

would do it - But I could die, after my recent experience  
of the cruel & insolent spirit of Calumny rather than subject myself  
as a slave to a club of subscribers to my Poverty. If I were  
any, I am easy in my conscience, I should add to the pains by  
die; but that I can truly say that my embarrassments have not  
been occasioned by the bad <sup>will</sup> or selfish indulgence, of my relatives  
I am at present five and twenty pounds in arrears, my expenses

J. Colley Esq  
Mansfield Square  
Bristol

Have written to you & to the bank & have been by writing many times  
to my and in respect of the many years you have spent in  
the world of a cabinet maker & have written to you & to the bank & have been by writing many times

being at 2<sup>1/2</sup> 10, the week. You will say, I ought to have  
in L<sup>o</sup> - and Dublin, I ought, if I were to align myself  
from all social affections, and from all conversation with persons  
of the same education. Those who so severely blame me, never see  
whether at any time in any life I had the myself, & my family, &  
parents, 50 £ before hand - but know, if the 200 £ received they go  
what went to myself. No, how dare we make manifest our poverty, & so

My best regards to your Sister - Let her, I pray you,  
at least hear from you from time to time -  
(N<sup>o</sup> 1) Bristol 7 - 1818

My dear Colley

I received by means of Mr Walker  
your "Mosaic" a few days ago: or by Mr Flood,  
I do not remember, which I have read about one half;  
and tho' I myself see your plan, yet I find it difficult to  
explain it. ~~to the world~~, so as to make it consistent with  
the received conception of a Poem, call it epic, heroic,  
divine or what you like. The common end of all narrative  
may, of all, Poems is to convert a series into a whole:  
to make those events, which in real or imagined history  
move on in a straight line, assume to our understanding  
a circular motion - the ship with its sail in its mouth.  
Hence indeed the almost flattering and yet appropriate  
Term, Poesy - i.e. poësis, = making. To the eye,  
which alone <sup>encompasses</sup> all Past and all Future in  
one eternal Present, what to our short sight appears  
straight is but a part of the great cycle - just as the calm  
sea <sup>to us</sup> appears level, tho' it be indeed only a part of a sphere.  
Even what the globe is in Geography, miniaturizing in scale  
to manifest the truth, such is a Poem to that Image of God,  
which we were created with, <sup>and through</sup> still seeking that Unity, or  
Revelation of the One in and by the Many, which reminds  
it that tho' in order to be an individual Being it must  
go forth from God, yet as <sup>the</sup> receding from him is to  
proceed towards Nothingness and Nothingness, it must still at  
every step turn back toward him in order to be, at all. Now a  
straight line continued retrograde forms a circular orbit.



Now God's Will and Word cannot be frustrated. His awful Fiat was with ineffable awfulness applied to Man; when all things and all living things, and himself (as a more animal) included, were called into being by the universal. Let there be - and there the Breath of the Eternal Super-added to make an immortal spirit immortally being, as the Author of the "Vision of Homer" profoundly expressed it, the only possible Reflex or Image of Eternity. The Somewhat Finite is the contracted Shadow of the Eternal Infinite. Therefore a thought or Death, to which we move as we recede from God of the Word, cannot be anything, but that tremendous Medium between Nothing and true Being, which Scripture of our most Dearest present as most, most Lovell! I have said this to show you the connection between things in themselves comparatively trifling, and things the most important, by their derivation from common sources.

The addition of Fiction, such as that of the descent between Satan & Beelzebub, could not have been blame (unless we blame the Paradise Lost) had it been written before the Paradise Lost. But as all your Readers have learnt you Milton alone, that Satan & Beelzebub were different beings (in the Scripture they are different names of the same Evil Being) it produces an effect too light, too much savouring of capricious Invention, for the exceeding solemnity of the Subject. There are the two faults of your Poem. I do not say, there appear to me: because, my dear Little, if I am not sure of this, I have no sense of surety: and I must write to you in sincerity - i.e. sincerely, without wax, artifice, or ruse. - But with the same sincerity I can and will say, and that forthwith, that the best character I can procure (and I have no interest in the Edinburgh or Quarterly Reviews; but in the Liberator or the Christian Observer I hope to have my Review inserted) that all exclusive

of the Plan is not praise-worthy - that the Plan, as it is, is well executed - that the fine passages capable of quotation as separate Passages are many - and that the metre and language rises in simplicity, dignity, & variety, above some of the very Schools of the Age. (You will wish to know something of myself. In Health, I am not worse than when at Bristol I was last - yet fluctuating, yet unhappy - in circumstances of ~~most distressing and humiliating nature~~ - I have collected my scattered & my manuscript Poems sufficient to make an volume - enough I have to make another. But till the latter is finished, I cannot without great loss of character, publish the former on account of the unavoidable - besides the necessity of corrections. For instance, I earnestly wish to begin the Odes with what has never been seen by any, however few - such as a series of odes on the different virtues of the Lord's Prayer - and more than all this, to finish my greater work on Christianity, considered as Philosophy and as the only Philosophy. All the materials I have - as small parts reduced to form, if written - but I see! what can I do, when I am so poor that in having to turn off every week from those to some mean subject for the Newspapers I despise myself, & at last neglect to write a little of the life. If it were in your power to receive my manuscript, for instance, what I have ready for the Press of my Poem, & by setting me forward with 30 or 40 £, being care that I should not be under any to you, would more than secure you from loss! I am sure you