

15.00 net  
n.t.e

Darlin

Deox C. W. H.

Travbridge 5 Dec<sup>r</sup> 1822

When your Parcel reached my House  
I was absent and several Days past, before my arrival: Since  
my Return I have read your Poems with all the Attention  
that Indisposition again allowed me to give them: In a former  
Letter I mentioned the Mistakes which are made by Men of  
Talent and even Men of Judgment in their Opinions of  
unpublished Works and this I still suggest when I write  
to you that I do not conceive your Poems in their present  
State are fitted for publication: There are Marks of poetical  
Talent and of Feeling, but there are two Objections to them  
They want Narrative to fix the Readers Attention and  
Propriety to prevent his having Trouble in comprehending  
your Meaning, which no Reader patiently endures: I do not  
recollect a Poem which has succeeded with the public,  
(satirical & personal excepted which succeed by their malignity)  
unless they were supported by some Relation, I. W. Scott  
and Byron, Mr Moore & all the present Race of Poets  
have Narrative and Characters without which I am afraid  
the most beautiful Composition would remain unnoticed. I  
will not dwell upon the Subject & repeat that my Opinion is  
that of an Individual, to which you will pay the Regard that your  
own Judgment shall determine to be right & no more

W. R. B.

Pardon me if I do not insert the Verses you  
desire of me & give me credit when I assure you  
that I have them not, I mean that I have none  
which would answer your purpose. I have been for  
some time endeavouring to correct & improve a few Lines  
but I cannot detach any Portion of them for your  
Album neither have I any short Poem which might  
fill a page after that of Mr. Montgomery.

I shall take care that your Books are forwarded to  
you from Town & I trust they will reach you in due time  
safely. And I know to whom I am writing. I  
might venture to say somewhat more on the Subject before  
us, but when we know not a Writers Time of Life nor  
the particular Object of his Wishes, we know not how  
to address him. To some persons it is of no Importance  
whether the Impression of a Poem be sold or not: to others  
it is of much consequence. An uneducated poet in this  
Neighbourhood, Henry Sir James, has ventured to print a  
considerable Number of an heroic Poem called Rogwald and  
I am much afraid that the Sale will not pay for the Impression,  
yet there is a Story & unquestionably, Marks of unpaired Genius,  
but attended by this great fault, that a Reader must keep his Mind  
on the Dutch to find what the Author is describing. The Obstacle is

a very important Requisite, & it is not by any means  
without its Use, for a Writer of Verses, to put them into  
the plainest Prose that his meaning can be conveyed in and  
then he will find whether he is obscure or may be readily understood.  
If the two first Stanzas of your Poem are thus tried, you will  
find that Obscurity which a Reader will seldom be at the  
trouble of elucidating for himself.

Whether I should wish you to  
peruse in your present prospects depend on circumstances  
which are to me unknown. If you prefer, I scruple not  
to say, that you have much to do, but you may do it &  
you are probably the best Judge whether you ought. The  
present Verse, I cannot advise you to lay before the  
public but I dare not give any formal respecting your  
doing this with any other: when I recollect that some have  
succeeded beyond even their own Expectations, I am afraid  
to damp the Labour of a young poet, but I at the same time  
remember the Fortune of at least an equal Number, who  
had nevertheless very considerable merit and would at  
a period not very distant, have acquired Reputation &  
this keeps me suspended in my Judgment & undecided  
in all Things but my good Wishes with which I am  
most heartily yours  
G. Crabbe