My dear Friend. It is a flattering thought, that the more we have seen, the less we have to say. In youth and early Manhood, the Mind and Nature are, as it were, two rival Artists, both potent Magicians, and engaged, like the King's Daughter and the Rebel Genie, in short conflict of Cooperation, each having for its object to turn the other into Canvas or paint in, Clay to mould, or Cabinet to contain. For a while the Mind seems to have the better in the contest, and makes of Nature what it likes; takes her colours and Weather Stocks for Ghosts & Printers Ink and print Maps of the Smiles of Arachne and Cement Billings on her Rocks; composes Country Dances on her brown mighty Ripples, Tanagers on her Waves and Walzger on her Eddy Sources; transforms her Summer Gales into Harps and Harps,lowest notes and highest Notes, and her Winter Blasts into Pindaric Odes, Christiebels & Ancient Ballads set to Music by Beethoven, and in the visions of triumph conjures her Clouds into Whales and Stalagmites with Valancienne on Their Backs, and choos the dodging Stars in a Sky hunt. Bubalus, alas! The Nature is a wary sly long breath ed Witch, tough lived as a Turtler and elusive as the Polyphemic repulsive in a thousand Snares and Entrapments, integument in toto. She is sure to get the better of Lady Mind in the long run, and to take her revenge too! transforms our Do Say into a canvas, dead, eluded to receive the dull features of Portrait of Yesterday; not a lone home; the Mimic Mind, the odious evil Sculptor, with all her kaleidoscopic freaks and symmetries, into clay, but leaves it such to catch Ghosts, Goblins or bullets in; and (to end

hall that which suggested the beginning) the works the Mind with it in

Metamorphosis, metamorphosing the Memory into a Bignion's Life Eevcrtrine to keep upped Bells, Keys, Letters, in, with outlines that had never been filled up, all that never went farther than the Title pages, and Proof sheets of true Opus and Watchmen, Friends, And to Reflections & other Stationary Waves that have ruffled the Publisher's Shelf with incroyable dust and all the tender intimacy of inoculation—"Fini!"—And what is all this about?
Why, very, my dear Friend. The thought forced itself on me, as I was beginning to put down the last sentence of this letter, how improbable it would have been 15 or even ten years ago for me to have traveled so far, to visit a hundred and twenty miles by water, and then to return by land, river, and sea. A hundred and twenty miles, by water, was a very long journey, but we had a very fine day, and we arrived at the time we expected. The middle third of the voyage fell into a reflecting melancholy, as I contemplated the events of this woman in a dark, hard basin. She looked pathetic, but I cannot afford, but I observed any reply sympathetic in the circumstances of her fellow-sufferers, which does not suit me for one to make a remark, how many of our virtues originate in the fear of death. While we flatter ourselves that we are blessed in Christian sensibility over the sorrows of our human brethren and sisters, we are in fact, the helpless, unconscious, moved at the thought of our own end. For who ever sincerely prays, 'Thy will, or a lot of his goods in a lusty good liver of 56 years?'

What have I to say? We have received the bundle for which I thank your provident friend. There is no one here, but we know. Only a very few of the Joneses or Mrs. Goldsmith talked yesterday, and send their love. I will write in a day or two. We went to Margate. (Susan sent this moment come in close to my ears.) Just as I was saying it, there, any way, Ma'am! What are you going to say?—Who's this? Will you give any kind love to Mr. Goldsmith?—Blephar—She is a darling of a girl. It is impossible not to love her. At Margate, I saw the ocean, so likewise smelt the same—called in Dr. Bailey, and got the—
Norman organum. In my hurry I glanced at the Blackwood
instead of a volume of Quarterly, which I left on the
Table in my room; I forget my things. A long bag of
old books. But perhaps when I set down to work, I may
have to request somebody to be sent, which many come
with them. I therefore refer it till then.

The streets enjoy themselves, and are happy.

Remember me kindly to Susan.

I wish to remember to Mr. and Mrs. Anderson. They
are honest men. Kind men, I fear, they will never seek
to be.

My kind love to Eliza Nixon, and to Mr. Nixon. His
friend, and my kind regards to Mrs. Nixon. I hope to see
her soon. I hope she will forgive me. I wish you
cordially to Mr. and Mrs. Chance.

God help you, my dear friend. You will soon
hear again from

S. T. Coleridge

9 Oct. 1825

8, Marylebone Road, Middlesex.
14, Borough High St.

James Gillman, Esq.

Surgeon

Grove Highgate
SAMUEL TAYLOR COLERIDGE, A. L. S., 9 October 1825, to James Gillman.

My dear Friend

It is a flat'ning Thought, that the more we have seen, the less we have to say. In Youth and early Manhood the Mind and Nature are, as it were, two rival Artists, both potent Magicians, and engaged, like the King's Daughter and the rebel Genie in the Arabian Nights Entertašs, in sharp conflict of Conjuration—each having for it's object to turn the other into Canvas to paint on, Clay to mould, or Cabinet to contain. For a while the Mind seems to have the better in the contest, and makes of Nature what it likes; takes her Lichens and Weather-stains for Types & Printer's Ink and prints Maps & Fac Similes of Arabic and Sanscrit Mss. on her rocks; composes Country-Dances on her moon-shiny Ripples, Fandangos on her Waves and Waltzes on her Eddy-pools; transforms her Summer Gales into Harps and Harpers, Lovers' Sighs and sighing Lovers, and her Winter Blasts into Pindaric Odes, Christabels & Ancient Mariners set to music by Beethoven, and in the insolence of triumph conjures her Clouds into Whales and Walrusses with Palanquins on their Backs, and chases the dodging Stars in a Sky-hunt!—But alas! alas! that Nature is a wary wily long-breathed old Witch, tough-lived as a Turtle and divisible as the Polyp, repullative in a thousand Snips and Cuttings, integra et in toto!—She is sure to get the better of Lady Mind in the long ago [deleted] run, and to take her revenge too / transforms our To Day into a Canvass dead-colored to receive the dull featureless Portrait of Yesterday; not alone turns the mimic Mind, the ci-devant Sculptress with all her kaleidoscopic freaks and symmetries! into clay, but leaves it such! a Clay to cast [word deleted] dumps or bullets in; and lastly (to end with that which suggested the beginning—) she mocks us [deletet] the Mind with it's own Metaphors, metamorphosing the Memory into a lignum vitae Escritoire to keep unpaid Bills & Dun's Letters in, with outlines that had never been filled up, MSS that never went further than the Title-pages, and Proof-Sheets & Foul Copies of

Transcription from:
Watchmen, Friends, Aids to Reflection & other Stationary Wares that have kissed [word deleted] the Publisher's Shelf with gluey Lips with all the tender intimacy of inosculation!—Finis! . . .

God bless you, my dear Friend!—You will soon hear again from
S. T. Coleridge

9 Octr 1825
8 Plains of Waterloo

Ramsgate—

ALS, 3 pages. Double sheet, 23 x 18.7 cm.
Wove paper. Watermark: crown above JM | 1824. Upper left corner blind stamped (small oval, indistinguishable letters)—by stationer?
Seal: red wafer.
Address: James Gillman, Esqre | Surgeon | Grove | Highgate.
Provenance: Unknown.
Published, with lengthy omissions and 2 substantive (and innumerable accidental) variations from the Lewis MS, by Ernest Hartley Coleridge, Letters, II, 742–744 (dated 10 Oct 1825).

Notes: 1. Coleridge became—and remained—a member of James Gillman’s household on 15 April 1816. They resorted frequently to the seashore, especially to Ramsgate.
2. Summer Gales is an apparent reference to the first line of an ode in The Watchman, no. 4, 25 March 1796; Harps and Harpers to “The Eolian Harp” (Poems on Various Subjects, 2nd ed., 1797); Lovers’ Sighs and sighing Lovers to “The Sigh” (sent in a letter to Southey, November 1794).
3. Harriet Macklin, a servant in the Gillman family, nursed Coleridge in his final years.
5. To be published in Griggs, V (no. 1488).
A Remarkable Letter from the Poet to Dr. James Gillman, his friend and biographer. 3 pages, 880 words, 4to, Ramsgate, October 9, 1825. Hole at seal. In a cloth portfolio.

This letter, written in the autumn of Coleridge’s life, is addressed to the eminent Surgeon James Gillman at whose house the poet spent the last years of his life in security and amidst loving devotion. It was in 1838 that Gillman published his authoritative Life of Samuel Taylor Coleridge.

The importance of this extraordinary and lengthy letter lies not alone in its mention of several outstanding cornerstones of English literature but more especially in the numerous autobiographical and bibliographical references which Coleridge has here made in retrospect.

The first important reference is found in the mention of The Arabian Nights Entertainments and the poet then proceeds brilliantly in fanciful prose graced with subtlety to make a bibliographical and autobiographical play on words. The following may be accepted as the correct interpretation: Summer Gales refers to the initial lines of an Ode (first published in The Watchman, No. IV, March 25, 1796) which begins "Ye Gales that of the hark’s repose......"; Harps refers to The Eolian Harp, included in the second edition of Poems on Various Subjects, 1797; Harpers alludes to poets in general (i.e. S. T. C. himself); Lover’s Sigh is a subtle reference to his poem The Sigh which was enclosed in a letter to the beloved Mary Evans; Sighing Lovers is a pathetic allusion to himself as a character in the unhappy love story of him and Mary Evans; Winter Blasts refers to one of his many poems on nature; Pindaric Odes brings to mind his youthful recitals of Pindar in The Cloisters of Christ’s Hospital. The references to Christabel and to The Ancient Mariner are obvious. Upon Nature he has imposed the character of his nemesis,
opium, in its victory over the mind. The term ci-devant was a familiar one to Coleridge who was deeply imbued with the fundamental principles established and extolled at the birth of the French Revolution. The allusion to unpaid Bills of Duns' is indeed reminiscent of the youth of Coleridge while at Cambridge and even in later life until finally the offer of an annuity by the Wedgwoods temporarily gave cease to his financial difficulties.

Surprisingly honest in his self-criticism is Coleridge when we read these lines of the "outlines that had never been filled up, MSS. that never went further than the title-pages and Proof-Sheets." The poet gives vent to his ever rankling disappointment in the fate of the periodical The Watchman (1796) which lasted only three months. And the same may be said of his reference to The Friend which was published in later years and to the Reflections on Having Left a Place of Retirement which was a companion piece to The Eolian Harp. His mention of his recent travels reminds one that six years prior to the date of this letter a steamship had crossed the Atlantic for the first time. While his description of the sea-sickness of "poor Harriet" is vulgar to say the least it is extremely amusing and in the best British tradition.

Towards the end of the letter, Coleridge refers to Bacon's Novum Organum, to the work of Giovanni Battista Vico, the famous Italian jurist and philosopher of the 18th Century, and to the family Nixon who were friends, acquired late in his life.

In consideration of its unusual length and of its remarkable contents, this letter may be considered as one of the most desirable Coleridge items of its kind ever to be offered in this country.
LETTER FROM COLERIDGE ADDRESSED TO JAMES GILMAN

My dear Friend

It is a flat'ring Thought, that the more we have seen, the less we have to say. In Youth and early Manhood the Mind and Nature are, as it were, two rival Artists, both potent Magicians, and engaged, like the King's Daughter and the rebel Genie in the Arabian Nights Enter'tnts, in sharp conflict of conjuration—each having for its object to turn the other into canvas to paint on, clay to mould, or cabinet to contain. For a while the Mind seems to have the better in the contest, and makes of Nature what it likes: takes her lichens and weather stains the Types of Printers' Ink and prints Maps & Fac-Similes of Arabic and Sanscrit MSS on the rocks; composes Country Dances on her moon-shiny Ripples, Fandangos on her Waves and Waltzes on her eddy-pools; transforms her Summer Gales into Harps and Harpers, Lover's Sighs and sighing Lovers, and her Winter Blasts into Fingarette Odes, Christabels & Ancient Mariners set to music by Beethoven, and in the insolence of triumph conjures her clouds into Whales and Walruses with Palaquins on their Backs, and chases the dodging stars in a Sky-Hunt! But alas, alas! that Nature is a wily long-breathed old Witch, tough-lined as a Turtle and divisible as the Polyęp, repugnulatative in a thousand Snips and Cuttings, integra et in tuta! She is sure to get the better of Lady Mind in the long run, and to take her revenge too/ transform our To-Day into a Canvass dead-colored to receive the dull featureless Portrait of Yesterday; not alone turns the mimic Mind, the ci-devant Sculptress with all her kaleidoscopic freaks and symmetries! in the clay, but leaves it such a clay to cast dumbs or bullets in, and lastly (to end with that suggested the beginning) she floods the Mind with its own Metaphors, metamorphosing the Memory into a lignum vitae escritoire to keep unpaid Bills or Duns' Letters in with Outlines that had never been filled up, MSS that never went further than the title-pages and Proof-sheets & Foul Copies of Watchmen, Friends, Aids to Reflection & other Stationary Waves that have kissed the Publishers' Shelf with gluey 'ips with all the tender intimacy of inoculation—Finis—And what is all this about? Why, verily, my dear Friend! The thought forced itself on me, as I was beginning to put down the first sentence of this letter, how impossible it would have been I5 or even ten years ago for me to have travelled & voyaged by Land, River, and Sea a hundred and twenty miles, with fire and water blending their souls for my propulsion, as if I had been riding on a Centaur with a Sopha for a Saddle—yet I have nothing more to tell of it than that we had a very fine day, and ran aside the steps of Ramsgate Pier at 1½ past 4 exactly, all having been well except poor Harriet who during the middle Third of the
Voyage fell into a reflecting melancholy in the contemplation of successive specimens of her inner woman in a Wash-hand Basin. She looked pathetic; but I cannot affirm, that I observed any thing sympathetic in the countenances of her Fellow-passengers—which drew forth from me a sigh from me & a sage remark, how many of our virtues originate in the fear of Death, & that while we flatter ourselves that we are melting in Christian Sensibility over the sorrows of our human Brethren and Sisters—we are in fact, tho perhaps unconsciously, moved at the prospect of our own end. For whoever sincerely pities Sea-sickness, Tooth-ache, or the a fit of the Gout in a lusty Good-liver of 50?

What have I to say?—We have received the Snuff—for which I thank your providential memory—There are no one here, that we know—saving & excepting the Joneses. Mrs. Gillman bathed yesterday—and sends her Love—I will write in a day or two.—We went to Margate (Susan just this moment comes up close to my ear, just as I was saying to Mrs. U. Is there any thing Ma'am! you wish me to say?—with "Sir! will you give my kind love to Mr. Gillman?—) Bless her!—She is a darling of a Girl. It is impossible not to love her.—to Margate, & saw the Caverns, as likewise smelt the same—called on Mr. Bailey & got the Novum Organum. In my hurry I scrambled up the Blackwood instead of a volume of Gianbattista Vico which I left on the Table in my Room, & forgot my Sponge & Sponge-Bag of oiled Silk—But perhaps when I sat down to work, I may have to request something to be sent, which may come with them. I therefore defer it till then. The Steels enjoy themselves, and are happy. Remember me kindly to Susan.

I would be remembered to Hutton—& Anderson; for they are House-mates. Heart-mates, I fear, they will never seek to be.

My kind love to Eliza Nixon, and to Amelia, & to Anne—and my kind regards to Mr. Nixon—& my most possible respects to Mrs. Nixon, the Tree Clippers, and pray, do not forget to mention me affectionately & cordially to Mr. and to Mrs. Chance—

God bless you, my dear Friend.—You will soon hear again from

S T Coleridge

9 Octr 1825
8 Plains of Waterloo
Ramsgate.