

53 Sheetsheet  
Wednesday

My dear Sir

Allow me to express, in a very few words my sincere Gratitude for your kindness in writing to Mr Stewart respecting me, by which you saved me from any possible charge of indelicacy towards that distinguished Person in becoming a Candidate for the Situation held by Dr Brown. It is my misfortune never to have seen but once the great Philosopher of his age; but I yield to none in admiration of his transcendent powers, and hope that I am not altogether ignorant of those views which he has opened up into the mysteries of our Nature.

I now take the liberty of offering to your personal several attentions in my favour from literary Men - belonging either to the Scottish or English Universities,

or to the great Republic of Letters.  
That their partiality greatly  
overstates my abilities I well  
know & most humbly admit;  
but, I trust at the same  
time, that such opinions of  
wise men prove that, though  
I may have given nothing of  
consequence to the world, great  
writing is done - Poetry has  
not been my exclusive Pursuit.

The kindness & amenity  
of your behaviour to me have  
always given me very sincere  
delight, and it would indeed  
be strange, if the favourable  
opinion which you have  
& expressed of my poetical  
attempts were not most  
dearly gratifying. I know,

however, that I have no  
claims of any kind upon you;  
& that you have already  
made me your debtor by  
undeserved favours.

Should you therefore, my  
Dear Sir, feel 'justified' in  
writing to me a few lines  
& expressing a favourable opinion  
of my talents & of the  
scope & tenderness of my Works,  
limiting them, if you chuse,  
to my two volumes of Poetry,  
my Essay on Byron or  
the Essay on Poesy, you would  
be performing upon me a  
very great benefit. But  
be assured of this, that if  
there be any Consideration  
of a nature that makes it

painful or delicate for you  
to give me such an attestation  
that your denial can awaken  
in my heart no other feeling  
but that of regret, and  
that my esteem for Mr  
Alison being moral and  
intellectual, & apart both  
from vulgar admiration, and  
mean selfishness, can neither  
be increased nor diminished  
by any thing that can  
occur on the present occasion.

I have the honor to be

My dear Sir

Yours with affectionate adherence  
& perfect esteem

J. M. W. W.