

For what is freedom, but the unfettered use
 Of all the powers which God for use had given?
 But chiefly this, him first, him last, to view
 Through meaner powers and secondary things
 Effulgent, as through clouds that veil his blaze.
 For all that meets the bodily sense I deem
 Symbolical, one mighty alphabet
 For infant minds; and we in this low world
 Placed with our backs to bright reality,
 That we may learn with young unwounded ken
 The substance from its shadow. Infinite Love,
 Whose latence is the plenitude of all,
 Though with retracted beams, and self-eclipse
 Veiling, revealest thine eternal Sun.

What Coleridge has to say about the Kantian philosophy (in *Biographia Literaria*) he would regard also as true for the poetic imagination:

An *idea*, in the *highest* sense of that word, cannot be conveyed but by a symbol; and, except in geometry, all symbols of necessity involve an apparent contradiction.⁶

And again:

In every work of art there is a reconciliation of the external with the internal; the conscious is so impressed on the unconscious as to appear in it. . . . He who combines the two is the man of genius; and for that reason he must partake of both.⁷

And still again:

The poet does not require us to be awake and believe; he solicits us only to yield ourselves to a dream; and this too with our eyes open, and with our judgement *perdue* behind the curtain, ready to awaken us at the first motion of our will: and meantime, only, not to disbelieve.⁸

No wonder that Coleridge, in conceiving possible symbolic functions for the Sun, even troubled himself about the gender

⁶Coleridge: *Biographia Literaria*, edited by J. Shawcross, Vol. I, p. 100.

⁷*Ibid.*, Vol. II, p. 258. ⁸*Ibid.*, Vol. II, p. 189.