'One / Inseparable Communion': Hartley Coleridge's Poetry of Religious Devotion

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DERWENT, AS HARTLEY'S POSTHUMOUS EDITOR, compared his career to 'an Australian river, wide at first, a flow of hopeful waters, which speedily contract into a feeble narrow stream, and are lost insensibly in the sand'.[1] Derwent's representation—or '(mis)representation'—of Hartley's work, in 1851, prejudiced its reception for a century and a half.[2] Major reassessments, however, have been undertaken by Andrew Keanie and Nicola Healey.[3] Keanie has shown the unique qualities of a writer 'whose greatness has been overlooked'.[4] What Derwent dismisses as 'feeble and narrow', Keanie restores as a 'commitment to miniaturism'.[5] Healey, meanwhile, presents Hartley as a poet of 'relationship, community, [and] sociability',[6] whose emphases are at variance with 'the conventional masculine Romantic tradition';[7] and who, as a sonneteer, is second only to Shakespeare.[8] With these revaluations in mind, I will consider Hartley's qualities as a devotional poet, and his religious outlook, in the heated context of his times.

Malcolm Guite, reading poetry from a theological perspective, identifies 'a continuous poetic tradition', traceable from the Old English *Dream of the Rood* to the work of Seamus Heaney, 'which encompasses and transcends the strict periods into which philosophy […] divide[s] the history of ideas'.[9] The poetry of this tradition, Guite contends, seeks to express 'the mystery which is both in and beyond nature'.[10] Hartley's work may be read in such terms: his vocation as poet, he says, is to reveal 'that love divine which merges itself with its objects';[11] and he defines the 'daily round of household things' as his realm of poetic discourse.[12] David C. Mahon, discussing recent poetry in context of Christian witness, understands the poet's task as disclosure of the 'extraordinary […] within the range of the ordinary'.[13] Hartley would have concurred: in an essay, *On Profaneness*, he aligns himself with 'the adherents of

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1 Derwent Coleridge, *Memoir of Hartley Coleridge*, *Poems by Hartley Coleridge with a Memoir of his Life by his Brother*, 2 Vols, edited by Derwent Coleridge (London: Moxon, 1851), Vol 1, p. xlix

2 Nicola Healey, 'The Reception of Hartley Coleridge's Poetry, from 1833 to the Present', *Romanticism*, Volume 16.1, 2010, p.30

3 Andrew Keanie, *Hartley Coleridge: A Reassessment of his Life and Work* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008). Nicola Healey, *Dorothy Wordsworth and Hartley Coleridge: the Poetics of Relationship* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012).

4 Keanie, *A Reassessment*, p. 17

5 Ibid, p. 144

6 Healey, *The Poetics of Relationship*, p. 12

7 Healey, 'The Reception of Hartley Coleridge's Poetry', p. 25

8 Nicola Healey, *The Poetics of Relationship*, cites Samuel Waddington (1905): 'after Shakespeare, our sweetest sonneteer is Hartley Coleridge', p. 1

9 Malcolm Guite, *Faith, Hope and Poetry: Theology and the Poetic Imagination* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2010), p.16

10 Guite p. 16

11 Fran Carlock Stephens, *The Hartley Coleridge Letters: A Calendar and Index* (The University of Texas at Austin: Humanities Research Centre, 1978), p. 96

12 Hartley Coleridge, *A Task Ad Libitum*, *The Complete Poetical Works of Hartley Coleridge*, edited by Ramsey Colles (London: Routledge, 1907), p. 23

13 David C. Mahon, *An Unexpected Light: Theology and Witness in the Poetry and Thought of Charles Williams, Michael O' Siadhail, and Geoffrey Hill* (Cambridge: James Clarke, 2008), p. 3

the ancient Church, and […] the first-born of the Reformation, [who]', he says, 'recognised God in everything, [and] spoke of Him on all occasions and in connection with all things'.[14] The divine 'dwells', for Hartley, in 'every moment' and 'every thought'.[15] He apprehends spiritually the phenomena of what he terms 'the sphere of sense';[16] for example, in his sonnet, *The Soul*:

> The shortest smile that flits across a face,
> Which lovely grief hath made her dwelling-place,
> Lasts longer than the earth or visible skies!
> It is an act of God.[17]

Hartley's imagery offers a 'double vision', in Malcolm Guite's terms: an 'experience of […] seeing through and beyond' immediate appearance.[18] As Sara Coleridge wrote of Wordsworth's poetry, Hartley's perspectives 'set […] Time at defiance'.[19]

Hartley's religious poems reflect the 'deeply humbled feelings' with which, Derwent says, he read 'Holy Scripture';[20] inevitably, then, the poems confront inadequacy and failure. These themes, to an extent, are inherited: STC had portrayed himself collecting 'nectar in a sieve',[21] while Hartley presents an absurdist image of having 'lost' a 'race' he 'never ran'.[22] The poetic 'viab[ility]' of STC's 'aesthetics of inachievement' has been recognised,[23] while Hartley's self-critical reflections have been dismissed as introspectively morbid;[24] particularly, his sense of failure to 'sustain […] aright' what he calls, 'the awful weight / And duty of my place and destiny'.[25] *Tait's Edinburgh Magazine*, however, in 1851, suggested a different interpretation: 'we are inclined to think', the reviewer contended, 'that, *as a poet*, Hartley did, in fact, gain more than he lost by his infirmity'.[26] Robert Southey, having tutored Hartley for a year in preparation for university, described his disposition as 'instinctively […] devotional'.[27] It is this 'devotional' quality, above all, that enables Hartley to contemplate 'infirmity' creatively; as Kierkegaard puts it, 'the real sufferer will

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[14] Hartley Coleridge, *Essays and Marginalia*, 2 Vols, edited by Derwent Coleridge (London: Moxon, 1851), Vol 2, p. 342
[15] *The Word of God*, Colles, pp. 357 - 358
[16] *Sonnet xxxiii*, Colles, p. 19
[17] *The Soul*, Colles, p. 349
[18] Guite, p. 16
[19] Sara Coleridge, 'Appendix', ST Coleridge, '*Biographia Literaria'; or, Biographical Sketches of my Literary life and opinions*. Prepared for publication in part by the late Henry Nelson Coleridge; completed and published by his widow. 2 Vols, edited by Sara Coleridge (London: Pickering, 1847). Vol 1, p. 353
[20] Derwent Coleridge, *Memoir*, *Poems by Hartley Coleridge*, p. clxviii
[21] PW 606 13
[22] *Sonnet ix*, Colles, p. 7
[23] JCC Mays, *Coleridge's 'Love': 'All he can manage, more than he could'* in *Coleridge's Visionary Languages*, edited by Tim Fulford and Morton D. Paley (Cambridge: D S Brewer, 1993), p. 50
[24] For example, see Anya Taylor, *Bacchus in Romantic England* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1999). Taylor writes: 'Hartley examines his own circling impotence, but unlike his father his introspection does not dart outward to other subjects but spirals inward. He is a good example of the adage, 'the alcoholic is an ego-maniac with an inferiority complex'. p. 150
[25] *A Friend in Sorrow*, Colles, p. 232
[26] Anonymous review in *Tate's Edinburgh Magazine*, cited Healey, 'The Reception of Hartley Coleridge's Poetry', p. 35.
[27] *Letters of Hartley Coleridge*, edited by Earl Leslie Griggs and Grace Evelyn Griggs (London: Oxford University Press, 1941), p. 10

always express himself truly'.[28] Hartley's religious poems reflect such integrity: he articulates an anxiety of inadequacy as an idiom of Christian penitence. John Keble, Tractarian theologian and poet, contradicting Dr Johnson, regards 'repentance' as a central theme for 'the emotional compositions of a Christian'. The 'business' of the religious poet, for Keble, is 'to quiet and sober the feelings of the penitent';[29] a task with which Hartley engages in *Christmas Day*, revealing hidden processes of redemption:

> [W]hen the winter of the soul is bare,
> The seed of heaven at first begins to grow,
> Peeping abroad in desert of despair.
> Full many a floweret, good, and sweet, and fair
> Is kindly wrapped in coverlet of snow.[30]

'[F]loweret', a characteristic diminutive, and the homely 'coverlet' and 'kindly', suggest God's fatherly care for the frail, lost sinner. Hartley's theme anticipates the view of an existentialist theologian: 'where the spirit is far from our consciousness', writes Paul Tillich, 'where we are unable to pray or experience any meaning in life, the spirit is working quietly and in the depth of our souls'.[31]

In Hartley's devotional poems, worldly weakness is reinterpreted as spiritual strength, as in the sonnet *Believe and Pray*:

> … free is faith and potent to obey
> And love content in patient prayer to wait,
> Like the poor cripple at the Beautiful Gate,
> Shall be relieved on some miraculous day.[32]

To adapt Lucy Newlyn's terms, Hartley's devotional idiom 'reconfigure[s]' 'apparent weakness[ ]' as 'strength[ ]' of spiritual 'identit[y]'.[33] Hartley creates the same effect in *Prometheus*, in which he subtly inflects his classical material with a Christian theme of redemptive love, represented by the female Sylphs, who counter pagan male aggression; and whose 'spell of unresisted power' resides in 'wonder-working weak simplicity'.[34] In *Hagar*, one of Hartley's neglected but memorable sonnets on female scriptural characters, he focuses with acute psychological sympathy on a victim's pain and powerlessness:

> A heavy burden and no winsome toy
> To such as her a hanging babe must be.

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[28] Soren Kierkegaard, *Concluding Unscientific Postscript*, translated by David F. Svenson and Walter Lowrie (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1974), p. 398

[29] John Keble, *Sacred Poetry*, *Occasional Papers and Reviews* (Oxford and London: James Parker, 1877), pp. 94-95. 'Sacred Poetry' was first published in the *Quarterly Review*, 1825.

[30] *Christmas Day*, Colles, p. 150

[31] Paul Tillich, *The Shaking of the Foundations*, (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1962), p. 141

[32] *Believe and Pray*, Colles, p. 334. The image of 'the poor cripple at the Beautiful Gate' refers to the parable of Dives and Lazarus, Luke 17, 19 – 31.

[33] Lucy Newlyn, *Reading, Writing, and Romanticism: The Anxiety of Reception* (Oxford University Press, 2000), p. 232

[34] *Prometheus*, Colles, p. 301

> A slave without a master—wild not free,
> With anger in her heart![35]

If Hartley interprets this episode to confirm God's omnipotent 'never-absent care', Hagar, in her 'silent tears', seems a resolute survivor.[36] Leah, another victim of male mistreatment, is redeemed, in Hartley's sonnet, by devotional endurance and patient faith in 'God's decree'.[37] 'In weakness strength', Hartley's definition of the 'true sublime',[38] is the paradox central to his sonnets on Jesus: Hartley presents Christ's divine power to 'save us from […] death' in context of His frailty as an infant, 'peevish, fond, as any other child';[39] and His vulnerable weakness as 'man in deed'.[40] Hartley's poetic representations anticipate the view of Lucien Richard; for whom, in our own times, '[a]n authentic Christology must affirm that Jesus's life is simultaneously characterized by power […] and by powerlessness'.[41]

Hartley's essential medium for devotional expression is the sonnet; he follows female predecessors, who appropriated the form for 'sensibility and private utterance'.[42] Hartley's 'scene is inwardness', in Kierkegaard's terms, and 'the individual's relation to himself' and God;[43] the sonnet offers this 'inward' 'scene' a formal shape. Moreover, as Joseph Phelan observes, 'the proportional relation between depth of feeling and technical difficulty create[d] a […] space for the religious sonnet'.[44] Hartley's reverent sensibility is at home in this 'space', associated by Wordsworth with the cloistered devotions of nuns.[45] If Wordsworth struggles against the sonnet's 'narrowing unavoidably the range of thought', as he puts it,[46] Hartley exploits the sonnet's constraints to express the presence of the divine within the fabric of common experience. 'Faith', proclaims Hartley, is 'an affirmation and an act / That bids eternal truth be present fact'.[47] *Multum Dilexit*, for example, exploiting elements of Italianate and English forms, enables Hartley to interweave 'eternal truth[s]' of a Gospel narrative within the urgency of 'present' experience. Based on Luke, Chapter 7, in which a 'woman', described as 'a sinner', is redeemed by her anointing of Jesus, the poem becomes a profoundly personal prayer. Its octave focuses on the woman's abject desolation, and burning desire for purification:

> She sat and wept beside His feet; the weight

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[35] *Hagar*, Colles, p.337
[36] Ibid, p. 337
[37] *Leah*, Colles, p. 338
[38] *Sonnet xiii*, Colles, p 117
[39] *But Jesus Slept*, Colles, p. 347
[40] *Jesus Praying*, Colles, p. 347
[41] Lucien Richard, *Christ: the Self-Emptying of God* (New York / Mahweh, NJ: Paulist Press, 1997), p. 63
[42] Marianne van Remoortel, *Lives of The Sonnet, 1795 – 1895: Genre, Gender and Criticism* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2011), p. 89
[43] Kierkegaard, p. 391
[44] Joseph Phelan, *The Nineteenth Century Sonnet* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005), p. 89
[45] William Wordsworth, *Sonnet 1*, *Miscellaneous Sonnets*. *Complete Poetical Works* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1936), p. 199
[46] Wordsworth, *Complete Poetical Works*, p. 709.
[47] *The Just Shall Live by Faith*, Colles, p. 334

> Of sin oppress'd her heart; for all the blame,
> And the poor malice of the wordly shame,
> To her was past, extinct, and out of date,
> Only the sin remained, - the leprous state;
> She would be melted by the heat of love,
> By fires far fiercer than are blown to prove
> And purge the silver ore adulterate.[48]

The third quatrain shows the penitent's act of devotional love and ultimate redemption; the final couplet is the poet's prayer. The sonnet's power resides in its simplicity of diction and strict economy of phonological pattern: three rhymes in the octave, three in the sestet; and all but two of the rhyming words are monosyllables. The polysyllabic pun, 'adulterate', therefore, carrying echoes of 'weight' and 'leprous state', closes the octave with a lingering emphasis upon guilt. The sestet, repeating the octave's opening words, prolongs this psychological suspense, delaying its turn until the caesura in line 9:

> She sat and wept, and with her untress'd hair
> Still wiped the feet she was so blessed to touch[.]

This softens the movement from octave to sestet, and heightens the impact of the couplet's transition to first person and present tense. Adopting the woman's penitential posture, Hartley prays for that absolute humility and surrender of self, which may, as in the Gospel narrative, bring redemption:

> I am a sinner full of doubts and fears,
> Make me a humble thing of love and tears.

The stresses and rhyme create a closing cadence tinged with anxiety: whether 'love and tears' will prevail over 'doubts and fears' trembles in the balance. Form and language, however, moderate intense longing with reverent restraint, exemplifying 'the power of simplicity', that Keble advocated in religious verse.[49] *Multum Dilexit's* formal precision anticipates Geoffrey Hill's view that 'the technical perfecting of a poem is an act of atonement, in the […] etymological sense—an act of at-one-ment […] a reconciling'.[50] If a poem is 'to engage justly with our imperfection', says Hill, 'so much […] more must [it] approach the nature of its perfection'.[51] Hartley's devotional sonnets, in their 'sweet flow of pure clear verse',[52] as Sara puts it, reflect such an ethic of form. The 'perfection' of *Multum Dilexit*, however, is of a different order from that of George Herbert's poem on the same subject. Herbert's *Marie Magdalene* treats the

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[48] *Multum Dilexit*, Colles, p. 359. The title means 'She loved so much', which are the last four words of line 12.
[49] Keble, *Sacred Poetry*, p.88
[50] Mahon, pp. 173 -174
[51] Mahon, p. 174
[52] Sara Coleridge, Letter to Hartley Coleridge, 7th October 1847. *The Regions of Sara Coleridge's Thought: Selected Literary Criticism*, edited by Peter Swaab (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012), p. 171

principles of repentance and redemption; and demonstrates, according to Helen Wilcox, 'the Protestant doctrine of the receipt of Grace'.[53] Hartley, by contrast, presents the suffering penitent's experience. As Keble contended, 'it is not the religious doctrine itself, so much as the effect upon the human heart and mind, which the sacred poet has to describe'.[54]

Hartley's devotional contemplations of 'heart […] and mind' influence his response to the religious controversies of the 1830s and 1840s. Unlike Derwent, pursuing a career as conservative cleric, and unlike Sara, applying her depth and brilliance of Coleridgean intellect to theological polemics, Hartley engages with the religion of his times in terms of personal faith. 'Either believe or philosophize', proclaimed Schopenhauer; 'it is either reason or the scriptures'.[55] Hartley rejects 'philosophiz[ing]', choosing 'belie[f]' and 'the scriptures'; as in his sonnet, *The Bible*:

> Whate'er of truth the antique sages sought,
> And could but guess of his benign decree,
> Is given to Faith affectionate and free,
> Not wrung by force of self-confounding thought.[56]

Hartley develops this theme in a conversation poem, *Religious Differences*, in which his addressee is of a different persuasion. The poem's easy fluency creates a genial tone:

> Yea, we do differ, differ still we must.[57]

Hartley goes on, though, gently to suggest the superficiality of doctrinal 'differ[ence]', which arises from the instability of language:

> For language is the type of thought, and thought
> The slave of sense [….] only fraught
> With cheques and tokens taken upon trust.[58]

Hartley, therefore, rejects the claims of rational theology to express precise truths; he offers, instead, scriptural motifs of redemption:

> Sweet Dove, sweet image of the faith that rests
> All doubts, all questions past,
> In babe-like love at last,
> With that dear Babe divine, between the Virgin's breasts.[59]

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[53] Helen Wilcox, *The English Poems of George Herbert*, edited by Helen Wilcox (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), p.597
[54] Keble *Sacred Poetry*, p. 93
[55] Arthur Schopenhauer, *Essays and Aphorisms*, *selected and translated with an introduction by RJ Hollingdale* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1970), p. 196
[56] *The Bible*, Colles, p. 333
[57] *Religious Differences*, Colles, p. 353
[58] Ibid, p. 353
[59] Ibid, p. 353

The movement of the lines, as their imagery, expresses resolution.

Although Hartley had been boldly outspoken, 'inveighing against all establishments',[60] as probationary Fellow at Oriel College, Oxford, he grew to dislike religious dispute. In 1838, when the prominent Tractarian, and future Catholic convert, Frederick Faber, was assisting the vicar at Ambleside,[61] Hartley avoided him, because he 'fear[ed] a collision on points', he said, 'that should never be prophaned by [...] disputation'.[62] Yet, he paid tribute to Faber's active Christian virtues, affirming, in a sonnet, 'by our common faith I love thee well'.[63] Similarly, Hartley expressed 'reverence' for Newman, Keble and Pusey, whose 'noble aim', he felt, was 'not preferment' or 'popularity', but 'truth for truth's sake'.[64] Hartley, then, recognizing that 'God hath spoken / To holy men in many different ways',[65] anticipates the twentieth century theologian, Dietrich Bonhoeffer, for whom 'to be a Christian […] does not mean to be religious in a particular way'.[66] In verse 2 of *Religious Differences*, Hartley accepts that individuals' 'several spiritual needs' may 'best' be met 'by seeming different creeds'. 'Seeming' is the key word: sectarian shades of meaning are superficial. Hartley and his addressee share an essential 'faith' of the 'heart[…]' that unifies them 'in one / Inseparable Communion'.[67]

In an essay, *Church Sectarianism*, Hartley develops his vision of a single, liberating, unifying faith: 'all shapes and hues' of doctrinal difference 'will vanish', he proclaims, 'in the universal light, and nothing remain but the love, which is perfect light, and life, and immortality, which flows from God, and is God, even God with us, uniting all blessed souls, from the beginning to the end of time, in a beautiful communion, identifying the love of God with the love of all that are God's, that God may be all in all'.[68] Hartley's rhythmic prose recalls, perhaps, the idiom of a medieval mystic.[69] Hartley contrasts his visionary 'communion' with the fractured 'Church of England', riven by 'schism and reciprocal misunderstanding […] not built as a city […] at unity with itself'.[70] Even in remote Ambleside, he notes regretfully, 'religious animosities run as high as ever'.[71] Hartley's concern is that dogmatic divisions should not disturb the simple faith he describes in his sonnet, *The Liturgy*:

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[60] Derwent Coleridge, *Memoir*, *Poems by Hartley Coleridge*, p. lxv
[61] Stephen Gill, *Wordsworth and the Victorians* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2001), p. 71
[62] *Letters of Hartley Coleridge,* p. 225
[63] Ibid, p. 225
[64] Derwent Coleridge, *Memoir*, *Poems by Hartley Coleridge*, p. cxli
[65] *The Word of God*, Colles, p. 357
[66] Dietrich Bonhoeffer, cited Mahon, p. 219
[67] *Religious Differences*, Colles, p. 354
[68] Hartley Coleridge, *Essays and Marginalia*, Vol 1, p. 349.
[69] See, for example, the rhythmic and alliterative prose of the fourteenth century English mystic, Richard Rolle. In *The Nature of Love*, Rolle writes, in characteristic style: 'Love is a life linking together the loving and the loved, for meekness makes us sweet to God, love makes us one with God. Love is the thing through which God loves us, and we God, and each one of us the other'. Richard Rolle, *Selected Writings of Richard Rolle*, translated by John G. Harrell (London: S P C K, 1963), p. 10
[70] Hartley Coleridge, *Essays and Marginalia*, Vol 1, p. 350
[71] *Letters of Hartley Coleridge*, p. 253

> The pastor bears along the prayers and praises
> Of many souls in channel well defined,
> Yet leaves no drop of prayer or praise behind.[72]

Hartley's vision of an 'inseparable communion' is based on local sociability: the shared traditional experience of a parish community. In *Church Sectarianism*, Hartley is concerned 'that […] plain, pious, straightforward believing church-goers, who hope to meet their forefathers in heaven, and are content to make the best of their way thither, by the same way as their forefathers […], may not be disturbed by the pugnacious colloquies of high-Churchmen and liberals'.[73] 'Straightforward' devotion, shared by 'many souls in channel well defined' offers, for Hartley, salvation from nihilistic materialism. Against a dread of cosmic isolation—humanity as 'Nature's waif'—Hartley invokes the communal faith of one who 'knows his path was trod/By saints of old, who knew their way to God'.[74] Hartley fears that Christian tradition will disappear: that 'there will be no such thing as a pure churchman, who […] holds in […] sincerity, and peace of mind, the Faith delivered down from the Fathers'.[75] In *Stay Where Thou Art*, addressed to Dora Wordsworth, after her decision not to follow Faber into the Roman Catholic Church,[76] Hartley invokes the 'pur[ity]' of 'firm faith' against doctrinal doubt, which risks perdition, in 'a desert waste and wide, / Where is no star, no chart, no compass, and no guide'.[77]

In Conclusion

From the mid-1830s, Hartley regarded religious poetry as his vocation: 'I would devote […] my talent, be it what it may', he wrote to Sara, 'to the direct service of God'.[78] In 1837, he was preparing a book of sacred sonnets,[79] continuing to work on it, despite what he described, in 1844, as 'very bad times' for 'the book market'.[80] In 1846, Hartley sent Sara 'a heap of sonnets and other poems on religious subjects', asking her to annotate any passage which might provoke controversy.[81] Although Hartley's vocational commitment developed in his final decade, the concern with religious experience is continuous through his whole work. Derwent, however, arranged Hartley's 'Posthumous Poems' under headings that present him, essentially, as an occasional, and minor nature poet; 'scriptural' poems are relegated to the

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[72] *The Liturgy*, Colles, p. 333
[73] Hartley Coleridge, *Essays and Marginalia*, Vol 1, p. 350.
[74] *Sonnet xi*, Colles, p. 116
[75] Hartley Coleridge, *Essays and Marginalia*, Vol 1, p. 353
[76] The sonnet was enclosed in a letter of 28th January 1848 to Sara Coleridge. See Fran Carlock Stephens, *Hartley Coleridge Letters: A Calendar & Index*, p. 66.
[77] *Stay Where Thou Art,* Colles, p.351
[78] *Hartley Coleridge Letters: A Calendar and Index*, p. 63
[79] Ibid, p. 98
[80] Ibid, p. 61
[81] Ibid, p. 63

end of Volume Two.[82] In his *Memoir*, Derwent is ambivalent about Hartley's religious character: he acknowledges Hartley's 'devotional' attention to the Bible, but alleges that he failed to 'look […] in the right manner' in matters of faith.[83] Derwent's reluctance to engage with the religious qualities of Hartley's poems is due, perhaps, to his professional concerns as churchman and educationalist; and to his misguided appraisal of Hartley's work as a whole, measuring it, as Nicola Healey suggests, against the 'overt magnitude of STC's poetic schemes'.[84] Different editorial emphases would have shown the continuity and development of Hartley's religious poetry; and his consistent commitment to reveal, in Dietrich Bonhoeffer's words, 'God in what we know'.[85]

[82] Volume 1 of Derwent's 1851 edition of Hartley's poems consists of those already published in a single volume by F E Bingley in 1833, preceded by Derwent's *Memoir* of Hartley. Volume Two consists of poems published posthumously, selected by Derwent and arranged by him under the following headings, in this order: *Miscellaneous Sonnets*; *Sonnets of the Seasons; Sonnets and Other Poems on Birds, Insects and Flowers; Sonnets and Other Poems referring to the period of Infancy and Childhood; Meditative and Descriptive Pieces; Miscellaneous Poems, chiefly Lyrical. Playful and Humorous Pieces; Translations; Sketches of English Poets*; *Scriptural and Religious Subjects*. Poems with obviously religious themes, such as *Faith*, *Hope*, *Prayer*, *Christmas Day*, are placed in the 'miscellaneous' and 'nature' sections. Moreover, Hartley's mode of perception, through both volumes, is predominantly devotional, his tone reverential. Matthew Arnold's description of Newman's voice as preacher recalls the pervasive timbre of much of Hartley's poetry: 'a religious music – […] sweet, mournful'. Cited Anthony Kenny, *Clough: A Poet's Life* (London: Continuum, 2005), p. 37.

[83] Derwent Coleridge, *Memoir, Poems by Hartley Coleridge*, p. clxxii

[84] Healey, *The Poetics of Relationship*, p. 97

[85] Dietrich Bonhoeffer, cited Mahon, p. 220