

ANIMA POETÆ. Selections from the unpublished Note Books of Samuel Taylor Coleridge. Edited by Ernest Hartley Coleridge. Boston: Houghton, Mifflin & Co. \$2.50.

It would seem at this late day, when nearly two generations have passed away since Coleridge left us, that all

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

his writings had been made public. And yet we have here an octavo volume, uniform with the *Letters of Coleridge* published in the spring, full of hitherto unpublished aphorisms, reflections, confessions, and soliloquies, collected under the title of *Anima Poete*. From youth to age note-books, pocket-books, copy-books, of all shapes, sizes, and bindings accumulated in Coleridge's possession. They were his "silent confidants," his "never-failing friends" by night and by day. More than fifty of these are extant, and their contents are as various as the versatility of Coleridge's genius could make them. Hitherto but little use has been made of this lifelong accumulation of literary material. Gems of thought, rare passages of beautiful diction, autobiographic fragments and other notes of singular interest and beauty have been culled successively for varying purposes, and used in a number of works pertaining to Coleridge, but the bulk of the material has been left for the present editor to glean in. Much in these note-books is of a private and sacred character, but it is nevertheless certain from internal evidence that Coleridge had no mind they should perish utterly. "Hints and first thoughts" he bade us regard the contents of his memorandum-books. "It was his fate," says his nephew, "to wrestle from night to morn with the Angel of the Vision, and of that unequal combat he has left, by way of warning or encouragement, a broken but an inspired and inspiring record."

The selections have been arranged, as far as possible, in chronological order, and an index of proper names and of subjects gives completeness to the plan. The notes begin with Coleridge's literary career and extend down to the summer of 1828, when he visited the Continent with Wordsworth. After that the note-books are taken up almost wholly with metaphysical and theological disquisitions, and are not of general interest. Sufficient in quality and quantity, however, has been gathered to make a rich addition to English literature, also to add one more volume to those profound works marked by that affluence of intellectual light, that free play of imagination, and that literary charm which are peculiar to the genius of Coleridge.