

certainty the least apprehension of having been anticipated. I shall however  
return to Highgate (Deo volente) within ten days, and as I shall bring  
with me the first half of the Article, having luckily the notes, I took, during  
a very minute and critical perusal of the Georgics, just by itself, and  
a second time with Wags's & your revision, I hope & trust, that I shall be  
able to finish it ~~before~~ before the close of as many days from the date

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of my return. I know of no other respectable channel - certainly  
none, to which I have any access unless indeed Blackwood's Magazine  
might be considered such. Indeed, on reflection, the sale of this work,  
and its undoubted influence on the literary Public, make it a question  
and I will defer the statement of my particular Article to Blanco  
White, till I hear from you, which likewise will give me the time, I  
unfortunately must devote to an article for a newspaper, necessary for my  
immediate affairs & how my soul shrinks from Politics in the present state  
of things at such a critical moment.

9 Jan 1820

P.S. My excuse for writing to know  
you feels perfectly, the new Review of  
the Edinburgh Magazine is that a certain  
tone & colouring of style is requisite for each.

My dear Sir  
It is a not unpoetical tragico-scientific  
fantasy with me to imagine myself as the survivor of  
"This Breathing House not built with hands,  
This Body that does me grievous wrong -  
and an Apoplexy at its dissection - inspiring, as spirits may  
be supposed to have the power of doing, this and that thought  
into the mind of the Anatomist. Ergo - Be so good as to give  
a cut just there, right across the umbilical region, then  
look the fellow that for so many years brooded me on my back  
making - on a stable throne, I beseech you - it was the seat of source  
of that dreaded Subvultus, which so often threw my back out of  
my hands, or drove my pen in a blur over the paper as I  
was writing! But above all and over all has risen and  
hovers the strong half-truth, half-belief, that there waits  
the found of not the justifying reason yet the more than  
the palliation and excuse - if not the necessitating cause,  
yet the originating occasion, of my leanness - & in truth,  
they are so bad that without vanity or self-delusion I might  
be allowed to call them my only offences against others, viz.  
Sins of Omission. & if, in addition to the disturbing accidents  
& diseases on any time resulting from any almost constitutional

from and difficulty in uttering & in possessing to utter, No. 1 - if  
in addition to the distractions of morning and encompassed circumstances,  
and of a poor man constrained to be under obligation to generous  
and affectionate friends only one degree richer than himself,  
the calls of the day forcing me away in my most genial hours  
from a work in which my very heart & soul were true, to a  
fine quiet task, which fifty persons might have done better,  
at least, more effectually for the purpose; - if in addition to these,  
and half a score other intrusive draw-backs, it were possible  
to convey without impairing the sensation, which (sustained  
by the stimulus of earnest conversation or of rapid motion)  
arise and it has overwhelmed me as soon as I sit down  
alone, with my pen in my hand, and my head <sup>hanging</sup> ~~drooping~~ and  
body cramped, over my table (I can not say, desk) - I  
dare believe that on the opinion of a competent Judge what  
I have performed will excite more surprizes than what  
I have omitted to do, or failed in doing - Example of this -  
which I have written because I sincerely respect you as  
a good man to whose merits as an accomplished scholar and  
Man of Letters his Rank and Fortune give a moral worth,  
as rendering this dedication of his time and talents an act  
of free choice, and exemplary - and by the beneficial influence  
of such an example on that class of society, in which the cultivation  
of the liberal Arts and Sciences affords the best, almost I had said  
the only, security against Idleness, and a refined but expectant  
Sensuality - the more expectant, in proportion as it is diffused and

intrusive. This is indeed the true meaning and etymon of the  
Liberal Studies. digne Libero viro. - thou, ~~in~~ which, a Gentleman,  
as containing in themselves and in their reflex effects on the  
Student's own mind and character a suffering motive and reward  
and are followed for Love not Hire. - Because you possess my  
inward respect; I would not stand on a worse light, than the  
knowledge of the whole truth would place me, or permit one of your  
esteem than my Conscience affords. I need not tell you, that  
pecuniary motives either do not act at all - or are of that class of  
stimulus which act only as Narcotics. and as to what people in  
general think about me, I say mind and spirit are too awfully  
occupied with the concerns of another Tribunal, before which  
I stand momentarily, to be much affected by it one way or other.

To thank for the Poets I owe for the answer to your letter,  
which I have but just received in a packet by the Coach, &  
which must have been detained at the Court Office for a day or  
half, according to the date of a letter to Mrs. Gellman enclosed in it,  
who is here with her sister. I mean by this Post to write to  
Mr. Blanco White, in answer to a letter from him stating his  
scheme of a new Quarterly Review of obtaining my immediate  
assistance - & I will offer to him without any particular  
mention of your name, an article on Sidonic Poetry, the age  
& style of manners to which it belongs; the merits and defects of  
the Georgics; and the comparative force of the principal European  
Languages & the comparative success of the several Translators,  
whose versions are collected in the splendid Polyglotta the former including  
the question of metres, and the two modes of translation, the identical, and  
the equivalent. I have not seen the Review, you mention; but do not