailed upon him by the act of an ancestor, thousands of years ago. Coleridge's view of it is this:² First, man has a re-

¹ For satisfaction on this point, see as one instance among many, the note entitled *Stedfast by Faith.—Aids to Reflection*, pp. 188—190.

² "We call an individual a *bad* man, not because an action is contrary to the law, but because it has led us to conclude from it some *principle* opposed to the law, some private maxim or by-law in the will, contrary to the universal law of right reason in the conscience, as the *ground* of the action. But this evil principle again must be grounded in some other principle, which has been made determinant of the will by the will's over self-determinaton."—*Aids to Reflection*, pp. 172, 173.

"Sin, therefore, is spiritual evil; but the spiritual in man is the will. Now when we do not refer to any particular sins, but to that state and constitution of the will, which is the ground, condition and common cause of all sins; and when we would further express the truth, that this corrupt nature of the will

sponsible will, and all the sin of which he is guilty, originates singly and solely within himself. Secondly, man is a sinner, not in this or that bad action, but in character, in that constant state of the will, which makes a man a good or bad man. He has received a nature into his will, he has subjected his will to a perpetual state of corruption. Thirdly, this is true of every man, and must have some common ground. But this ground cannot be any external circumstances as a cause. It is not inflicted on him, it is not implanted in his nature. It does not pass over to him by his descent from Adam, but to be sin, it must be his own.¹ "This evil ground cannot originate in the divine will; it must therefore be referred to the will of man. And this evil ground, we call original sin. It is a mystery, that is, a fact which we see, but cannot explain; and the doctrine, a truth which we apprehend, but can neither comprehend nor communicate. And such by the quality of the subject, viz: a responsible will, it must be, if it be truth at all." In respect to the sin of the primeval pair, and its relations to the sinfulness of the race, he hardly takes the pains to deny that it is imputed to them, for he had excluded the possibility of this, by his definition of sin. He affirms it as his opinion, that the prevalent notions of their quasi angelic nature before they fell, and of their superhuman knowledge and capacities, is wholly gratuitous. He affirms also, but without going into the argument, that they were the introducers of sin, only as they were the representations or symbols of the race, so that what was true of them, was, and is true of universal man, and suggests that the story of the fall is more likely to be a mythus, than a veritable record of fact.²

As Coleridge has not argued much in asserting his view of original sin, there is no argument for us to criticise. We will affirm, however, that any theory of depravity which fails to se-

must, in some sense or other, be considered as its own act, that the corruption must have been self-originated; in this case and for this purpose we may, with no less propriety than force, entitle this dire spiritual evil and source of all evil, that is absolutely such, original sin."—*Aids*, p. 163.

¹ "Nor the origin of evil, nor the *chronology* of sin, or the chronicles of the original sinner; but sin originant, underived from without, and no passive link in the adamantine chain of effects, each of which is in its turn an instrument of causation, but no one of them a cause! nor with sin inflicted, which would be a calamity! nor with sin (i. e. an evil tendency) implanted, for which let the planter be responsible! but I begin with *original sin*."—*Aids*, pp. 158, 159.

² *Aids to Reflection*, Note 66, p. 323, 6.

- cure a response to its truth in the honest conscience, or that does not awaken a strong and awful conviction, that man himself is wholly in *fault*, is a millstone on the neck of Christian theology. So too we add, that any theory concerning the sin of Adam, which does not effectually guard against the impression, that our connection with him was designed to work mischief to the race; any theory that does not strongly and earnestly assert that whatever this connection was, it was designed to be fraught with blessings, fails to do justice to plain declarations of the apostle Paul, and loads down Christianity with an awful and terrible weight. On the other hand, we add, that any theory of sin, as voluntary, which does not provide for sin as pertaining to the character, and running with its dreadful under current through the moral life of the soul, does no justice to the facts of man's consciousness, and the plain assertions of the Scriptures.

We would say also, that Coleridge has done a noble service to the truth, in declaring so explicitly and repeatedly, that the mystery concerning the fact or the origin of man's sinfulness, remains a mystery, whatever be true of Christianity.¹ The disease is just as deeply seated, and just as deadly, and just as real, whether the remedy be good, or whether it be a vile imposture. The fact of man's sinfulness, and of his sinful character too, is attested by every man's consciousness of what is in his own bosom, and is confirmed by observation. Christianity in asserting the fact, does but speak the whispers of every man's bosom. The origin, too, is just as dark and inexplicable; it is just as great a mystery how sin could be permitted under the reign of a benevolent God, whether the God of nature be or be not the God of the Scriptures. Its permission, too, is just as inconsistent with

¹ "And here the first thing to be considered, and which will at once remove a world of error, is, that this is no tenet first introduced or imposed by Christianity, and which, should a man see reason to disclaim the authority of the gospel, would no longer have any claim on his attention. It is no perplexity that a man may get rid of by ceasing to be a Christian, and which has no existence for a philosophic Deist. It is a FACT, affirmed, indeed, in the Christian Scriptures alone with the force and frequency proportioned to its consummate importance; but a fact acknowledged in every religion that retains the least glimmering of the patriarchal faith in a God infinite yet *personal*," etc.—*Aids*, pp. 170, 171. "I conclude with this remark. The doctrine of original sin concerns all men. But it concerns Christians in *particular*, no otherwise than by its connection with the doctrine of redemption, and with the divinity and divine humanity of the Redeemer, as a corollary or necessary inference from both mysteries. Beware of arguments against Christianity which cannot stop there and consequently ought not to have commenced there."—pp. 176, 177.

the desire of the God of nature to deter from it, as it is with the earnestness and oaths of the God of the Scriptures. Let this truth be realized as it deserves to be, let it be urged home as it might be, and if it would not accomplish good results for religious philosophy, we are greatly mistaken.

The views of Coleridge in respect to the inspiration of the Scriptures demand some notice. These are presented in form in the posthumous work, "The Confessions of an Inquiring Spirit," if indeed it be right to call that a formal statement of opinion which is put forth as a *tentative* theory, like a wooden bastion, thrown up in the haste and heat of a conflict, against the time when a permanent wall of stone may be constructed. The views of Coleridge are aimed against that high estimate of the mere letter of the Bible, which he has called by the expressive term *bibliolatry*; an idolatry, which is the occasion of much of the infidelity of protestant countries. The Bible itself it robs of more than half of its usefulness and power over the minds of the believers themselves, who, instead of consulting it as the sage counsellor who sits by their fireside and gives them the lessons of inspired wisdom, turn it into a stiff mummy, which they keep in their houses, as the Egyptians used to preserve for worship the embalmed bodies of their ancestors. We do not think it at all extravagant to say, that the round assertions in the general, in regard to this kind of inspiration, which are taken back in the detail, or bolstered up by arguments unworthy of a special pleader, are the cause of that lukewarm belief of the truth, which chills true ardor and spiritual energy, and of that frightful rationalism, which has swung off to so dreadful a length in the opposite direction. There are many we know, who reason to precisely the contrary conclusion of our own; who say, men are so prone to disrespect the Scriptures, that we must tie them very strong; and the more awful we make the divine oracles to be, the more likely are they to be honored. To all such arguments there is one answer: "Will you speak deceitfully for God?" Who committed to you the fearful trust of uttering any species of falsehood to support his cause? Nay more, this very course of extravagant statement, is of itself the direct parent of unbelief. The man that feels the hand laid upon his conscience, to tie his conviction by a double knot, one tie of which is added to a divine sanction, in order to hold him secure, will be very likely to break from both.

We do not approve of all the statements made by Coleridge. This work, like his other productions, is partly well elaborated

and partly ill finished, and it is capable of a sad perversion to evil; but we are bound to assert for it, *fairly interpreted*, a reverential spirit towards the sacred volume, and a tendency to leave the mind with a more earnest conviction of the supreme authority and priceless value of this gift of God. The questions involved in these Letters, are the great questions of the day. The whispers of thousands and tens of thousands of "inquiring spirits" plead with earnest intreaties, that they shall be fairly considered and fairly answered. The word of God itself lifts up its own voice, demanding of those to whom is committed the trust of defending and explaining it, that they should defend it from the enemy that rushes in like a flood. Let no man undertake this work in haste or rashly. Let no one do it with an unbelieving and irreverent or self-inflated spirit. But it needs to be undertaken and put at rest.

These are all the theological opinions of Coleridge which it seems necessary or proper to consider. Many hasty and some foolish things which he has written, might be made the themes of extended strictures. Our limits and our taste forbid us to touch upon these, or indeed upon anything except his prominent and marked peculiarities.

The third division of our inquiries now presents itself, under the title of the transcendental metaphysics of Coleridge. We shall but follow the example of many illustrious predecessors, if on this point, where most light is needed, we shall be able to shed the least. It is as a metaphysical philosopher, that Coleridge's merits and defects are most conspicuous. Here his strength and weakness have met together.

To his pleas for a more fundamental study of these sciences we give our heartiest response. We assent to his critiques on the superficial character of much of what is called metaphysics in England, though we think these critiques need not have been so scornful or indiscriminate. To the admiration of the older philosophers and theologians, so fervently expressed by him and echoed by Dr. Marsh, we also respond, though the assertion that they used his terms in the scientific sense in which he employed them, or held the metaphysics which he taught, is almost as idle as the fancy that the writers of the Scriptures employed his theological metaphysics.

What are called transcendental metaphysics relate to two subjects of inquiry. First, there is the criticism of the powers

of man in respect to their essential nature, their original action, the origin of our knowledge, the laws of perception, the way in which we are led to believe in an external world, and the steps by which we ascend to the belief of God and of spiritual truth. Secondly, the philosophy of the absolute and the infinite, concerning the possibility of which there is a wide diversity of opinion. Those who believe it possible and real, contend that the infinite is directly revealed to the reason in *ideas*, which are the base and stuff of all *conceptions*. Some go further, and contend that the true method of philosophy is to begin with the absolute and to reason from that both ways to infinite and finite existence.

The question in respect to the difference between the reason and the understanding as managed by Coleridge, includes both these points. As far as it relates to the first of the two, i. e. as far as it is a critique upon the origin and reliability of human knowledge and of the office of the several faculties in securing this knowledge, so far is it a legitimate subject of inquiry in the view of all philosophers. It is in fact the question which Locke and Berkeley and Hume and Reid and Kant have each attempted to adjust. It is a most important question also. It lies at the foundation of all those other questions involved in man's moral responsibility, and his capacity for and obligation to religion.

Is there then a faculty in man correspondent to Coleridge's speculative reason? That there is in man a faculty by which he is capable of science, no one will doubt, nor that brutes are incapable of science. Nor will one doubt who has reasoned at all on these subjects, that the whole basis of scientific reasoning rests on the nature and laws of the mind itself, that this furnishes all the material out of which science is made in its first principles and general laws. In reasoning to the laws of nature, their existence, their uniformity, their unity, the mind rests on what is to it reasonable, i. e. it is so constituted that it can come to no other conclusions. It invariably takes it for granted that other minds reason in the same way; hence the possibility of a common knowledge, and of universal science. It must also assume that such is the mind of God; that this constructs and sustains the universe both material and spiritual on the same principles. The human mind cannot conceive of the existence of mind, except as thus reasoning, nor of any existence objective to itself except as answering to these principles. In this sense of the word, the *mind*, or the reasoning or the reasonable man appeals to itself.

These principles can be abstracted and generalized and named

and reflected on. It may be proper to call them universal and necessary truths, or the ideas of the reason, in distinction from conceptions of particular existences or of species of existences. And as they are derived from the mind itself, it may be true enough to say that they are revealed to the reason.

But on the other hand, the assertion, that the reason "has the same relation to the intelligible or spiritual, as sense has to the material and phenomenal," or the description of the reason as an inner sense, which beholds ideas, as the senses do the living world, is a mere fiction and fancy. So also, the description of these ideas as objective to the reason, in any other way than the conceptions are, i. e. by being reflected on, is tolerable only as a highly figurative method of speaking, but is intolerable in the cool and exact language of science.

Still more do we reject the view that the reason acquaints the mind with things without itself, as that, in the contemplation of the finite, there is involved the idea of the infinite, (not as a conception but as a reality, an idea,) or as that in the soul's view of its own existence, it involves necessarily the existence of an infinite soul. We reject it because there is no proof of it in fact, and more than all, because the mind can come to this knowledge by inference, by reasoning on the principles by which alone it can exist or act as a mind. If it can come to this knowledge by inference, it has no occasion for a direct revelation. If the mind is so constituted when it sees two events connected under certain circumstances, that it must conclude that the one has caused the other, however rapid the processes may be by which it has come to the result, or numerous the train of associations, it has no need that, in addition to this inference, the *idea* of a cause should reveal itself at this critical moment, in the majesty of a universal and necessary truth.

- The term practical reason was borrowed by Coleridge directly from Kant, by whom it was invented and introduced to save his system from being carried by a logical necessity, to a system of complete moral and religious skepticism. It is employed by Coleridge, in a sense sufficiently loose and lacking in scientific precision, just as is its correspondent the speculative reason. For it is described as "comprehending the will, the conscience, the moral being with its inseparable interests and affections." This is all well enough. No man can object to the term as a popular definition of the moral in man, provided it be understood that it is a *general* and unscientific term, that it includes several distinct

faculties and does not raise the question as to how these faculties derive their moral ideas and the sanction for them, and as to how many are the elements into which they may be analyzed. But we object to the term when it is so used as to stand but for one faculty, and the ideas which it reveals, are spoken of as directly revealed without the possibility of being analyzed or explained, and are made to say to every attempt thus to deal with them "procul o procul este, profani." But Coleridge does *thus* use this term and most frequently. Even in the very sentence which we have quoted above, as being a very satisfactory and rational attempt to give us the reality in the case, he goes on to say, "that reason, namely, which is the organ of wisdom and (as far as man is concerned) the source of living and actual truths." In the "Friend," speaking of this same thing after naming its constituents, he describes the conscience thus, "which in the power and as the indwelling word of an holy and omnipotent legislator *commands* us,—from among the numerous IDEAS, mathematical and philosophical, which the reason by the necessity of its own excellence creates for itself,—unconditionally *commands* us to attribute *reality* and actual *existence*, to those ideas and to those only, without which the conscience itself would be baseless and contradictory, to the ideas of soul and of free-will, of immortality and of God." This is all very true and very eloquent, but if a man would have us believe that it is philosophically true, and that no analysis has a right to go further, we beg to be excused for differing from him. So, too, if the soul, free-will, immortality and God, are to be all classed together as ideas, revealed to the practical reason in their ethereal essence, uncompounded and indecomposable, and a man must be forced to take them as such, without dispute and without digestion, under penalty of being banished forever from the fellowship of the spiritual and ideal philosophy—why then, we cheerfully accept the penalty.

This ideal philosophy has a grave aspect, however, which may not be overlooked. Let a man admit that spiritual truth is thus revealed to the reason in the perfection and purity of ideas, and the next thing which he will naturally do, will be to ask what need have I of any other revelation, and indeed how can I be made the subject of any other revelation? A revelation in human conceptions and by human language is utterly useless, and indeed quite a poor affair compared with the perpetual revelation of ideas within me. It must either use the ideas which I have already, and in that case it can tell me nothing new, but can only use the knowledge which I already possess, or it must be an in-

dividual revelation acting by inspiration on my own reason; but a supernatural revelation, in the common acceptance of the term, it cannot be.

Such has been the actual result of the transcendental philosophy, or more properly speaking of the transcendental *phraseology*. No sooner had the Kantian system been thoroughly received and established in Germany, than the philosophical world were startled by the appearance of a work entitled "A Critique of all Revelation," in which these principles are carried forward to this result. It was anonymous, but it was so consistent and thorough that it was at first attributed to Kant, though afterwards claimed by Fichte. No one needs to be told that this argument is the basis of the philosophical anti-supernaturalism of Germany, or that it has been extensively carried to this conclusion in this country. We do not deny that Coleridge held it back from this result, by asserting as he does the moral depravity and ruin of the race as the occasion for a revelation. Nor do we deny that he and other ideal philosophers can so define their terms as to escape this conclusion; but the charge we make is, that they use these terms so loosely, and press them with such confidence, that taken on their own saying, it is the easiest thing to lead them to this conclusion of anti-supernaturalism. The German philosopher does not define. It is below his dignity to do it, and so his adversary takes up his proposition and putting it into the iron enginery of his logic, turns it out upon him in all its frightful consequences. And as far as Coleridge or his admirers adhere to this method of solemnly asseverating without condescending to explain, or if they do explain, yet forgetting it, the next time they propound, they must bear the responsibility of furthering the conclusions of which their propositions are capable. This spiritual philosophy may be and is the fruitful parent of atheism and unbelief, and it yet remains to be seen, whether its harvest shall not be a harvest of deeper and more enduring woe, than that which sprung up from the seed sown by the sensual school.

And now having followed our friends fairly up to the line that separates the philosophy of the finite and that of the infinite, we must shake hands with them, if they will go further. For we have no belief in the reality or the possibility of such a philosophy. We are willing to remain along the border line as long as they may choose. We believe in the attempt to answer all the questions which relate to the region on this side. We think, too, that the line itself between the finite and the infinite, between

the knowable and the unknowable, should be drawn, definite and ineffaceable, and that its monumental stones should be fixed deep and unshaken; but as to going over it at present after them, their own success is not so flattering as to encourage us in the least. We should as soon think of following the dog which is shown off in the Grotto del Cane of which we used to read in our school days.

Coleridge has occasionally attempted a flight of this kind. He is quite confident for instance that he can demonstrate a Trinity as necessary to the idea of God, and has besides favored us with sundry disquisitions upon substance and the absolute; but his speculations are not sufficiently wrought out to render it fair to criticise them, even if we were disposed to attempt it. We will use all the efforts to see the star to which the astronomer directs our attention in the remotest heaven; we will gladly employ his best instruments, and follow obediently his minutest directions; but as to receiving a blow on the forehead, so that we may make our own stars, that is a little too much to ask of us. There is so much in the lawful metaphysics to strain and confuse the mind, that we have no present intention to submit ourselves to any voluntary bewilderment.

The American disciples of Coleridge have been numerous, and in the variety of uses to which they have applied his principles and his name, they have certainly been sufficiently diversified. Indeed, his influence in this country has been wider, and his reputation more sudden than in England. Certainly his principles have been more thoroughly adopted and tested, and the extravagance of his devotees has been more ridiculous. Among many other services which America renders to the Old World, one of the most conspicuous is that of furnishing a field and room for all sorts of principles to be received and tested, and to be carried out to practical results. The American people and not a few of the American scholars, perform the same service to the European philosophers and theologians, which certain unfortunate rabbits and *cuniculæ* do to chemists and physicians, in receiving a dose or two of every newly invented potion. If the potion be innocent or healthful, we are the gainers; but if not, we must take it notwithstanding. In Europe, old laws, old creeds, old customs, and old prejudices stand greatly in the way of the general and rapid adoption of new principles and systems; but in young America,

which sometimes means *L'Amérique verte*, there is so little respect for the past, and so much hope for the future, that we are ready to hail every new prophet, as the harbinger of a new era, and to give ourselves up to his experimenting. Carlyle here gets his greatest reputation, and the echo of the plaudits of thousands sounds louder across the seas, than the whisper of his fame slowly waxing at home, and quickens the sale of his heavy-going editions. Fourier here can find "Communities" ready to gather themselves in his name, and Strauss, when forbidden to lecture in the universities of Germany, can preach in our churches. All this as we have already remarked, is both well and ill. In Coleridge's influence the good and evil have both been conspicuous.

His general influence upon our literary men has been in some respects salutary. It were quite impossible indeed, that anything good could be glorified by so splendid a genius, and enforced by so fiery an eloquence, and not obtain a deep and rooted lodgment in the mind. Then, too, Coleridge was not a preacher, or a trader in religion or morals in any sense, and of course was unsuspected of sectarian bigotry or party zeal. When he sternly rebuked the shallowness of modern scholarship and the want of thorough principles in morals, and brought up new fields of honorable enterprise, resplendent as the field of the cloth of gold, he did a good service. When he brought to the illustration of writers unknown and neglected, his own glowing criticism, and contended against the undeserved reputation of infidel philosophers and historians, and in commanding words as those of a prophet, called us again to the consecration of all genius and of all learning to the highest service in the honor of God and the advancement of spiritual religion, he did a great and a good work. These are many hundreds now living, on whose minds his writings dawned like a new light, and on whose ears his words fell like the trumpet note, to stir all their better nature, and to strengthen and confirm their holier purposes. The infusion of his influence into our literature, and indeed into our literary atmosphere, is yet to be traced and will long be felt for good. We bless its presence, and rejoice in its healthful promise.

Coleridge had the advantage of being introduced to our theological arena, by one of the most worthy and distinguished of our scholars. The lamented President Marsh will not be soon forgotten by any who had the happiness to know him. His modest demeanor, his amiable disposition, his freedom from craft and cunning, his obvious and ardent love of truth, wherever it was to be

found, the thoroughness of his scholarship, his iron diligence, his warm susceptibility to the good and the noble, and his disposition to master every subject in its principles, were such as to merit for him a reputation and an earthly reward far higher than he in fact received. His essay preliminary to the *Aids to Reflection* and his criticism on Stuart's *Commentary on the Hebrews*, are among the first specimens of writing in their kind. He was no parasite or dependent, in his nature, on the *dicta* of any man. The fragment on Psychology, which he left behind him, shows conclusively that he would take no man's system without examination; that it was his aim and effort to work out for himself and express in his own language, the philosophical truths on which he rested. And yet his reverence for Coleridge sometimes shows itself to be excessive, especially in his theology. There is in his sermons, a more strict and subservient adoption of Coleridge's phraseology, and a closer imitation of his style of thought than we should like to see, and than we were prepared to expect. We were surprised, too, to see in all his *Remains*, that he adopted Coleridge's theory of the atonement, and threw aside the Pauline doctrine of a forensic justification. We must own our surprise, that an interpreter so able as he, should have failed to detect the careless unfairness of Coleridge's expositions, and to supply from Coleridge himself, the refutation of his own reasonings.

The influence of Coleridge on the philosophy and theology of New England, has been in some respects, what President Marsh desired it should be. It has opened new fields of inquiry, and put us in possession of other modes of viewing religious truth. It has brought within our notice, writers which used to be unknown in our libraries. It has rendered our theology tolerant, by showing that the same faith may be held under different formulas of expression. At the same time it has made it free, by giving to the freest inquirer, strong principles of faith and piety, holding to which, he might be sure that he would not make shipwreck of the faith. It may have served to abate the harsh spirit that had grown out of our controversies, and to depress the tendency to low arts, and whispering cunning, and to break down all that wire-pulling apparatus, which is too often present in the religious as well as in the political world. Above all, it has contended for a wakeful, thorough, and scientific theology, in which, let *alarmists* and incapables say what they will, rests the hope of the church. We should say no more than we believe, if we add,

that it has deepened the channel of our psychological inquiries, and started new questions in our schools of mental and moral science.

- This certainly forms no objection to it in our view. For our New England theology has for its genius and aim, to acquaint itself with mental and moral science as it is, during the current generation, in order to correct its errors if it have any, and to avail itself of its better analysis, and above all, to influence the philosophical world for good. So did Edwards, who was a most assiduous student of the philosophy of his day. His correspondence shows that he eagerly sought for every new book from Europe. Some of his leading works were written against evil principles in philosophy. There are those who think, that it is more Edwardean to do the same thing in their own day, than it is to put his writings on their book shelves, and leave them there, and then ejaculate: "there were giants in the earth in those days."
- As far as Coleridge has had influence to create a taste for psychological studies and to send our theologians to a thorough study of the philosophy of the day, so far has it done us good.
 - And yet this Coleridgism, if we may use so barbarous a term, has a foreign look in our New England theology. Geologists tell us that in a uniform and homogeneous stratum, one often meets with a *dike* or a rock formation, which was violently thrust up in a liquid state, across the level strata, disturbing all its ancient arrangements, and introducing into all the interstices a new substance. Such has been this new system in its relations to all the old principles and methods of the New England theology. Ours is a Puritan theology. This is more or less of a church theology, invigorated and guarded indeed, but still adapted to the feelings of a devout reader of the liturgy. Ours is severe in its simplicity, plain in its nomenclature, and sternly logical in all its arrangements. This is gorgeous in its ornaments, ambitious in its terminology and imagination, as well as philosophical in its addresses to the mind. The New England theology is stern in its love of the truth, and rigid in its scrutiny of evidence. This is an avowed devotee of beauty as well as of truth, and easily believes what suits its taste. Above all, the eloquence of the New England theology is founded on convictions, and warmly and frequently addresses the conscience, which it carries by its solemn appeals and its awful earnestness. That nurtured by the system of Coleridge is less severe, more calm, and appeals less to the conscience. The one system is more earnest, direct and practical; the other

is more graceful and speculative and literary. The one was formed in the pulpit and for the pulpit. The other was framed in the closet of the school, and better suits the closet. We are far from denying that our theology, our preaching and our practical views are exposed to some defects. We are willing that these defects should be corrected, and care not from whence the correction comes. Our theology may have been too unrefined and scholastic, and our preaching too often hard and metaphysical. Our worship may have been too often rude and ungraceful. Our practical views may have led us to sin against taste and propriety, as well as to commit worse mistakes. But we would hold fast the staple of our New England system. For the world has no other like it, and the excellences which we lack can be easily taken up by a truth-loving and truth-serving church.

It seems worth while to ask distinctly the question, what is the one distinctive feature of the New England theology, by which it differs from every other? It certainly is far enough from the ecclesiastical theology of the English church, and very far also, if the testimony of its opponents is to be received, from the scholastic Calvinism of the Synod of Dort. Its peculiarity seems to be, that it is an intensely rational and moral system. It addresses the conscience and it aims to move it by reasoning. Thus does it vindicate the moral government of God, by declaring the need of moral rule, to a being who understands his fitness for law, and the sacred obligations of law. Having thus prepared the way, it unveils the mount of God, from whose "right hand went a fiery law," and it wrings the willing or the reluctant amen from the sinful being whom this law condemns. It shows, too, the need of the sacrifice on the cross as a moral necessity, and while it displays the necessity it vindicates the love that did not shrink from giving it full satisfaction. It shows man his deep, his damning guilt, guilt pertaining to a deliberate purpose, and rooted in the very lowest springs of his moral life, a willing depravity. It summons him, thus alienated and refusing to repent himself, to be reconciled to God, and holds over him the awful fact of his dependence on sovereign grace, as the grand argument against delay. Thus is it a perpetual argument with the reason and conscience, an earnest striving with men capable of being thus addressed; vindicating the truths which it urges, and holding them perpetually home to the mind. How different this from the diluted weakness of the theology of regeneration by baptism, and of sanctification by the sacraments; of growth in grace by the ma-

gic influence of symbols, rather than by the manly diet of prayer and preaching. How different also from the unthinking and formal reiteration of stereotyped dogmas, in old scholastic phrase. Whether it be not the nearest to the theology of the apostle of the Gentiles, let all men judge. Whether its preaching be not the most akin to apostolic preaching, and its results to those of apostolic power, let candid men decide. That it has defects we own, but that its genius and aim is better than that of all others which the world now beholds, we do most earnestly contend.

Wherever, then, the influence of Coleridge has caused a dislike of this system and a longing after a splendid ritual and formal observances; wherever it has induced the feeling that the glory of a church was to be found in its organization, rather than in its moral life; and that this moral life depends more on its usages than on its faith; there has it induced a sad degeneracy. That it has caused this degeneracy we know. Much of this morbid dissatisfaction with our own system which has recently prevailed, this longing after something perfect in the outward to satisfy our dreamy ideal, rather than the resolute purpose to make a better church by making better Christians, has come from the perverted study of Coleridge.

Its influence upon the power of the pulpit has been not a little disastrous. Some preach the better for it. More, we fear, preach the worse. To preach with earnestness and power, one must have something to say and must care to say it. There is and there can be no commanding and continued power in any pulpit where theology is not preached. But it must be a theology which the people can understand, and which the preacher must feel that he can make level to their apprehensions and by which he can hold their consciences. But *this* theology must be translated into another dialect to be received by the people, and the misfortune is too often that the preacher, instead of translating his theology into the language of his hearers, corrupts the language of the pulpit by its own barbarous and grotesque phraseology. Hence disgust with the people because they cannot understand him, then disgust with theology in the pulpit and the betaking of one's self to what is vulgarly called popular preaching, and last of all disgust with the pulpit itself.

We feel bound to notice a perversion of Coleridge, seriously unfavorable to moral and religious life. A love of the clear in thought and of the simple in expression, is akin to moral simplicity and to singleness of religious character. An earnest man for

duty has little to say of great and eternal principles, and a man who longs for communion with God, loses sight of ideas, that he may find the living Jehovah. It is quite possible to be so rapt with an imaginative philosophy, as to despise the simplicity of practical ethics, and to be so devoted to an imaginative theology, as to forget the sublime simplicity of God as revealed in Jesus. Far distant be the day when our philosophy and theology shall spoil the simplicity of our trusting faith, or give us a morbid distaste for the realities of a struggling and humble piety.

To pass from the abstract to the concrete, from the general to the particular; the American disciples of Coleridge, to our eye, group themselves into the following classes: First are the genuine scholars and thinkers. These are the men who adopt the Kantian principles and nomenclature from study and conviction, who receive no system without digestion, who can translate their own principles into tolerable English, and can use them in the solution of other questions, with the ease and air of men who understand their own views and can explain them. All honor be rendered to those men, whether they be few or many. All respect be given to their claims and to their reasonings. They are not to be disposed of by a name, nor will they be affected by a sneer. We may reject fewer or more of their opinions. We may think we detect their errors and can show the weak points of their reasonings; but for their independent and scholar-like spirit, for their actual services to mental and moral science, for their free and tolerant spirit, for their elevation above the petty squabbles of party, they merit the respect of the whole commonwealth of letters.

Next come the discriminating or eclectic students of Coleridge. These are the men who reject his terminology and some of his peculiar principles in philosophy, and who start back in utter amazement, from the main peculiarity of his theological system, as also from his rash and capricious interpretations of Scripture, but have an eye to see and a heart to feel his other high excellences. And yet Coleridge is to them a favorite author from his wakeful and wakening spirit, from his intense earnestness, from his vigorous criticism, for his tact in comprehending the bearings of a writer and a principle, and for his point and power in uttering what he thinks. So also, for all that variety of merit comprehended under the term *suggestion*, for the stores of his powerful, his ready, eloquent mind, bursting out in every direction from the profuse and overstocked richness of his intellectual wealth. His

works are those which they would be very unwilling to spare from their library or their table. Of this class, the writer would of course be likely to think and to speak well, as he would count himself in their number, and if the epithets which he has affixed to them be too flattering, they may be ascribed to a very natural cause.

The next are the parasites of Coleridge, the undigesting recipients of all that he says, without the attempt to explain or to understand it, except by repeating his own praises and confounding you with his terminology. A parasite of any man is always offensive, especially an unthinking retainer of any metaphysician, but most of all of such a philosopher as Coleridge. The pretensions are so magnificent, the learning so imposing, the terminology so appalling, that when it comes up in the form of an "ass's load of lumber," the contrast between the bulk of the burden and the sorry figure of the bearer, is striking and ludicrous.

Another class may be called the figurative philosophers, or more precisely those who philosophize by illustrations rather than by reasoning. Coleridge is not the only philosopher who has introduced this intellectual fashion, but he is greatly responsible for it. It consists in propounding a theory or speculation or course of argument, which may be true or may be false, which may be original or which may be borrowed, which may be sense or which may be nonsense, but which shall be imposing by its mysterious way of announcement and which is sure to be arrayed in the lively and piquant air of pointed illustrations or in the gorgeous robes of splendid imagery. When you look for the truth in the midst of these magnificent appendages, it is possible that there is no truth to be found, and that the substance and accidents, the body and its dressing, are but empty air; or if you do find it, it may prove not to be worth finding. There is a strong tendency in the public mind to call this philosophy. Our educated men who ought to know better will shout, "this is original, this is philosophy;" and the students of some of our literary institutions have been known to be strangely bitten with a mania for this kind of philosophizing. There are two reasons for this. Our national aptness for guessing with our disposition to praise the successful guesser, and the absence of a thoroughly learned class who are able and ready to discriminate between scholarship and pretension. If we do not read Plato and Aristotle and Lord Bacon and Cudworth, we can *talk* about them, and with the help of quickness and tact we can often guess aright; or if we do not, Cole-

ridge and such as he can tell us what to say, and then how magnificently we can say it!

Even when the philosophizing is of a higher character, and the merit more real, it is an ill sign in a man who sets up for a philosopher, always to speak in figures, never to face a syllogism and to dread the precise avowal of his opinion, in severe and well-defined statements. And it is a sadder sign, for the commonwealth of letters, if this is to pass as genuine and profound philosophy. It is one thing, to be able to shed various and pleasant lights around an old truth or a happy suggestion, and quite another, to go down into the depth of the mine and bring up the heavy ore. It may seem to be a strange charge but we believe it is true, that the tendency of the so-called spiritual philosophy has been to render superficial and to popularize our science. Its contrary influence has been urged in its favor. This is no philosophy for boarding-school misses, say its friends, and yet more zealous Coleridgites than sundry misses of sixteen or thereabouts we have never seen. Guessing and pretension, mystery and splendor, go well with the people on this side the water. Itinerant ministers will exhaust all their reading about Plato and Aristotle on the immortality of the soul, before an audience of a dozen in a log school-house, and they shall pass for very learned men. That this philosophy gives facility for similar operations on a larger scale and before a more respectable audience, we need not stay to argue.

So too it has begotten in many a sad and almost savage intolerance. There are sundry defenders of the faith and of right principles against infidelity and error, who planting themselves upon the eternal principles of the spiritual philosophy, treat their antagonists with no stinted measure of contempt, if not of railing. The appellations, utilitarian, priestly, infidel, principles of the sensual school, are distributed in every variety of combination, and with labored efforts to overwhelm their antagonists beneath a storm of contemptuous expression and of violent language. Where there is so much violence we may always suspect some confusion of thought. When the words are so bitter, though the direction of a man may be right in the main, yet there appears to be less conscious strength in the argument. But these men of the spiritual school, do not analyze; they affirm; they will not argue, but they will overwhelm you with a hail-storm of contempt. The cause of truth owes but little to such defenders.

The next variety which we name, are the voluntary mystics.

These are the men who in order to believe enough, will believe more than enough, who are not content with interpretations that are at once logical and scriptural, but delight in supposing some additional meaning, they know not what. Faith and the union of the soul with Christ, and the indwelling of the spirit and the presence of Christ in the Eucharist, these and other truths give them ready opportunity to exercise the believing, or more properly the imaginary faculty, to their heart's content, and for it all they have the sanction of their master and the spirit of the school. This in the view of many is a harmless tendency, and tends to orthodoxy and spirituality. We do not think so. The man who will believe *more* than by the laws of sound interpretation he feels bound to, would under other circumstances believe *less*. Besides, the imagination is as likely to have as much to do with this mystical faith, as the conscience has; the fancy, as the conscious wants of the soul.

Next come "the artful dodgers" in theology. The name we own is not very dignified, nor is the occupation. These are the men who take advantage of the many-sidedness of Coleridge's theology to be on no side of any disputed point, or who by a strange and most inconsistent eclecticism, merge into their own faith ingredients the most opposite, and materials the most irreconcilable. They are High Churchmen, and yet Congregationalists, bigotedly conservative, and laxly libertine. Strongly Calvinistic, and yet grossly Pelagian. Stoically rigid in their practical views, and loosely Epicurean. Or if pressed to any logical conclusion, they find their refuge in some Coleridgian term, and hide themselves from their pursuers in a convenient mist.

We name next the Prelatic or Episcopal variety, the men who from reading Coleridge have contracted a strange sympathy with the English church, and whose heads have been turned by his allusions to his mother the church of England. This has been carried so far by not a few that they have disowned their Puritan ancestry and their Puritan baptism, forgetting that Coleridge blessed the Puritans in his heart, and rendered to them the high meed of his worthy praise. Men are indeed to be pitied, who could so pervert the lessons of such a master, on such a subject.

Last of all we name the Coleridgians, *par excellence*, who show their zeal for their master, by their Babylonish dialect. Who with hardly a thought that can be precisely expressed, can yet pile up mountains of barbarously compounded words into sentences of complicated construction, and can so go forward, page after page, and

perhaps volume after volume. The wonder is, by what magic of patient labor, by what mystery of intellectual toil, these sentences are ever written. It is no matter of wonder, how they can ever be read, for we are sure that they are never subjected to this operation.

If there are other varieties than these which we have named we know them not. With this enumeration, we conclude our remarks. We have spoken freely, but we hope not unkindly, plainly and perhaps pointedly, but we trust not inconsiderately nor unfairly.

ARTICLE VII.

THE STRUCTURE OF THE HEBREW SENTENCE.

THE subject named at the head of this Article should not be left wholly out of view, in a course of Hebrew instruction. Every biblical student should endeavor to ascertain and classify the principles which regulated the expressions of thought among the Hebrews. Without this, there can be no radical acquaintance with Hebrew syntax in general; and without it, even the meaning of the sacred writers cannot always be fully apprehended. If any one supposes that the Hebrew sentence is so simple as to afford no opportunity to exercise his powers of analysis; or that it is so stereotyped in form as to exclude any very striking exhibition of variety, he entertains probably the common opinion on the subject, but one which is not correct. As compared with those languages which carry the system of inflection to such an extent, for example, as do the Latin and the Greek, the Hebrew moves in this respect, it must be confessed, in a restricted sphere; its sentence is, certainly, both uniform and simple. But without possessing so much flexibility as we see there, it has still left to it a wide range of movement. The inquisitive scholar has opened to him here an interesting field of study; and, after performing the necessary preparatory work, he should advance to it and add to his other knowledge that which may be gained from extending his inquiries in this direction. In truth, the greater the uniformity which may distinguish a language in the construction of its sentences, the more important and significant must be any departure