



LETTERS
OF
SAMUEL TAYLOR COLERIDGE

EDITED BY
ERNEST HARTLEY COLERIDGE

IN TWO VOLUMES
VOL. I



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INTRODUCTION

HITHERTO no attempt has been made to publish a collection of Coleridge's Letters. A few specimens were published in his lifetime, both in his own works and in magazines, and, shortly after his death in 1834, a large number appeared in print. Allsop's "Letters, Conversations, and Recollections of S. T. Coleridge," which was issued in 1836, contains forty-five letters or parts of letters; Cottle in his "Early Recollections" (1837) prints, for the most part incorrectly, and in piecemeal, some sixty in all, and Gillman, in his "Life of Coleridge" (1838), contributes, among others, some letters addressed to himself, and one, of the greatest interest, to Charles Lamb. In 1847, a series of early letters to Thomas Poole appeared for the first time in the Biographical Supplement to the "Biographia Literaria," and in 1848, when Cottle reprinted his "Early Recollections," under the title of "Reminiscences of Coleridge and Southey," he included sixteen letters to Thomas and Josiah Wedgwood. In Southey's posthumous "Life of Dr. Bell," five letters of Coleridge lie imbedded, and in "Southey's Life and Correspondence" (1849-50), four of his letters find an appropriate place. An interesting series was published in 1858 in the "Fragmentary Remains of Sir H. Davy," edited by his brother, Dr. Davy; and in the "Diary of H. C. Robinson," published in 1869, a few letters from Coleridge are interspersed. In 1870, the late Mr. W. Mark W. Call printed in the "Westminster Review" eleven letters from Coleridge to Dr. Brabant of Devizes,

dated 1815 and 1816; and a series of early letters to Godwin, 1800-1811 (some of which had appeared in "Macmillan's Magazine" in 1864), was included by Mr. Kegan Paul in his "William Godwin" (1876). In 1874, a correspondence between Coleridge (1816-1818) and his publishers, Gale & Curtis, was contributed to "Lippincott's Magazine," and in 1878, a few letters to Matilda Betham were published in "Fraser's Magazine." During the last six years the vast store which still remained unpublished has been drawn upon for various memoirs and biographies. The following works containing new letters are given in order of publication: Herr Brandl's "Samuel T. Coleridge and the English Romantic School," 1887; "Memorials of Coleorton," edited by Professor Knight, 1887; "Thomas Poole and his Friends," by Mrs. H. Sandford, 1888; "Life of Wordsworth," by Professor Knight, 1889; "Memoirs of John Murray," by Samuel Smiles, LL. D., 1891; "De Quincey Memorials," by Alex. Japp, LL. D., 1891; "Life of Washington Allston," 1893.

Notwithstanding these heavy draughts, more than half of the letters which have come under my notice remain unpublished. Of more than forty which Coleridge wrote to his wife, only one has been published. Of ninety letters to Southey which are extant, barely a tenth have seen the light. Of nineteen addressed to W. Sotheby, poet and patron of poets, fourteen to Lamb's friend John Rickman, and four to Coleridge's old college friend, Archdeacon Wrangham, none have been published. Of more than forty letters addressed to the Morgan family, which belong for the most part to the least known period of Coleridge's life, — the years which intervened between his residence in Grasmere and his final settlement at Highgate, — only two or three, preserved in the MSS. Department of the British Museum, have been published. Of numerous letters written in later life to his friend and amanuensis, Joseph Henry Green; to Charles Augustus