

“All that metaphysical disquisition”:
Reason and Understanding but the Faculty Divine
Deleted?

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I FIRST STUMBLED ACROSS COLERIDGE, NOT KNOWING IT WAS HE, when I was a small boy. Among the often amusingly illustrated entries in the autograph album my mother had preserved from her own childhood were lines carefully inscribed by Dora MacLeod on the 11th of January 1926:

You ask me for something original,
But I don't know where to begin;
For there's nothing original in me,
Unless its [*sic*] Original Sin.

Eagle-eyed Coleridgeans, inspecting my mother's album, will no doubt detect Dora's deviations from the original wording of the lines written, in another album a hundred years earlier, by STC, 'on a lady asking him for something original' (*PW I (CC)* 2 1029). The doctrine of Original Sin prevalent in the Highland village where Dora and my mother were brought up, dominated as it was by the staunchly Calvinistic Free Church of Scotland, no doubt also diverged from that held by Coleridge. I mention this now however, not to launch into Coleridge's critique of the hereditary misinterpretation of 'original' sin (*AR (CC)* 257, 265ff.), but as an excuse for a 'premonition and request'—namely that you will not find nor expect 'something original' in what I am about to say on Coleridge and the Religious Imagination. Over the years, this subject has been exhaustively mined by scholars, and while there may well be some remaining productive veins in the late Notebooks,¹ which I have not

¹ Two important late notebook references to the Imagination have been discussed by scholars:

Graham Davidson, *Coleridge's Career*, Palgrave Macmillan 1990: 169-170: '... as late as 1829 he [Coleridge] wrote, "It is wonderful, how closely Reason and Imagination are connected, and Religion the union of the two" [F I 203n]. His later notebooks also show the continuing importance he attached to the power, and that he continued to investigate the close links between the religious and the creative impulses. In Notebook 23 he asserts the necessity of the imagination in a man's religious life'. For a discussion of this entry, see the editor's 'Prescript' in this issue.

Nick Reid, 'The Satanic Principle in the Later Coleridge's Theory of Imagination', *Studies in Romanticism*, Vol 37, No 2 (Summer 1998) pp. 259-277 (responding to) Anthony Harding, 'Imagination, Patriarchy and Evil in Coleridge and Heidegger', *Studies in Romanticism*, Vol 35, No 1 (Spring 1996) pp. 3-26'. Harding argues that: '... in the last decade of his life, Coleridge found a new genealogy for his concept of the imagination in the patriarchal culture of the ancient Hebrews, and specifically in their perception, transmitted in different forms to Judaism, Christianity, and Islam, of the reality and cosmic pervasiveness of evil. ... linking his concept of imagination to those secret doctrines of the patriarchal religion that were made known only to initiates (particularly the "tradition of an Evil Principle")...' (3).

Reid is not persuaded of such a major shift in Coleridge's view of imagination: '... a duality at the heart of the human soul... points... to the place of the Satanic element within the human imagination... But... this thesis... merely reflects the fallenness of the human soul. Moreover, we should not forget the possibility of redemption... which promises our spiritual salvation in a general sense, and even (here Coleridge was less certain) our personal survival after death' (276).

examined in sufficient detail, what I have to say as an amateur will be heavily reliant on the professionals.

Having done that however, I would like then to take another look at what Coleridge had to say on Reason and Understanding, and to some extent Imagination, in the light of the writings of a more recent author, who mentions Coleridge in passing two or three times in his major work. I'll say more about that later, but let me begin with one of his references to Coleridge, and let me add, in the author's defence, that for perhaps understandable reasons in pursuit of a much larger historical theme, his references to Coleridge appear to be limited to the first volume of the *Collected Letters*, the *Biographia Literaria*, and the highly suspect source of the following all-too-familiar quotation:

Carlyle gives an amusing portrait of Coleridge, his guests falling asleep around the dinner table as he theorised about the endlessly fascinating relationship between 'sum-m-mject' and 'om-m-mject'; but possibly because, precisely, of the abstraction of his approach, Coleridge never managed to find a way of transcending this polarity. By contrast Wordsworth did not need to *talk about* it because he expressed in the very fabric of his poetry the union of subject and object, the incarnation of the world of images in the lived body.²

What in essence we have here then, is a frequently-made accusation against Coleridge, the failed poet and ultimately the failed philosopher. So *did* Coleridge, in his later years, lose interest in the Imagination, the 'Faculty Divine', as, quoting Wordsworth's *Excursion* (I. 79), he frequently called it? (BL I 241). Or did his imagination fail him, as his visitor Professor Spurzheim suggested, when in 1825, the phrenologist 'consoled me ... for the want, or evanescence of the Organ of Ideality or Imagination' (CL V 460-461).

Might Coleridge's purported loss of interest in the Imagination be attributed to the failure of his powers as a poet? Consider the comment he scribbled in the margins of a letter of March 1828 from his long-time patron Lady Beaumont, who had written:

Let me remind you of our last conversation when you said that metaphysics so far from destroying the spirit of imagination had added new wings from the power of contrast, and the last specimen you read is proof of your not having deceived yourself. Do not let the last rays sink for want of exertion, and give Fancy its full play. For *one* of the present —one that will profit by your labours, hundreds will feel the purest

Reid does however agree that: 'Within C's later thinking, then,... the BL definition is insufficiently qualified (it is simply too grand) in its implicit claims for the human imagination, for it fails to acknowledge the ways in which our fallenness prevents any genuine repetition of the divine act in our own creativity — and C's own poems are redolent of a sense of an epiphany never quite actualized' (277).

² McGilchrist I, *The Master and his Emissary: the Divided Brain and the Making of the Western World*. New Haven and London, Yale University Press, 2010: 357-8.

thoughts kindle into life by the powers of that precious gift you have received. Do not throw it away.
(CL VI 731)

'In this exhortation' Lady Beaumont added, 'I shall be seconded by Mrs Gilman'. Many years later, Mrs Gilman's granddaughter recalls:

At times when I was reading aloud favourite passages from the Poet's works, some agitation appeared to come over her, she would sigh – and there was a change in the tone of her voice as she would murmur 'Ah! my dear, if only...' then after a pause, 'Well! Let us continue.' Soon recovering her accustomed calm and gracious manner she bade me resume the reading, and again spoke hopefully of the Poet and his work. During these interludes I experienced a momentary feeling of wonder and concern, but at the time I was too young to formulate any theory explaining my grandmother's agitation, and I felt a delicacy in questioning her about it.³

Was it 'if only' Coleridge had taken Lady Beaumont's advice? We cannot now know. But Coleridge's response at the time is both ambivalent and informative.

Lady B. in this letter urges me to resume Poetry. – Alas! How can I? – Is the power extinct? No! No! As in a still Summer Noon, when the lulled Air at irregular intervals wakes up with a startled *Hush-st*, that seems to re-demand the silence which it breaks, or heaves a long profound Sigh in it's Sleep, and an Aeolian Harp has been left in the chink of the not quite shut Casement – even so – how often! – scarce a week of my Life shuffles by, that does not at some moment feel the spur of the old genial impulse – even so does there fall on my inward Ear swells, and broken snatches of sweet Melody, reminding me that I still have that within me which is both Harp and Breeze. But in the same moment awakes the Sense of *C[hange] without* – Life *unendeared*. The tenderest Strings no longer thrill'd.

In order to poetic composition I need the *varied* feeling – 'Thought charmed to sleep; and the too great *continuity* of mind broken up, to begin anew, with *new*-power seeking & finding *new* themes. (CL VI 731)

'The tenderest Strings no longer thrill'd'. The *kind* of love he longed for no longer possible? That may have been part of it. But also 'too great *continuity* of mind', the continuity of that unbroken chain of metaphysical argument he struggled to forge in his 'great work', never finished, but 'if you once master any part of it, you cannot hesitate to embrace it as the truth' (TT I 491). 'The continuity of mind metaphysics demanded, resisted being 'broken up to begin anew with *new*-power seeking and finding *new* themes', did not leave room for

³ Watson L E, *Coleridge at Highgate* London: Longmans, Green & Co. 1925: 5

‘the *varied* feeling’ needed for ‘poetic composition’.

To Coleridge’s mind however, this was not all loss. In June 1834, just two months before his death, and after observing, ‘if you once master any part of it, you cannot hesitate to embrace it as the truth’, he recollected what he had written almost twenty year earlier and remarked:

All that metaphysical disquisition at the end of the first volume of the *Biographia Literaria* is unformed and immature; it contains fragments of the truth, but it is not full, not thought out. It is wonderful to myself to think how infinitely more profound my views now are, and yet how much clearer they are. The circle is completing; the idea is coming round to, and to be, the common sense. (TT I 491-492 28 June 1834)

‘It contains fragments of the truth, but it is not full, not thought out’. The passage Coleridge has in mind here presumably is the one whose contested interpretations have kept generations of scholars in literary employment:

The Primary IMAGINATION I hold to be the living Power and Prime Agent of all human Perception, and as a repetition in the finite mind of the eternal act of creation of the infinite I AM. The Secondary Imagination I consider as an echo of the former, co-existing with the conscious will, yet still as identical with the primary in the *kind of its agency*, and differing only in *degree* and in the *mode is* of its operation. (BL I 304)

According to his daughter Sara, ‘the final clause of the sentence (‘and as a repetition in the finite mind of the eternal act of creation of the infinite I AM’) ‘was “stroked out” in a copy of BL containing a few marginal notes by C’ (BL I 304 fn. 3). In the light of his remark about ‘fragments of the truth ... not thought out’, however, Coleridge’s deletion of the clause suggests not a rejection of the imagination’s religious significance but a reassessment, or series of reassessments, of imagination within the complexities and conflicts of Coleridge’s mental world. To see how these reassessments may have come about, let me try briefly to identify where and how imagination appears in some of Coleridge’s main prose writings after the *Biographia Literaria*.

First, and with the Religious Imagination specifically in mind, *The Statesman’s Manual* and *Lay Sermon* of 1816-1817. (The much later *Confessions of an Enquiring Spirit* of 1824, also concerned with the interpretation of Scripture, does not appear to make any explicit references to imagination.) In *The Statesman’s Manual* the histories of Scripture are characterised as

the living *educts* of the Imagination; of that reconciling and mediatory power, which incorporating the Reason in Images of the Sense, and organizing (as it were) the flux of the Senses by the permanence and self-

circling energies of the Reason, give birth to a system of symbols, harmonious in themselves, and consubstantial with the truths, of which they are the *conductors*. (LS 29)

Coleridge illustrates this with reference to the symbolism of the mysterious 'wheels' accompanying the Spirit in the vision of the prophet Ezekiel. This illustration leads him on to emphasise the prophetic function of Scripture, and also to his profound insight that a symbol, as opposed to an allegory 'always partakes of the reality which it renders intelligible' (30).

In Appendix C of *The Statesman's Manual*, Coleridge expands on this theme. Setting out definitions of Reason and Understanding, he says that the latter, the '*discursive* understanding, is characterised by 'Clearness without Depth' and that 'the completing power which unites clearness with depth ... is the IMAGINATION, impregnated with which the understanding itself becomes intuitive'. (69) What Coleridge seems to be saying here, is that limitations to the way the human mind works mean that ultimate truths the mind intuitively stretches towards, cannot be grasped, in the normal way we use to describe the evidence of our senses, without fragmentation and contradiction. Stories and symbols woven by the imagination around those ungraspable ultimate truths however, like poetry, can evoke in the human mind a deep sense of their truth: but the 'clearness' with which this depth of intuition is united, again, is clarity not of exposition but of intuition. As Coleridge goes on to write: 'Each individual must bear witness of it in his own mind, even as he describes life and light: and with the silence of light it describes itself to us, and dwells in *us* only as far as we dwell in *it*.' (70) Later, responding perhaps to claims that this was all very obscure, Coleridge wrote in a copy of *The Statesman's Manual* that the real 'Object' of the following more 'miscellaneous' Appendix E was

to rouse and stimulate the mind – to set the reader a thinking – and at least to obtain entrance for the question whether the truth of the Opinions in fashion is quite so certain as he had hitherto taken for granted – rather than to establish the contrary by a connected chain of proofs and arguments. (LS 114 fn.2)

In his *Logic* and *Opus Maximum*, by contrast, Coleridge was much more concerned to establish a connected chain of proofs and arguments. In the *Logic*, long premeditated, but probably committed to paper only in the early 1820s, Coleridge's characterisation of imagination takes on a more technical form, as 'the faculty of original and constructive imagination' manifested in 'the imagination of the geometrician'. Being by Coleridge, of course, this is vividly illustrated by describing his experience of imaginatively 'connecting two bright stars' in the night sky and of observing 'the exceeding velocity of motion' of 'ephemerae and other minute and half-transparent insects' (L 73-76). Later in the *Logic* Coleridge continues to use the word in this more technical sense, rather than the more expansive one of *The Statesman's*

Manual. There are, he writes: ‘objects the existence of which we may hold with the clearest and most distinct insight of reason, though we are capable of formally neither a conception nor an imagination of the same’ (172). And again:

As we cannot become mathematicians but by reasoning according to the laws and necessities of the primary imagination, so neither can we become logicians or discourse logically, but according to the inherent forms and necessary data of the understanding or reflective faculty. (266)

In *Aids to Reflection*, published in 1825, references to the imagination are few and far between, and not all of them complimentary.⁴ An aphorism entitled ‘THE WISEST USE OF THE IMAGINATION’ sternly warns Christians against the failure of imaginary efforts to arm themselves against temptation’ (AR 93), while in another, the imagination’s weavings, benign in *The Statesman’s Manual*, are now held to blame for aiding the conversion of speculative theories into ‘mischievous superstitions’ (167). More positively however, in a letter of 1822, projecting the proposed book to the publisher John Murray, Coleridge praises its inspiration, Archbishop Leighton, as a man whose many qualities, ‘working conjointly could not fail to form and nourish in him the higher power, and more akin to reason—the power, I mean, of Imagination’ (CL V 1288).

But if *Aids*’ references to the imagination are few, those to reflection, as might be expected from the title, abound. It is ‘by reflection alone’ that ‘self-knowledge ... can be obtained’ (AR 10) and it is by reflecting on ‘common-place maxims ... in direct reference to our own state and conduct, to our own past and future being’ that we give ‘freshness and importance’ to them (11). Or again, ‘To restore a common-place truth to its first *uncommon* lustre, you need only *translate* it into action. But to do this you must have *reflected* on its truth’ (12).

At this point it is tempting to wonder whether Coleridge is using ‘reflection’ as another way of saying ‘imagination’, since in many, especially of the early aphorisms he seems to be advocating something similar to what is meant when someone urges another to “use your imagination!”. But the matter is more complex, since in *Aids*, the word reflection seems to carry almost too many different meanings: from using ‘the energy of thought’ to gain ‘an insight into the laws and constitution of the human mind and the grounds of religion and true morality’ (14-15); or again ‘to ask yourself the precise meaning’ of over-familiar words(47); to being described as this ‘*seeing* light, this *enlightening* eye’ illuminated from above, from whence ‘even this light is *but* a reflection’. (15-16). In his Editor’s Introduction to the CC edition, John Beer helpfully

⁴ Imagination is also mentioned negatively in a fragment of 1821 ‘ON THE IMPORTANCE OF METAPHYSICS’. ‘God is Absolute Will essentially invisible or God is a most pure Spirit. – To this point Philosophy by a long and arduous discipline gradually desensualizing the mind, and emancipating it first from the tyranny of the Eye, and then of the Imagination may elevate the natural man’ (SW&F II 900).

explains that for Coleridge, ‘the value of the word [reflection] was that it could be used both as an abstract word to describe a mental process and as an image invoking metaphors of religious and moral illumination’; and that it had been so used in many of the ancient and early modern writers with whom Coleridge was most familiar (lxxxix). And if the diverse ways in which Coleridge characterises reflection seem to overflow the technical description, firmly insisted on in the *Logic* and still in *Aids*, that ‘Understanding is the Faculty of *Reflection*’, (223) Beer adds that ‘there is a clear presumption that such work [by the Understanding] is preparatory to that which will lead to the truths revealed by intuition’ (xciv).

A similar point is made in Fragment 2 of the *Opus Maximum*, dating from the early 1820s.⁵ Coleridge, apparently returning to the argument of *The Statesman’s Manual*, again distinguishes between the Understanding, which is ‘the faculty of the finite’, concerned with ‘things of reflection, association, or discourse’ and the Reason, associated with ‘intuition’ as opposed to ‘discourse’. But when, he continues, the understanding is

employed in the service of the reason to bring out the necessary and universal truths contained in the infinite into distinct contemplation by means of pure acts of the imagination... in this case the discursive faculty becomes what our Shakespeare, with equal felicity and precision, entitles “discourse of reason”. (OM 87)

To illustrate such ‘pure acts of the imagination, Coleridge provides examples familiar from the Kantian influenced *Logic* and from the meanings of ‘reflection’ in his *Aids*: namely,

the production of the forms of space and time, abstracted from all corporeity, or of the inherent forms of the understanding itself, abstractly from the consideration of particulars – processes which constitute the sciences of geometry, numeral mathematics, universal logic, and [he then adds] pure metaphysics (87).

⁵ Other mentions of the imagination in *Opus Maximum* include:

- (1) ‘... in creation we imply a creator and thus prepare ourselves for the equivalent to the advantage which the infinite series forever gives and snatches away, according as we contemplate each part severally or attempt to account for the All: the Creator, I say is again required and presented by the reason and by the imagination in the service of the reason as the fosterer, the teacher, the Providence’ (14).
- (2) ‘Unnatural usurpers of the imagination, not things but the images of things, no longer his mere objects, become his Gods, and in their vividness distinguish the self-love in which they commenced. Enslaved by imagination, he may be educated to force his way through fire and blood for one who repays his service with contempt and injury.’ (123-124.)
- (3) Discussing the idea of power: ‘it could not but tend to emancipate the imagination from the tyranny of the visual and the palpable over the reason, of that domination of death over life and living power...’ (294).
- (4) ‘... all language is utterance, i.e. Outer-ance, and with Outness the imagination necessarily associates a sensation of reality more or less faint, and it requires all the caution of reason to prevent this sensation from passing itself [off] for a sense’ (312).
- (5) ‘... to subject ourselves to a delusion of the imagination, as if there were a separability as well as distinctness of the act of the Spirit from that of the Word...’ (380).

Now it is with such ‘pure acts of the imagination’, enabling the understanding ‘in the service of reason’ to create a ‘discourse of reason’ in the field of ‘pure metaphysics’ that much of the *Opus Maximum* is concerned, not least in relation to the metaphysical problem of the origin of evil. But it is far from clear that such ‘pure acts of the imagination’ can successfully create in the understanding a ‘discourse of reason’ capable of completing the unbroken chain of metaphysical argument Coleridge struggled to forge in his *Opus Maximum*. In a marginal note of around 1831, on Bunyan’s *Pilgrim’s Progress*, he defined metaphysics as ‘those truths of the pure reason, which always transcend and not seldom appear to contradict the Understanding’ (M I 819); and in the *Opus Maximum* he wrote of the Absolute Will as ‘the most abstruse of all metaphysical speculations and the one great mystery of the mind’ (OM 19). But elsewhere, in a notebook, he had defined a ‘Mystery’ as ‘that which we apprehend but can neither comprehend nor communicate—a truth of Reason which the Understanding can represent only by Negatives, or contradictory Positives.’ (CN IV 5170). The unresolved question, in other words, is whether an ineffable (incapable of being expressed in words) mystery can ever be successfully converted into a resolvable metaphysical problem—as opposed to being evoked by the imagination in symbol, story, or poetry.

Almost to the end, it seems, Coleridge kept hoping that metaphysics could do the job. His motivation, I suspect, particularly in relation to the crucial question of the origin of evil, was his anxiety to resolve the conflict between his profound awareness of divine providence and the challenge to that provided by the existence of evil not just in human beings but in the natural creation. In the end perhaps, like so many other believers with eyes turned outward as well as inward, he could not resolve it; and perhaps he had to accept this, ruefully, as he seemed to do, just two years before his death when he remarked:

The sublime and abstruse doctrines of Christian Belief belong to the Church – but the faith of the individual, centred in his heart, is or may be collateral to them. Faith is subjective – “I throw myself in adoration before God, acknowledge myself his creature – sinful, weak, lost – and pray for help and pardon” – but when I rise from my knees, I discuss the doctrine of the Trinity as I would a problem in Geometry – in the same temper of mind I mean, not by the same process of reasoning, of course.

(TT I 313 28 July 1832)

And if Coleridge were alive and rising from his knees today? I suspect he would be intrigued, excited, and perhaps comforted by the writings of the author I quoted from at the beginning, whose criticism of the abstraction of Coleridge’s approach the poet might well forgive, recognising a kindred spirit in his mental strife against the mechanical philosophy. Let me give just a brief suggestion of why that might be.

In the 1960s, a successful experimental treatment for epilepsy involved

cutting the connections between the two hemispheres of the brain. This led to new information about the different ways in which the right and left hemispheres work. That information was quickly oversimplified by New Age writers, to claim that the right brain is creative, intuitive and spiritual and the left brain rational and analytical. But it isn't so simple. In *The Master and his Emissary*, (see fn.2) published in 2010, and highly regarded by his scientific peers, the psychiatrist Iain McGilchrist reviews an impressive amount of solidly researched neuroscientific and clinical evidence.

What all this shows (as he summarises in two other publications) is that both hemispheres are involved in all aspects of thinking and emotion, but each does it in a different way. Humans, and animals, use ‘the left hemisphere to provide narrow attention to what we can use... and the right to provide the broad sustained awareness of the whole picture’.⁶ How we actually experience the world, McGilchrist suggests, depends on with which hemisphere we are paying attention. If it is the right, ‘we experience – the live, complex, embodied, world of individual, unique beings, forever in flux, a net of interdependencies, forming and reforming wholes, a world with which we are deeply connected’. If we are attending with the left, by contrast, ‘the world is [not present but] “re-presented”... This kind of attention isolates, fixes, and makes each thing explicit by bringing it under the spotlight of attention. In doing so it renders things inert, mechanical, lifeless... But it also enables us to learn more easily, and to see how to make things by putting them together’.⁷ ‘The left hemisphere’s world requires precision rather than breadth, and aims to close things down as much as possible to a certainty’: but ‘the right hemisphere views the broad picture and opens things up to possibility’.⁸ In order to experience the world aright, McGilchrist argues, we need both types of attention: ‘the right hemisphere is aware of, and understands, more than the left: but the left is more able to articulate and use what it knows.’ But the ‘catch’ in this is that because ‘the left hemisphere exists to make things certain’ it has ‘a tendency to prioritise its theory over experience, “re-presentation” over the presence of things’, and to think ‘that it can go it alone’. This one-sided view, clearly, ‘is not a reliable guide to the nature of the world’: but ‘its mechanistic vision is seductive’. Seductive, McGilchrist adds, but not scientific, since science, ‘just as much as the arts, starts with processes best served by the right hemisphere’.⁹

I hope it may be apparent by now why Coleridge might have been excited and perhaps comforted by all this. The right hemisphere, which ‘is aware of, and understands, more than the left’, sounds rather like the Reason, at least from its human side; the left hemisphere, ‘more able to articulate and use what

⁶ McGilchrist I, ‘The Art of Medicine; Paying attention to the bipartite brain.’ *The Lancet* Vol 377 March 26 2011: 1069.

⁷ *ibid* 1068

⁸ McGilchrist I, ‘Divine Understanding and the Divided Brain’, in Clausen J, Levy N (eds.), *Handbook of Neuroethics*, DOI 10.1007/978-94-007-4707-4_99, Springer Science+Business Media Dordrecht 2015: 1589

⁹ see reference 7: 1069

it knows', like the Understanding, and like the Understanding, tending to think that it can 'go it alone'. The left hemisphere's misapprehension however, is explained by McGilchrist with reference to neuroscientific 'observations of the relation between language and gesture'. These suggest

that thought originates in processes which are best carried out in the right hemisphere, and is then passed to the left for syntactical and semantic processing. But expression is hugely enriched by what is then added by the right hemisphere – tone, humour, metaphorical understanding, and the implicit meaning that makes up most of what we communicate when we talk. So with everything, it seems: grounded in the right, “unpacked” for practical purposes in the left, then reintegrated into the whole picture by the right again.¹⁰

And in a more positive reference to Coleridge, McGilchrist compares this process with an observation from the *Biographia Literaria*:

In order to obtain adequate notions of any truth, we must intellectually separate its distinguishable parts, and this is the technical *process* of philosophy. But having done so, we must then restore them in our conception to the unity, in which they actually co-exist; and this is the *result* of philosophy. (BL II 11; see also fn. 2: 200-201)

Had Coleridge been alive today, alert as ever to scientific developments, he might also have been delighted to seize on a comparison McGilchrist makes between the relation between the left and right hemispheres' ways of seeing the world, and the relation between Newtonian and quantum mechanics:

The “laws” that work well in the middle ground, at the every day level, and which seem so certain there, turn out to be false outside that context. They are just useful approximations, that help us manipulate the world, but radically mistake its fundamental nature.¹¹

Ah! my dear, if only... Coleridge had known, not of Schelling, but of Einstein.

¹⁰ *ibid*; intriguingly, commenting in 1828 on Alaric Watts' *Poetical Sketches*, Coleridge writes: 'I have no objection to your spiritual Cranium containing both the Taste Exquisite; and "the Faculty divine *this* in one hemisphere, and *that* in the other...' but let the Poet keep at a distance from the Connoisseur' (SWF II 1467-1468).

¹¹ see reference 7: 1069