

Coleridge
1827

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Grove, Highgate
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My dear Sir
In what form of Thanks
shall I acknowledge the receipt of the
Plymouth Georgian, that shall bear even
a tolerable proportion to the Magnificence
of the Present? I will avail myself
of some one of those focal states of
my Being, in which Head and Heart
converge, and record on the blank
leaves all, I know, think and feel
of the work, and of the Author: and
it shall be, as far as the full and
earnest expression of my Will can
make it such, a Heirloom in my
Family; which I shall, I & V, deliver
to my Daughter on her Wedding
Day, as the most splendid way, that
I can command, of marking my sense
of the Talent and Industry, that have

Made her Mistress of the Six Languages
comprized in the volumes, and of the
fine Taste and genial sentiment
which will ensure her selecting the
English and the German Versions, as
(in the only two legitimate kinds of
poetic translation) carrying the transposition
of the Spirit and Individuality of a
Poet, each in its kind, to the highest
point of Perfection. And I shall
make this Request the more willingly,
that in all present probability my
dear Sara, whose worst fault is
that of tempting her Parents to be
proud of her, will change her
Maiden State (wherever that may be)
without changing her Maiden Name.

I will not attempt any remark on
Your Georgics. I have never had any
other opinion, than that in a Poem
of all others the most difficult to translate
into English Metre it is the best

Translation, ^{of any work, that exists} in our Language, and the
nearest to the ideal Alter et Idem. The
Diction and Perspicacity are more
highly polished, more exquisite than
those of your Oberon; and both the
Georgics and the Oberon are free from
the one (and only notice-worthy) defect
of your later Compositions, the
occasional excess of fullness - a strength
and Coarseness that tend, ^{at times} to retard
the movement, and counteract the
propulsive impetus of the Total Spirit
of the Poem. Were I asked, ^{of any} ~~about~~ detached
two or three hundred Lines in your
Poems - ex. gr. Com. Cant. III. - what was wanted
to make them more beautiful, I know not, how
I could convey my mind more truly than if
I should reply - To make 30 or 40 of them
less so. You, I dare promise myself, will
not be offended by my heart-in-mouth
Openness. - I will make an attempt to
find you at home tomorrow - if I sleep
in Grosvenor Square - with respectful
veneration to Mrs Sotheby & Miss Sotheby,
once more accept the thanks of a Graculatee of
your obliged Friend & Son P. J. Coleridge