

Jan 10th 1797

To Lady
Lucus vol 1 83

Saturday

I am completely reconciled to that second strophe, & waive all objection. In spite of the Grecian Lyrist, I persist in thinking your brief personification of Madam's useless reverence fatalists me to see say, un-
Golden locks & snow white glories are as incongruous & your former, & if the great Italian painters, of whom my friend knows about as much as the man in the moon, if these great gentlemen be on your side, I see no harm in estimating the purple - the glories, that I have observed to encircle the heads of saints & madonnas in those old paintings, have been mostly of a dirty drab color'd yellow - a dull gambogium. Keep your old line: it will excite a confused kind of pleasurable idea in the reader's mind, not clear enough to be call'd a conception, nor just enough, I think, to reduce to painting. It is a rich line you say; & riches hide a many faults. I maintain, that in the 2^d antist. you do disjoin Nature & the world, & contrary to your conduct in the 2^d strophe. Nature joins her gown, & joins with whom, a god's name, but the world or earth in the line preceding? but this is being over anxious, I acknowledge. Nor did I call the last line useless, & only objected to unnatural. I cannot be made to like the former part of that 2^d Epode; I cannot be made to feel it, as I do the parallel places in Isaiah, Jeremy, & Daniel. Whether it is that in the present case the rhyme impairs the efficacy - or that the circumstances are feigned, & we are conscious of a made up life in the case, & the narrative is too long intended to preserve the semblance of truth, or that lines 8. 9. 10. 14 in part c: 17 & 18 are mean and unenthusiastic - or that lines 5 & 8 in their change of rhyme shew like art - I don't know, but it struck me as something meant to affect, & failing in its purpose. Remember my waywardness of feeling is single, & singly stands opposed to all your friends, & what is one among many! This I know, that your quotations from the prophets have never escaped me, & never fail'd to affect me strongly - I have the minute, - - I am glad you have amended that parenthesis in the account of Destruction. I like it well now. only alter that history of child hearing, & all will do well. Let the obnoxious Epode remain, & terrify such of your friends, as are willing to be terrified. I think, I would omit the Notes, not as not good but as ungenial with the dignity of the Ode.