

My belov'd Mr. Hagley, with what grief of heart do I contemplate your confinement! with what terror your recent danger, so narrowly escaped, & that you had earlier consulted an able Surgeon!—but it is in vain to regret the past—~~yet~~ my God! was yours a Life to have been thus desperately neglected? An unavailing impatient rage seizes my spirit under the consciousness that a timely application to surgical skill had preserved you from this evil. I promise—~~me~~, my dear dear Bard, that if Time shall fulfill the happy predictions of your medical Friend, & restore to you that strength of limbs which ~~could~~ may again enable you to range with ease, safety, & pleasure over your lovely Hill, promise me, I conjure you, that you will never more omit to obtain the best assistance on the first symptoms of any disease which may assail you. When Giovanni & I have said to each other on the late fine mornings—“how is the dear Bard ranging thro’ his walks which are growing so beautiful,” how little did we divine ~~that~~ his confinement, or his danger! Not all that cheerful blaze of intellect, which illuminates your last letter, & shows the triumph of a noble spirit, & a self-approving Conscience, over bodily imprisonment, & the sense of danger, can calm my apprehensions, tho’ much it penetrates, & somewhat it comforts my heart. Giovanni, by sharing my regret, & my solicitude for your situation, renders their pressure more supportable than I could find their unperformed weight. If it is allow’d us by Providence to receive cheering tidings of the dearest of our Friends, & the glory of the age in which we live, I let ~~them~~ <sup>them</sup> not be delay’d!—a few lines which may, faithfully & concerning the progress of your recovery, which I earnestly beg of Heaven to render perfect, may be conveyed to us by the pen of one of your servants, if writing should be troublesome to yourself, or reader’s irksome to dear Mrs. Hagley by the solicitude of her heart. Well am I aware of the incapacitating power of anxiety. Heavily do I ~~feel~~ <sup>feel</sup> it at this moment, when I wish, in vain, for the power of amusing you. My Father had another dangerous attack on Tuesday last, brought on by an intemperate quantity of food—the power of medicine has once more snatch’d him from that grave, which his ungovern’d appetites, & unresistable temper, ever more ~~than~~ rapidly than age itself, with all its concomitant feebleness, are preparing for him. I write to you from the Terrace-Walk, which overlooks the little smiling valley, now bursting forth into luxuriant beauty. Soon alas! the day must come when it shall be no longer in my power to pass the



concerning poetic composition. With an ingenuously, as uncommon as it is amiable,  
Doc. P. Percival professes himself convinced that his concurrence was injudicious, &  
retracts it, observing that he shall expunge the passage in the next edition of his  
Work.

So, we have lost the Poet Laureate. I always thought Mr. Whitehead's  
abilities too considerable for that thyming slavery - & now a yet greater <sup>Bar</sup> ~~and~~ <sup>Bar</sup>  
undertakes the laboring oar of the Boat, which is yearly to row our heavy monarch  
over one of the Pictish rivers.

The least of all poppish Wives, Mrs. Brooke Boothby, has past safely thro' the hour  
of peril, & presented her fair spouse with a fine tall Infant; but it is female.

A spiritless Imagination, & an aching <sup>head</sup> admonish me to lay down my pen after  
I have assured you of Giovanni's, & my father's anxious wishes & prayers for your  
recovery. Those of the former have all the ardor of own solicitudes; those of  
the latter ally, of which a mind, never very impassioned in its affections, & now  
weakened by the decreas of age, is capable - Our best regards to Mrs. Hayley &

DO NOT  
FIELD

Wm. Hayley Esq.  
Longham, near Leicester

Safest

Single Sheet



Alphonso. Once more I implore Heaven to perfect your recovery, & I trust  
I may not long be kept in suspense concerning an event so very important to  
my peace.

Yours, my dear Bard, dearer than ever now



Edward

Lichf. Friday April 29<sup>th</sup> 1785