

**PROSPECTUS. COLERIDGE
ON THE SCIENCE OF
METHOD. ENCYCLOPAEDIA
METROPOLITANA**

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Prospectus. Coleridge on the Science of Method. Encyclopaedia Metropolitana by Samuel Taylor Coleridge

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SAMUEL TAYLOR COLERIDGE

**PROSPECTUS. COLERIDGE
ON THE SCIENCE OF
METHOD. ENCYCLOPAEDIA
METROPOLITANA**

CABINET EDITION OF THE ENCYCLOPÆDIA METROPOLITANA.

PROSPECTUS.

JUST PUBLISHED, HANDSOMELY PRINTED IN CROWN OCTAVO,
COLERIDGE ON THE SCIENCE OF METHOD,
BEING PART I., PRICE ONE SHILLING,

(To be continued in Weekly Parts and Monthly Volumes.)

OF

A SECOND EDITION, REVISED AND CORRECTED

OF THE

ENCYCLOPÆDIA METROPOLITANA,

OR,

System of Universal Knowledge;

ON A METHODICAL PLAN,

PROJECTED BY SAMUEL TAYLOR COLERIDGE.

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Φαίνεται ἕναι κίβητος, ὅταν τελειότερον εἶχον· ἔστι ἀπὸ τοῦ ἀρχῆς ἄλλη ἀπὸ φαίνεται ἀρχὴ· μίση  
τοῦ ἐν τῇ τελειότητι ἴσως ἀκαταμάχητος τελειότη· τὰ μὲν ἑλλείπει, τὰ δὲ πλεονάζει, θεώρηται δὲ,  
ἀίμα, κηρατισθῆναι τὸ πᾶν ἀνάγκη· Ὅσαυτὸν δὲ φαίνεται καὶ ἀστέριον καὶ χωρὶς ἑαυτοῦ, καὶ  
κινουμένα πάντα κινήσει, καὶ ἑαυτὰ κατακτῆ, καὶ γινόμενα καὶ ἀπολλόμενα καὶ μηδενίκα, ἢ  
ἰσὺς μὴ ὅταν πολλά ἴσται;  
ΠΑΑΤΟΝ· Παρμενίδης.

“The strength of all sciences, which consisteth in their harmony, each supporting the other, is, as the strength of the old man's faggot, in the band. FOR WERE IT NOT BETTER FOR A MAN IN A FAIR ROOM TO SET UP ONE GREAT LIGHT, OR BRANCHING CANDLESTICK OF LIGHTS, THAN TO GO ABOUT WITH A SMALL WATCH CANDLE INTO EVERY CORNER?”

BACON. *Advancement of Learning*, Book I.

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LONDON:

PUBLISHED BY JOHN JOSEPH GRIFFIN AND COMPANY,

53, BAKER STREET, PORTMAN SQUARE,

AND RICHARD GRIFFIN AND COMPANY, GLASGOW.

1849.

PROSPECTUS.

1. AN ENCYCLOPEDIA is indispensable to every library, as a *concentration* of human knowledge; while to the voyager, the naval and military officer, the colonist, and that numerous class of enterprising Britons whose want of a settled residence may isolate them from the world of letters, it is the only possible *substitute* for all other books. Works of this description are therefore among those few literary projects which have uniformly secured the patronage of the public. The reason is obvious: an Encyclopædia is to the rising education of the country at once a reservoir and a fountain—it receives perpetual accessions of knowledge from the genius of the age, which it yields again in willing abundance to posterity.

2. With the ancients, the term Encyclopædia, explained itself. It was really *Instruction in a cycle*, i. e. the cycle of the seven liberal Arts and Sciences, that constituted the course of education for the higher class of citizens. Unfortunately, the inapplicability of a strictly *scientific* method to a modern Encyclopædia, such as shall include the whole of its contents, has led to the abandonment of all principle of *rational* arrangement; and it may be safely asserted of all our universal dictionaries hitherto, that the chief difference between them, in respect of their *plan*, consists in the more or less complete disorganization of the Sciences and Systematic Arts; now retaining certain integral portions of the system as integers, forming each an entire treatise, but resigning these treatises to the places severally assigned to them by the accident of their initial letters; and now splintering all alike into their fractional parts, with an arrangement merely alphabetical. Nor has the imperfection rested here. This very alphabetical position was but too frequently determined by the caprice or convenience of the compiler; inasmuch as the division of parts into minor parts had no settled limit. Thus, one technical or scientific term included as its subordinates, and to be explained in the same article, sometimes more, sometimes fewer, other terms: and the arrangement became neither properly scientific, nor properly alphabetical. It had the inconveniences of both, without the advantages of either.

3. The results are such as might have been expected, in part from the necessity of such plans, and in part from the interference of individual whim, carelessness, and procrastination, to which it afforded the amplest opportunities, and even frequent temptation. Numerous articles of important information are found where the reader could have least expected to find them; while articles of equal interest are in many cases not to be found at all.

4. A second result is, that an Universal Dictionary so constructed, equally with an Encyclopædia the most methodically arranged, requires alphabetical references; but with a twofold inconvenience, from which the latter would be free. First, the references, instead of being collected in one appropriate index, or at least in some known portion of the work, are scattered throughout the whole; and this is no slight annoyance, when a scientific term happens to have many synonyms, as, for instance, Azote, Nitrogen, Phlogisticated Air, &c. Secondly, the references must eventually lead the reader through as many volumes, as those other words happen to be placed in, which are necessary to be *previously* understood in order to a tolerable comprehension of the term first sought.

5. A third evil, resulting from the same causes, is the utter want of all proportion in the space occupied by each article, relatively either to the importance of the particular subject, or to the promised limits of the whole work. Hence, too, it arises that the proprietors are frequently reduced to a choice of evils. The work must be extended far beyond the first expectation of the purchasers, or the articles assigned to the latter volumes must be crowded in scanty and superficial abridg-

ments. They contract to give the public an Universal Dictionary of the Arts and Sciences, but the execution outgrows the plan. Either openly then, or in the form of supplementary volumes (bearing perhaps a large proportion to the whole work), this pledge must be redeemed. In both cases the disorder and dislocation, and in many instances the deficiencies, remain unremedied.

6. The fourth ill consequence of this arbitrary arrangement calls for a somewhat fuller consideration. It requires but a moment's reflection to be convinced, that the most voluminous Encyclopædia which has yet appeared, is incomparably too narrow to contain an Universal History of Knowledge in its present state; and that the authors and compilers will have satisfied all rational expectations if only nothing shall be found excluded from any other cause than the higher importance of that which has been admitted; in order that on *all* subjects the ends of *general* information at *least* may be accomplished. Where, therefore, selection is so imperiously required, there must be an equal necessity that certain fixed and intelligible principles should be pre-established. An Encyclopædia neither is, nor can reasonably be considered as, the book which a man of profound science is likely to consult for those things in which he is himself eminent. He will seek for accessions to his knowledge in the works of contemporaries employed like himself in extending the pomera of science, and will often be most interested in *speculations*, the worth and stability of which are yet undetermined. But an Encyclopædia is a *History* of human knowledge, in which therefore these intellectual embryos, which at best are (as it were) but truths in the *future* tense, have no rightful or becoming place. This, indeed, we hold to be a principle of such paramount importance, that we take the earliest opportunity of avowing our determination of a strict and systematic adherence to it; and we here give our public pledge that the ENCYCLOPEDIA METROPOLITANA shall be so far *historical* in all respects, that only what has been *established*, or is at least already *publici juris*, and to be found in the records of Science and Literature, shall form the main body of every article; and that any opinions or speculations of the writer himself shall be declared to be such, and be given distinctly as a mere appendix of the article to which they belong.

7. We shall now particularize the evil to which we have been referring. From the licence which the planless plan of former works allows to the separate writers—in one place, instead of a systematic history of the received truths and established discoveries in the department of knowledge, which was to have been exhibited, the larger portion of the space is filled up with the individual writer's own crude conceptions and prolix argumentation—while in another, on some subject of the highest interest, lo! in tarnished fragments over the numerous volumes, an old work torn asunder by all the letters of the alphabet! and reminding the classical reader of the decrepit Pelias, whose credulous daughters were induced by the artifices of Medea to cut his aged limbs in pieces, as the sole and certain means of restoring him, like another Aëson, to the blooming honours of youth.

8. The SCHEME which we propose to substitute, or the principal outlines of the ENCYCLOPEDIA METROPOLITANA, we now lay before the reader, as follows:—The work will consist of four main divisions. The first, which for the sake of distinction we have called the Philosophical part, comprises the Pure Sciences; and the second, or Scientific part, the Mixed and Applied Sciences. The third, or Biographical part, is devoted to Biography chronologically arranged, History, Chronology, and Geography; and the concluding or Miscellaneous part, besides being referential and supplementary to the preceding volumes, will have the unique advantage of presenting to the public, for the first time, a Philosophical and Etymological Lexicon of the English language; the citations selected and arranged chronologically, yet including all the purposes of a common Dictionary. The volume of Index will complete this division. It will be instantly seen that the first two divisions of a work, thus arranged, will grow naturally out of each other; the needful references will therefore be generally *retrospective*, and rarely made to future volumes. In our Biographical department we shall teach the same truths by example, that have been evolved in the former divisions, and stimulate to the exertions that have developed them;—while in our Miscellaneous

portion or in the Index, every word will be found in its usual alphabetical place, as in any other Dictionary, with a plain reference to the volume and page containing its full explanation in the present work; together with a variety of interesting articles, either illustrative of the former divisions, or in their own nature miscellaneous. Each division of the work will be separately paged.

9. Such is the general outline of the proposed Scheme. The Table at page 13 places the principal subdivisions, likewise, before the reader's eye, with as much detail as is compatible with the limits, or requisite for the purposes, of a Prospectus. It will be seen, too, that a more particularized and systematic justification of the principles, on which the Scheme has been constructed, will be afforded in the Preliminary Treatise, or General Introduction to the Encyclopædia.

10. When the work is completed, it will appear as an orderly Digest of all the great points of human knowledge, and, notwithstanding its comparatively moderate extent and price, must form the most perfect system of intellectual instruction and entertainment, that has been hitherto submitted to the friends and patrons of Art, Science, History, and general Literature in Great Britain.

11. We would place our claims to the favourable attention and patronage of the public, on two grounds: 1. That the great outline of our plan is free from the numerous defects and inconveniences *incurred* in the plan of all preceding works of the kind, or occasioned or permitted by it. 2. That the plan now substituted possesses great *positive* advantages, peculiar to itself.

12. From what has been already seen of our plan, in the necessary discussion of its relative merits, we presume that we appropriate to the work the title of an Encyclopædia by an especial right, and that of a Philosophical System on a plea of superior propriety. But we cannot neglect the argument for such a work as the present, which is derivable from the peculiar circumstances of our times. The political changes of the world have not been more wonderful than the scientific and moral revolutions that have occurred within the last few years. The new views, new discoveries, and fresh facts, especially in all the different branches of Experimental Philosophy, which every year has brought with it, are unparalleled in the history of human knowledge; and the accessions have not seldom been of such a nature as no mere supplementary postscript can embrace. For in many instances they affect the whole theory and consequent arrangement of the Art or Science to which they belong. Our project is in this respect therefore singularly fortunate in point of time. It will have to collect and combine the rich but scattered elements of future Science; while a still more important argument for our plan and for the period of its execution, will be found in the manifest tendency of all the Arts and Sciences at present, from the most purely intellectual even to the labours of the common mechanic, to lose their former insulated character, and organize themselves into one harmonious body of knowledge. The civilized world is now doing that which the ENCYCLOPÆDIA METROPOLITANA is preparing to do; and for which it is providing a correspondent repository.

13. The Proprietors have not disguised from themselves that their undertaking is of the most *arduous* kind. The mass of ability requisite, will be great in proportion to the originality of our plan; and the perseverance, harmony, and punctuality, that are indispensable conditions of its success, must be commensurate with the difficulty of uniting variety with system, and of reconciling selectness and calculated proportion with universality as a whole, and fulness in each component part. If, in addition to this, the amount of capital demanded and already dedicated to the one purpose of securing this coalition, and of overcoming these difficulties, be considered; with the number and high character of the artists, the men of science, and men of letters, on whose zealous co-operation, now pledged to us, we rest our pretension to the first acts of the public favour, and our confident hopes of continued support—not forgetting the relief and moral influence of a regular employment afforded during all seasons of the year to so many industrious mechanics as must necessarily be engaged on this work—the Proprietors of the ENCYCLOPÆDIA METROPOLITANA dare promise themselves, that by no reflecting reader will the present prospectus be deemed too serious.

14. Having explained the *Principles* on which the *Encyclopædia Metropolitana* was founded, we proceed to state a few facts, in reference to the manner in which the **FIRST EDITION** of the work was executed, and the *Modifications* now intended to be made in the **SECOND EDITION**.

15. The *Encyclopædia Metropolitana* was projected by the late eminent poet and philosopher, S. T. COLERIDGE. It differs in its plan from other Dictionaries of Universal Knowledge in being strictly methodical. The contributions of the scientific and learned men by whom it was composed, are arranged, not according to the letters of the alphabet which happen to form the initials of the English names of the Treatises, but in agreement with a **PHILOSOPHICAL SYSTEM**, based on the *nature* of the Subjects,—a method which causes the entire work to become a rational exposition of the state of human knowledge, and the mutual dependence and relative importance of its different branches. In virtue of this classification, the work forms both a course of study for the scholar, and a book of reference for the man of business: the former has the principles of the sciences laid before him in the philosophical order of their natural sequence; the latter is enabled to find readily the specific information he requires on any subject that interests him.

16. The system, projected by Mr. Coleridge, was ably executed by the Editors* and Authors to whom the execution of the scheme was confided. To confirm the truth of this assertion, it is sufficient to refer to the names of the Authors, and to state the fact, that many of the Treatises have been admitted by the Learned throughout Europe to be of the highest order of merit, and to have enlarged the boundaries of the scientific world, and placed their authors in the first rank of men of science in the present age.

17. The following **ABSTRACT OF THE CONTENTS OF THE QUARTO EDITION**, taken from the **GENERAL PREFACE**, will show in what manner the early professions of the projector of the work were realized.

We shall speak of the four great divisions of the *Encyclopædia* separately.

PURE SCIENCES.

18. The order in which these sciences are exhibited, and the plan on which the **MATHEMATICAL** portion of the *Encyclopædia* is conceived, resemble considerably the series of Elementary Treatises projected many years ago for the University of Cambridge by Dr. Wood, the late Dean of Ely, and Professor Vince; but with this difference, that the present volumes are far more comprehensive in the subjects they embrace, and far more elaborate and scientific in their execution. But this very similarity shows that the *Encyclopædia Metropolitana* has attained one of its professed objects,—systematic instruction and scientific information, conveyed—not in a confused mass, but in the natural sequence of the sciences.

Indeed this portion of the work has met with a degree of approbation in many quarters, but especially in the University of Cambridge, which no other *Encyclopædia* has ever yet received. The student who has really mastered these sciences in the systematic form in which they are arranged here, will never in the course of the longest life find occasion to unlearn any portion of what he has here acquired, and will find no difficulty whatever in adding to his stores any new results which the mental energy and labour of mankind may hereafter develop from principles now known. It may, indeed, be safely affirmed, that any person of good mathematical abilities, who shall follow the course of Mathematical treatises in this *Encyclopædia*, which are so arranged that a student may pursue them even without the assistance of a tutor, may become by that means a mathematician of very high character, and be enabled to master the most difficult and delicate speculations of continental mathematicians.

19. The names of the authors of the Treatises on *Pure Mathematics* are suffi-

The Editors of the original edition of the *Encyclopædia Metropolitana* were—The Rev. EDWARD SZADLER, M.A., late Fellow of Sidney College, Cambridge; the Rev. HENRY JAMES ROSE, B.D., late Principal of King's College, London; and the Rev. HENRY JOHN ROSE, B.D., late Fellow of St. John's College, Cambridge.

cient to prove that the *Encyclopædia* is worthy of the present state of science, and that its most important articles are contributed by those who have themselves been foremost in the onward march of science. The elaborate Treatise on ARITHMETIC, by the present Dean of Ely (Dr. Peacock), Lowndian Professor of Mathematics, by the University of Cambridge, is interesting alike to the scholar, the mathematician, and the speculator in metaphysics. The brief but comprehensive Treatise on TRIGONOMETRY, by Professor Airy, now Astronomer Royal, is of considerable value from the general elegance of its demonstrations. The publications of the Rev. H. P. Hamilton on ANALYTICAL GEOMETRY and CONIC SECTIONS, and that of Professor Barlow on the THEORY OF NUMBERS, are so highly esteemed, that any eulogium on their papers on these subjects would be superfluous. The Treatises of Professor Levy on the DIFFERENTIAL and INTEGRAL CALCULUS are calculated to carry the student to a very high point of proficiency. The GEOMETRY, ALGEBRA, and GEOMETRICAL ANALYSIS complete the Volume in a manner worthy of the treatises with which they are associated.

20. These sciences are, however, in some degree elementary; and although by them the student would be so far advanced as to enter upon the works of some of the ablest analysts, it would be unworthy of such a publication as the *Encyclopædia Metropolitana* to leave untouched or imperfectly treated, the more refined applications of the higher Calculus. It will be found, accordingly, that the highest branches of mathematical analysis have been treated by writers conversant with all its intricacies, and the mathematical student is furnished in them with results of far greater variety and of a more subtle nature than can at present be used in the application of analysis to Mixed Mathematics.

21. The CALCULUS OF VARIATIONS, and the CALCULUS OF FINITE DIFFERENCES by Professor Hall, are distinguished by the clearness peculiar to his treatment of these refined and subtle portions of analysis. The CALCULUS OF FUNCTIONS and the THEORY OF PROBABILITY are the work of Professor De Morgan. The latter (on a subject which has exercised the talents of the greatest mathematicians, even down to the times of Laplace) is, as might be expected, one of the most complete in any language. The Treatise on DEFINITE INTEGRALS completes the series of these elaborate surveys on the higher branches of Mathematical Analysis. The name of Professor Mosely is a sufficient warrant that his Essay is also of the highest character.

22. Without wishing, therefore, to offer any undue eulogium on the Treatises enumerated above, we confidently ask that portion of the public which is qualified to judge of their merits, to compare the whole system of *Pure Mathematics* here presented to them with that in any similar work, whether of this country or of the Continent, on the grounds of *arrangement, clearness, ability, and completeness.*

23. We must now allude to such of the Pure Sciences as are not included in the Mathematical department. Sir John Stoddart has given a lucid and able summary of the General Principles of GRAMMAR, or the Philosophy of Language. The LOGIC and RHETORIC of Archbishop Whately require no commendation here, as they have long since been published in a separate form, and have taken their place among the standard works of our language. The Treatise on LAW is the work of Richard Jebb, Esq., Professor Graves, and Archer Polson, Esq. It embraces one of the most difficult portions of Philosophy—the general foundations of Law and Morals; and the Editor is happy to state that testimony from the very highest quarters has been given both to the profoundness of the views entertained, and the ability with which they are developed.

24. In the present state of metaphysical knowledge, it would be presumptuous to put forth any system of Metaphysics; but a general HISTORY OF MORAL AND METAPHYSICAL PHILOSOPHY affords the most convenient opportunity for displaying the principles on which the greatest philosophers have hitherto endeavoured to form their systems, for pointing out their difficulties, and for marking how far each has contributed to the progress of the science. Such a sketch, however, required the hand of a master; and the Editor confidently believes that the Treatise on Moral and Metaphysical Philosophy which is here given is calculated fully to sustain the

deservedly high reputation of the Rev. F. D. Maurice. Of the *Outlines of THEOLOGY*, it does not become the Editor to say more than to acknowledge with gratitude the very able assistance of Professor Corrie, to whom two chapters are due. He has endeavoured to render this Treatise as practically useful as possible, not only to avoid passing controversies, but to bring forward the sound and genuine doctrines of the Church of England; and perhaps he may be allowed to add that, in pursuance of this object, he has spared no pains or labour.

MIXED AND APPLIED SCIENCES.

25. From *Pure Mathematics* we proceed in natural order to their application to physical phenomena. Of these sciences, some belong to the elementary branches of physical knowledge, and others to a higher and more advanced stage. Now, the treatises on *MECHANICS*, *HYDRODYNAMICS*, *PNEUMATICS*, *OPTICS*, and *PLANE ASTRONOMY*, have been written by Professor Barlow with an express view to this distinction. They are elementary enough to enable any student, with a competent knowledge of *Pure Mathematics*, to overcome their difficulties; and yet they are so based on scientific principles, that they will also prepare him to enter readily on the higher branches of *Mixed Mathematics*. In *Mechanics*, more especially, a foundation is laid for the succeeding investigations of *Physical Astronomy*, which is, in fact, only one of the higher branches of *Analytical Physics*.

26. Some of the treatises in the volumes devoted to the *Mixed Sciences* demand a separate notice, as enlarging the boundaries of our scientific knowledge. Of this class are the *Treatises on LIGHT and SOUND*, by Sir J. F. W. Herschel. The *Treatise on LIGHT*, by Sir J. F. W. Herschel, from the position it has already obtained in the scientific world, both in England and on the Continent, cannot require any recommendation here. The simple mention of Sir J. F. W. Herschel's name is a sufficient recommendation to the *Treatise on PHYSICAL ASTRONOMY*, and proves at once that it must be an *Essay of the highest order of merit*, and worthy of the present state of the Science; and the conductors of this *Encyclopaedia* may justly be proud that that distinguished writer has contributed so largely to its pages. But although *Plane and Physical Astronomy* had been thus ably treated, it was considered that something more was required; and the late Captain Kater kindly furnished the very useful and able *Treatise on NAUTICAL ASTRONOMY*, a subject with which his acquaintance was at once profound and practical.

27. *MAGNETISM and ELECTRO-MAGNETISM* are treated by Professor Barlow with the same ability and research which he has displayed in the other *Essays* contributed by him; and *GALVANISM*, by Dr. Roget, whose scientific character is too firmly established to leave any doubt as to the merit of his contributions. The author of the *Treatises on ELECTRICITY, HEAT, and CHEMISTRY*, the late Rev. F. LORU, was one whose merits as an experimental philosopher and chemist were not so extensively known as they deserved to be; but at Cambridge his acquirements were acknowledged to be of the highest order. The treatises themselves, it is believed, will amply justify their favourable anticipations.

28. The *Third Volume of Mixed Sciences* is chiefly devoted to the *FINE ARTS*; but there are two or three *Essays* in the early part of the Volume which belong to the more exact sciences, viz., the *Essay on the FIGURE OF THE EARTH*, by Professor Airy, the present Astronomer Royal, and his *Treatise on the TIDES*. With regard to the former much novelty was hardly to be expected; but it is presumed that this *Treatise* contains the most complete combination and discussion of observations relating to the subject hitherto produced in England. The treatise into which this great mathematician has thrown all his power is the *Theory of the Tides*. The terms in which some of the most distinguished mathematicians of Cambridge have spoken of this treatise prove that they consider it to have greatly advanced the knowledge of this difficult subject. Every previous treatise on the theory of the tides is entirely superseded by this production, and it will supply, for many years to come, the only sound foundation of our knowledge upon this subject.

29. The *Treatise on POLITICAL ECONOMY* was written by N. W. Senior, Esq.

30. The *Treatises on BOTANY and HORTICULTURE* are supplied by G. Don, Esq.,