

# THE HOMILETIC REVIEW.

VOL. XXVIII. — NOVEMBER, 1894. — No. 5.

## REVIEW SECTION.

### I.—WHAT THE PREACHER MAY GAIN FROM A STUDY OF COLERIDGE.

BY PROF. J. O. MURRAY, D.D., PRINCETON, N. J.

AMONG the books which should be found in the library of every minister may be named, with some decisiveness, the works of Samuel Taylor Coleridge. It is a large debt which the Christian ministry owes to Dr. Shedd for his writings. And it admits of little question that the edition of Coleridge's complete works,\* published under his editorial care, with an introductory essay from his pen, and Dr. Marsh's preliminary essay to "Aids to Reflection," makes a very considerable part of that obligation. Coleridge will never be introduced to the public under better auspices. This edition appeared in 1856. The influence of Coleridge upon American thought is perhaps less today than it was a generation since. The same may be true of England. The best authors fluctuate in their hold on the public mind. But there are some signs that interest in the writings of this remarkable man is far from extinct. Such essays as that of James Martineau, "Personal Influences on Present Theology: J. H. Newman, S. T. Coleridge, T. Carlyle;" or that of Professor Shairp, in his "Studies in Poetry and Philosophy," on Coleridge; "The Life of Coleridge," in the "English Men of Letters Series," by Mr. H. D. Traill, clearly evince that he has not yet passed to the limbo of neglected or forgotten authors. As I write these lines, there comes into my hands a little volume of "Selections from Coleridge's Prose Writings," by Professor Beers of Yale University, in a series of "Readings for Students."

But whether or no Coleridge holds the influential place in English and American thought he once held, it is certain that both in England and America he has powerfully molded the thinking of some of our ablest divines. I am well aware that in some quarters there has existed, and does still exist, distrust of his methods and of his influence. The epithet "Coleridgean" carried with it a suspicious sound.

\* Coleridge's Complete Works. Edited by Professor Shedd. In seven volumes: Harper & Brothers.