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Letter from Samuel Taylor Coleridge to James Augustus Hesse, [1822-25]

Samuel Taylor Coleridge

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Dear Sir

I have no other way of accounting for the detention of the enclosed [Sheet], but that it having been drawn off on fine Paper, I had been led to suppose that the whole Number had been drawn off - the more readily, that with the exception of the omission of the word, raises, in p. 144, there was nothing that absolutely required further correction. The few corrections made by me in the proof [I were intended for my own copy, ex. gr. p. 135 - and tho' the insertion would improve the [Stk.], I am by no means desirous to have it done, ~~as if it cannot~~ be done without displacing the type or other trouble. The stop after the vocative case, Lucili! (Ita dico, Lucili! sacer instead of Ita dico: Lucili sacer) is of more importance. -

By the bye, of the sheets printed off I possess B. C. D. E. F. G.

I. - but not H. 97 - 112. -

But in the sheet M. - p. 161 of the former proof, and p. 163 of the proof enclosed, there must have been some oversight, whether mine or the printer's I know not, and therefore hold myself bound to suppose the former. A Slip was written by me, to be inserted, instead of the bewildering long and entangled Sentence - & I feel positive that I put it into the Proof & sent it off. But as Experience has long ago taught me not to confound the feeling of positiveness with the sense of certainty, but rather to consider the former as a strong presumption that there is no ground for the latter, but that my fancy, in some odd way blending with a sensation of memory, has been playing me a trick - therefore, tho' I can no where find the said Slip among my scraps, I conclude that it is a blunder of my own making. I found the beginning of a first Copy of the

Slip, which I have completed so as to make sense, and
this I have inclosed - in case, ~~no~~ ^{the} true Simon Sly should not
turn up at the Printer's.

And yet when I look over the
proof as it now is, omitting only l. 10, I become doubtful whether
my meaning is not rendered sufficiently clear. You will greatly
oblige me, my dear Sir! if you will compare the two, and if you
think the superior clearness of the slip inclosed will make
it worth while to unsettle the types, you will, of course, have
it substituted. But if not, I shall be content with the present,
omitting the 10th line, and put the — after "Consequences" —

respectfully
your obliged

S. T. Coleridge

Grove, Highgate!

Thursday Afternoon.

Mr Peepay