Anna Seward's Journal and Sermons

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Edited by

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For Orla, Josie, and Martha McGinty
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NOTE ON THE TEXT

The volume begins with Anna Seward's letter to Walter Scott, which explains her bequest. The complete original manuscript of Anna Seward's juvenile journal does not survive. When Walter Scott censored the manuscript before publication, he saved the censored extracts and letters but the originals of his published sections no longer remain. The unpublished sections of letters, written in Seward's hand, are printed here in italics and retain the original punctuation, underlining and spelling. I have made no changes other than modernising the double "s" to the contemporary version, in order to make the narrative easier to read. Seward numbers each letter and page clearly in her manuscript and Scott has changed both the letter and page numbers to reflect his censorship. I have used Seward's numbering here. As Scott's edited sections were published almost fifty years after Seward began her journal, the spelling and grammar are noticeably different where Scott has updated the original. I have corrected a small amount of printing typos and left all else as it was printed.

The sermons have never appeared in print. Sermons One, Three and Four are in Seward's hand and are printed here with the original punctuation and grammar. Sermon Two is not written in Seward's hand and is presumably a copy made by the clergyman, John Mackleston, who delivered the sermon.

POSTHUMOUS LETTER FROM ANNA SEWARD TO WALTER SCOTT ESQ., JULY 17TH 1807

Dear Sir,

In my last & lately executed Will, I have bequeathed to you the exclusive Copy-right of those Compositions in Verse which I mean shall constitute a miscellaneous Edition of my Works. This bequest consists of my writings in Verse which have passed the Press, together with those that are yet unpublished. Also a collection of juvenile Letters, from the year 1762 to June 1768, together with four Sermons & a Critical Dissertation.

The Verse consists of two half-bound Volumes quarto, full of manuscript compositions; &, at this time, of six manuscript books sewn together in the form of quarto Volumes. With these I desire may be blended my Poems, which have already been regularly & separately published, printed copies of which will be found tied up with the manuscript Verse, & from those printed copies I desire the Press for this collective Edition may be struck. Some slight alterations in the printed copies are inserted in my own hand writing, to which I request that you will have the goodness to attend in your survey of the proof sheets. I wish the printed & manuscript Poems may succeed each other in the Miscellany according to the successive periods at which they were written; to which end there are specified directions to the Printer thro' their whole course.— With these you will find, & to these I desire may succeed in the Miscellany, the three first books of an Epic Poem, raised on the basis of Fenelon's Telemachus, but in very excursive paraphrase; harmonizing, as I flattered my self, with the style of Pope's Homer. I once hoped to have completed the Poem & that in such completion it might have formed no unacceptable conclusion to the Adventures of the young & royal Hero, left unfinished in the Odyssey. More indispensible [sic] claims upon my attention frustrated that purpose. Abortive as it proved, those of my classical Friends, who have examined the three books, assure me that their contents are poetically equal to any thing I have written.

With the above named compositions you will meet with a little Collection of my late dear Father's poetry, with references to more of it published anonymously in Dodsley's Miscellany. I wish you to admit this Collection, together with his poems in Dodsley's into the Edition I have

bequeathed to you & that it may succeed to my own Poems.—To these metrical volumes I wish the juvenile Letters may be added; succeeding the poetic volumes as in Warburton's Edition of Pope's Works. I refer the Critical Dissertation defending Pope's Odyssey against the erroneous criticisms of Spence, to your judgement, that when you have read the Tract, you may publish or suppress it, as you think best. If the former be your choice it should follow the juvenile Letters, being as it was, the production of my youthful years.—Last the four Sermons, unless you think it better to publish them by them selves, at a different period, rather than that they shou'd form a part of this collective Edition. I wish it to be printed in small Octavo; with an Engraving prefixed, taken by one of our best London Artists, from Romney's Picture of me, drawn in 1786, & bequeathed to my Friend & Executor Charles Simpson Esq. of Lichfield, & which, I doubt not, he will have the goodness to lend for that purpose. I cou'd wish that the heavy disposition of the hair, which the fashion of that period dictated, might in the Engraving be altered to a more light & picturesque form, such as is now worn, & which never can appear over-charged or ungraceful.

Twelve quarto & manuscript Volumes of my letters from the year 1784, to the present day, I have bequeathed to Mr. A. Constable. They are copies of such letters, or parts of letters as after they were written, appeared to me worth the attention of the Public. Large as the Collection is, it does not include a twelfth part of the letters I have written from the said period.

To Mr. Constable, rather than to yourself, have they been bequeathed, on account of the political principles which, during many past years, they breathed. Fervent indeed, & uniform was my abhorrence of the dreadful System in our Cabinet, which has reduced the Continent to utter vassalage, & endangered the independence of Great Britain. Yet I know these opinions are too horrible to your Friendships & Connections with the Belligerent Party, for the possibility of it being agreeable to you to become the Editor of those twelve epistolary Volumes.

I shall address a posthumous letter to Mr. Constable on their subject, expressing my desire that he publish two of the said Volumes annually, not classing them to separate Correspondents, but allowing them to succeed each other in the order of Time, as they stand in the Collection.

This letter has been written beneath the pressure of much pain & illness. I am in a state, which induces me to believe you will, ere long, receive this testimony of my regard, confidence, & gratitude for all the attention with w^{h}. you have honored me; above all for your kind visit. May

health & length of days be yours, with leisure to employ, from time to time, your illustrious Muse!—And now, dear Sir, a long a last Adieu!

Anna Seward

INTRODUCTION

This is the full text of Anna Seward's juvenile journal which is written in the form of a series of letters to an imaginary friend, "Emma". Seward intended the letters to be an autobiographical account of the period of her youth from 1762-8 before she achieved fame as a published poet. Towards the end of her life, Seward had collated all her poetic works, the letter-journal, four sermons, a dissertation and some of her father's and her friends' poems for posthumous publication, bequeathing the manuscripts to Walter Scott. As much as the publication of her body of work, her intention was to consolidate her literary reputation into posterity.[1] Seward's lawyer, Charles Simpson, reminded Scott of his "sacred" duties as the conserver of "the fame of a lady who has placed the rank she is destined to hold under your care and protection".[2] However, as Scott disliked much of the anecdotal substance of the letters, he censored them, removing over half of the contents. Fortunately, he retained the censored sections and I have restored the journal to its original format to publish it as Seward intended. Also included in this volume is a portfolio of four Anglican sermons written by Seward and delivered by unsuspecting clergymen who, Seward claimed, had no idea they were written by a woman. These were also excised by Scott who agreed with Seward's family that the sermons were, "nearly the reverse of what that solemn Composition should be".[3] The sermons are published in full here and provide retrospective evidence of Seward's contribution to feminist Enlightenment debate.

Eighteenth-Century Letters

The paraphernalia of letter writing—pen and ink, paper and seal—are often the objects that form the basis for historical enquiry. However, recent studies show a concern for culture, as much as for material, as a defining influence. The textual, as well as the physical object is relevant to our perceptions of intellectual life and the words on the page of a letter or journal can provide new insights into both public and inner worlds of women of the past. In his epistolary poem, "Eloisa to Abelard", Alexander Pope defines letters as sentient—they "live", they "speak", they "breathe".[4] Extant letters passed down to us through history live on as

material manuscripts but they also speak to us of what it means to be human in a certain time and place, breathing life into our knowledge of culture and society. They discuss topical events and private concerns, revealing the life of the author, or at least as much as the author wants us to know. Anna Seward's juvenile letters are no exception. They illuminate not only Seward's life, but also give fascinating insights into the manners and mores of mid-eighteenth-century England. Seward's main body of letter-books, which date from 1784-1807,[5] have a lot to tell us about the life and culture of her time. She was one of Britain's foremost Augustan poets before the Romantics' philosophies took hold and changed our perception of what a poem should be. The Augustans fell out of favour and Seward's elaborate poetry and eloquently written letters lost their appeal until more recent times.[6] The published letter-books are easily accessible today, but the juvenile letters to "Emma" and the sermons are works that have remained unexplored.

During this period, autobiography tended to be viewed as egotistical, but published letters were an acceptable form of introspection and also a means of engaging with wider issues. Personal letters can be of particular value when they are read as a complete collection. Helen Maria Williams' account of the French Revolution is in the form of letters written to a friend.[7] In this way, Williams attempts to convey the sentience of the images that "press upon [her] mind"[8] as she gives an eye-witness account through anecdotal narrative. She also demands the collaboration of her reader: "It is much easier to feel what is sublime than to paint it", she writes, "and all I shall be able to give you is a faint sketch, to which your own imagination must add colouring and spirit".[9] The era also saw the early beginnings of the novel genre with many authors, such as Samuel Richardson and Frances Burney, using the influential epistolary form or, "writing to the moment", which allowed for self-reflection as well as introducing various other points of view. An efficient postal service made it easy for friends to exchange letters regularly and literary coteries flourished. As a social practice, letters were a non-threatening literary form that worked particularly well for women. Male-produced conduct books guided young girls towards mind-improving reading, which invariably included letters. In his *Plan for the Conduct of Female Education*,[10] for example, the Lunar Society founder Erasmus Darwin recommends Lady Mary Wortley Montagu's letters[11] as an aid to good writing. Darwin deemed the letters representative of a body of work that was, "chaste, distinct . . . [and] not overloaded with metaphors".[12] He closes his Plan with a collection of letters from a mother to her daughters, which he classes the "Rudiments of Taste".[13]

Girls were encouraged to keep journals and these were often in the form of letters to an imaginary friend. Fifteen-year-old Frances Burney addressed her diary to "Nobody", writing:

> To Nobody, then will I write my Journal! since to Nobody can I be wholly unreserved—to Nobody can I reveal every thought, every wish of my Heart, with the most unlimited confidence, the most unremitting sincerity to the end of my Life![14]

Letters, either actual or journalised, recorded women's lives and emotions as and when experienced. Gina Luria Walker explains how Mary Hays believed that texts "embodied their writer".[15] To Hays, the letters she wrote to William Godwin provided a record of time past that might be relived in memory and that "testified . . . before she composed the lives of other women, [that] she had written her own life as she was living it".[16] Unlike Seward, Hays did not keep copy letters and deeply regretted the loss of her Godwin correspondence when she was unable to retrieve it after Godwin's death.

Anna Seward's Juvenile Letters

Anna Seward's published letter-books are a form of journal that traces the course of her intellectual life. She reproduced hundreds of those letters she considered most valuable to posterity in her letter-books, many of which were published posthumously by Archibald Constable of Edinburgh.[17] Her broad-ranging, frequently masculinist themes are testament to her engagement with many aspects of the intellectual world. She dips her pen into science, religion, politics, philosophy and the arts. The juvenile journal is different. It takes the form of a collection of thirty-nine letters dating from 1762, when Seward was nineteen years old, to 1768. The letters are addressed to "Emma". Naturally, as a nineteen-year-old, she writes of her social life in Lichfield; of the excitement of parties, balls, the theatre, duels, and gallant soldiers in scarlet uniform. Her adopted narrative persona is confident, offering advice on issues from reading material to lovers. Seward sets the scene to her musings with a letter that reveals the most important things in her life: friendship, intellect, sensibility, love, loyalty, literature. Believing this letter, and all the others, to be bona fide Scott embarked on his censorship, blue-pencilling Seward's advice to "Emma" about her soldier lover, Captain L—. This letter sets the scene for a fascinating account of eighteenth-century provincial life that is far more accessible with the deleted sections restored

than Scott's original published version. Seward writes with literary energy and an eye for vivid detail. Her excessive use of punctuation and underlining emphasises her passion, thus crafting her journal in the style of Pope: living, speaking and breathing. (Scott's sanitised, published sections modify and update the punctuation, thus removing the letters' immediacy). The journal closes satisfactorily with Seward's philosophical contemplations on the nature of writing with summer "in her full pride".

When Scott deleted the personal anecdotes, what remained was mostly literary debate. His later letters to Seward's relatives and lawyer confirm that he had an intense dislike of what he classed "gossip" and that he considered her personal references far too controversial for publication.[18] The literary debate is quite interesting in its own right as Seward's equivalent of coffee-house banter on topical issues, but Scott effectively censored a more subjective voice that told the histories of young women who were struggling for an education or attempting to negotiate the complex workings of the marriage market. Nowadays, Seward is sometimes portrayed as prolix and humourless and much of this lies in the general censorship of her writings. In terms of the journal, Scott excised Seward's observations on society and her complaints on the gendered inequalities of education and career, depriving us of anecdotes important to our knowledge of eighteenth-century culture. He deleted stories such as her father's rejection of suitors and her mother's embarrassment of her daughter's intellect.

It is clear from her many references that Seward was influenced by the epistolary novels of Samuel Richardson and Jean-Jacques Rousseau and there is a certain amount of literary embellishment at play in the letters. Some names are given, some not. Some events can be verified, others not. Quotations and random verse interlard topical debate and she gives painterly vignettes of neighbours, relatives and friends. There is also a sense of elegy in poignant sequences, such as when Seward tells the story of her sister Sarah's arranged marriage and early death. Many of the censored anecdotes have a strong metaphorical value with underlying themes familiar to women of the period. What appears superficially frivolous—fashion, manners and conventions—becomes emblematic of expectations for young women. How to conduct oneself at a ball and on the public walk, what was whispered behind fans at card parties, the behaviour of aristocrats at assemblies, pushy mothers attempting to bring their offspring to good marriages, all become pre-Austen indicators of how young women perceived their place in society. There are, in places, traces of an intimate connection between fashion and exploitation. Letters Thirteen and Seventeen, for example, show an observant Seward standing

at the periphery, watching events unfold before setting out her own opinions on subjects such as marriage, manipulation and repression. The two letters introduce a cast of characters depicted with the exquisite detail of miniature portraits. There is Mr. B—, the connoisseur, who courted Seward's sister Sarah and who became obsessed with the fashionable image of the Venus de Medici, a Hellenistic marble statue of the goddess Aphrodite that was considered to represent the perfect woman. Mr. B— married a woman who was proportionally the same as the Venus, thus objectifying her as his acquisition. At the same time, Seward displaces her own anxiety over joining the ranks of "old Maids" by making gentle fun of her sister's skinny arms and legs that saved her from this man. In contrast to Mr. B—'s "living statue", Seward introduces a confident young woman, Miss Harriet D—, in Letter Seventeen, whose resemblance to a Greek statue is in her risqué clothing. Harriet's diaphanous dress is key to her bold personality and emphasises her emancipation through the shape of her natural body, rather than through society's restricted, corseted and boned silhouette. Harriet's complete disregard of social manners indicates that she probably has greater control over her marital prospects than her conventional friends. There are many other stories that reveal social interactions and constraints faced by women.

Seward tends to present her characters and anecdotes by using various writerly techniques that give her journal all the appearance of an exchange of letters, writing of people's appearance and behaviour and building stories around them. To complete her depiction, she often turns to the language of portraiture or likens her subjects to specific paintings. The visual aspect of her descriptions is a further link to Pope's sentient letters. Seward's journal breathes life into the description of inanimate objects; a statue, a dress, a painting. It helps us place new meanings on individual behaviours, particularly concerning the construction of identity. In his poem, Pope portrays letters as "warm from the soul", and the intimate nature of Seward's journal persuades us to take a closer look at the relation between object and its sentient value through the warmth and the immediacy of the letter form.

The Sermons

There was something very disturbing about the notion of women preaching in eighteenth-century England. When James Boswell told Samuel Johnson that he had been to a Quaker meeting and heard a woman preach, Johnson's sarcasm conveys the general view, "Sir, a woman's preaching is like a dog's walking on his hinder legs. It is not done well;

but you are surprized to find it done at all".[19] The famous aphorism points out the disapproval of women having any voice at all in any branch of the church. Seward's four sermons are therefore unique in the tenure of their authorship. Although the elders of dissenting religions, such as Quakers and Methodists, generally encouraged women to write sermons and preach, the established church was more concerned with submissive female piety; the Anglican pulpit was masculine and authoritative and the status of women was deemed inferior. If women were covert contributors to the writing of Anglican sermons, the probability of them using their own thoughts is negligible. For an Anglican woman to intrude into this male domain with her own ideology, she would have to mount a challenge to the traditional structures and in wishing to publish the sermons under her own name, albeit posthumously, Seward was doing exactly that.[20] As with letters, sermons were a popular means of communication in the eighteenth century. Jennifer Farooq details their significance, explaining how they were very much part of everyday life. Congregators often took notes and preachers might circulate their manuscript sermons. Farooq confirms the particular importance of published sermons, writing, "[they provided] not only a moral compass, but also a source of entertainment, a method of fundraising and promotion, and a forum for politics."[21] Anna Seward, who was the daughter of the canon of Lichfield Cathedral, composed her sermons in secrecy, telling only her closest friends. As in the journal, words are underlined for the clergyman's emphasis and all four sermons indicate courageous writing that engages with a unique perspective of Seward's literary output. It is clear that she was more concerned with the eloquence and philosophical meaning of sermons, rather than their didactic value, which she claimed to dislike.[22]

Seward's four sermons are printed here in full. Sermon Two, written in 1789, refers to passages from "The Book of Job" in a moving memorial address for a young woman, Miss Wishaw, delivered by Revd. John Mackleston at St. Mary's in Lichfield. The focus is a reflection on the innocence of youth and a warning against man's frailty in the face of "dangerous passions". Sermon Three, which is undated, provides a philosophical piece based on "The Book of Isaiah" and Sermon Four (c.1783) displays a strong literary dynamic, centring on the life and moral example of Daniel. Sermon One, perhaps the most interesting, has a more subversive tone. The sermon's content is both a literary expression of self-identity and of the wider implications of women intervening in traditionally masculine areas. Seward's narrative here is part-sermon, part-polemics, as she sets herself above "her" congregation, employs her literary skills and uses the unwary minister as her spokesperson to

encourage women away from domesticity. Delivered annually to a congregation of charitable women, it is clearly an attempt to motivate the women to take control of their own lives. The sermon is based on the text of Lemuel, which is described in "The Proverbs" as a female prophecy. King Lemuel is advised by his mother on female virtue and industry and, in much the same way, Seward's sermon promotes the notion of fulfilment through education and employment.

Despite her father's high rank, Seward had no firm allegiance to the Church of England and she was not involved in the charitable work herself. When young, she was determined to join the Quaker movement, but was overruled by her father, who locked her in her room until she relented. She even asserted that she was no great reader of published sermons, which may have been a modest claim as she appears knowledgeable of both genre and writers. In later life, when she was wealthy, independent, and supported by an inheritance and her writing, she was naturally generous to her friends and family but, tellingly, she left no charitable bequest to the church or to any other institution in her will. Naturally, these unprecedented writings were thought too subversive for publication as their author was a woman. Introducing them into the public domain in this volume will help provide valuable insights into women's unacknowledged achievements and also their silencing.

Notes

[1] When Scott first visited Seward in Lichfield, he was in the process of completing his *Life of Dryden*, a work of several volumes that incorporated Dryden's correspondence. In choosing Scott as her editor, no doubt Seward expected the same careful treatment of her manuscripts, but Scott's indifferent editing and his heavy censorship effectively removed the vitality from Seward's juvenile letters and did little to promote her posthumous reputation. See also, Walter Scott, *The Works of John Dryden: Now First Collected in Eight Volumes, Illustrated with Notes Historical and Explanatory and a Life of the Author* (London: William Miller; Edinburgh: James Ballantyne, 1808).

[2] Charles Simpson, "Letter to Walter Scott" (9 April 1809). National Library of Scotland, MSS 865, folios 138-9.

[3] Henry White, "Letter to Walter Scott" (2 July 1809). National Library of Scotland, MSS 865, folio 133.

[4] Alexander Pope, *Alexander Pope: Selected Poetry* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), 57.

[5] Anna Seward, *Letters of Anna Seward: Written Between the Years 1784 and 1807*. In Six Volumes (Edinburgh: Archibald Constable and Company; London: Longman, Hurst et al, 1811).

[6] Interest has revived in Seward's works on both sides of the Atlantic. See for example, Claudia Thomas Kairoff, *Anna Seward and the End of the Eighteenth Century* (Baltimore, Maryland: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2012); Anna Seward, *Anna Seward's Life of Erasmus Darwin*, edited by Philip K. Wilson, Elizabeth A Dolan and Malcolm Dick (Studley, Warwickshire: Brewin Books, 2010); Anna Seward, *The Collected Poems of Anna Seward*. In two volumes, edited by Lisa L Moore (Abingdon and New York: Routledge, 2016).

[7] Helen Maria Williams, *Letters Written in France in the Summer 1790, to a Friend in England; Containing Various Anecdotes Relative to the French Revolution*, edited by Neil Fraistat and Susan S. Lanser (Ontario: Broadview, 2001).

[8] Helen Maria Williams, *Letters*, 63.

[9] Helen Maria Williams, *Letters*, 63.

[10] Erasmus Darwin, *A Plan for the Conduct of Female Education, in Boarding Schools, Private Families, and Public Seminaries. To which are added, Rudiments of Taste in a Series of Letters from a Mother to her Daughters* (Philadelphia: John Ormond, 1798).

[11] See Lady Mary Wortley Montagu, *The Turkish Embassy Letters*, edited by Daniel O'Quinn and Teresa Hefferman (New York and Essex: Broadview Press, 2012).

[12] Erasmus Darwin, *A Plan for the Conduct of Female Education*, 52.

[13] Erasmus Darwin, "Rudiments of Taste", *A Plan for the Conduct of Female Education*, 199-307. The letters are predicated on the fashionable idea of young women emulating the noble Roman matron.

[14] Frances Burney, *Journals and Letters of Frances Burney*, edited by Peter Sabor, Lars E. Troide, and Victoria Kortes-Papp (London: Penguin, 2001), 1.

[15] Gina Luria Walker, *Mary Hays (1759-1843): The Growth of a Woman's Mind* (Aldershot: Ashgate Publishing Ltd., 2006), 235.
[16] Gina Luria Walker, *Mary Hays*, 235.
[17] The editor of Seward's posthumous letter collection was Archibald Constable, the Scottish publisher. He published approximately half of the letter-books Seward left for him in her will. According to Robert Southey, who knew Seward personally, Constable failed in his duty as an editor as the resultant publication contained, "some of her hastiest and most violent expressions, which now pass for her settled judgement, because the letters in which they were qualified or retracted do not appear". Robert Southey, "Letter to Walter Savage Landor" (5 June 1811). *Selections from the Letters of Robert Southey*. In four volumes, edited by John Warter Wood (London: Longman, Brown, Green and Longman, 1856), II:226.
[18] The uncensored sections of letters were eventually published together with Seward's posthumous poetry volumes. See Anna Seward, *Poetical Works of Anna Seward, With Extracts of Her Literary Correspondence*. Three volumes, edited by Walter Scott. (Edinburgh: John Ballantyne; London: Longman, Hurst, Rees and Orme, 1810).
[19] James Boswell, *The Life of Samuel Johnson*. Edited by David Womersley (London: Penguin, 2009), Kindle edition, 315.
[20] Sean Gill confirms that women of the Church of England were seen as more dependent on the "comforts and consolations of religion" than men. The Church's teaching incorporated the notion of the woman's role defined as wife and mother. Sean Gill, *Women and the Church of England from the Eighteenth Century to the Present* (London: SPCK, 1994), 11.
[21] Jennifer Farooq, *Preaching in Eighteenth-Century London* (Woodbridge, Suffolk and Rochester, NY: The Boydell Press, 2013), 1-2.
[22] Seward explained to her friend, the poet and playwright Edward Jerningham, the delight she had in observing her own words delivered by the authoritative figure of the clergyman, writing, "Without the audience knowing that the composition was not the Preachers, I had the satisfaction of witnessing their attention and their tears. Indeed you have mistaken me in supposing I wish to restrain the pathos or the energy of pulpit eloquence". Anna Seward. "Letter to Edward Jerningham", "Letters of Anna Seward to Edward Jerningham. 1789-1804". Huntington Library. MSS JE 756-780.

EXTRACTS FROM MISS SEWARD'S LITERARY CORRESPONDENCE[1]

Letter One
Lichfield,[2] Oct. 1762.

There is surely, my dear friend, a certain magnetism which attracts dispositions to those which resemble them, and, in some sort, supplies the place of long experienced good qualities. Let us recollect our first conversations with people whose age and situation in life had parity with ours. It is, perhaps, not often that any of them shall be found to have passed in absolute indifference, though the degree of attraction or repulsion in each might be widely different.

I am strongly tempted to rely upon this involuntary bias. Young as I am, my experience must be very limited; but hitherto I have not often found these first-sight impressions deceive me. On the contrary, the disappointments I have met with in [sic] my friendships generally resulted from people with whom circumstances of mutual convenience had united me in a slow progressive regard, which had gradually subdued the force of primary impressions that were not in their favour.

Yet I must not permit you to suppose that my youthful, perhaps enthusiastic credulity, extends so far as to adopt the idea, either in friendship or love, of the one only kindred spirit destined to subdue our hearts, if of the other sex, or to engross our whole stock of amity, if of our own; but I do religiously believe that Nature, or rather the God of Nature, has formed the human mind into different classes, and that there can be no enduring happiness in any connection for dispositions which are not of the same order of mind.

In love, the impermanent pleasures of the eye eternally mislead uncongenial spirits into bands which are legally indissoluble.[3] Hence that matrimonial infelicity which we often see exist between persons, neither of whom are unamiable; where each, in a better-suited connection, might have found that comfort which they lost, by not attending to the dissimilarity of their tastes and pursuits; a dissimilarity which ought to have shewn [sic] them the impossibility of finding it in each other's society, and have restrained them from wandering out of their own class.[4]

Friendship, less influenced than love by the intoxication of the eye, is less apt to lead the soul out of her bounds; yet sometimes, in the choice of friends, even thinking minds are dazzled by the glitter of superficial attractions, and caught by the fascination of a smile; and oftener still, as I before observed, circumstances of convenience, consciousness of obligation, or reverence for imputed virtues, shall overrule the want of native sympathy in the formation of friendship.

Such friendship, however, is mighty apt to be suddenly dissolved. Their acquaintance wonder, and the parties themselves wonder at the ease with which they had mutually renounced communication, that, from its frequency, might well be supposed to have been important to their happiness. But, in reality, there is little marvel in the matter. Friendship not having, like marriage, a legal indissolubility, the connection which convenience or accident had formed, we are not to wonder if convenience or accident dissolves.

Still less ought we to wonder that attachments quickly vanish which were founded upon the airy nothings of superficial attractions.[5] They are, indeed, but as "the baseless fabric of a vision".[6] Yet it were well, if, like a vision, they left no wreck behind.[7]—Alas! They are too apt to leave wrecks, most properly so called, which shall prove, through life, the long-repeated folly of ill-placed confidence.

And now, dear Emma, are you not ready to ask your friend wherefore she moralizes thus sententiously, at an age when it is more natural, perhaps more pleasing, to feel lively impressions, than to analyze them? There is a wherefore. I have been called romantic. It is my wish that you should better know the heart in which you possess so lively an interest.

My sensibilities are poignant;– my credulity has all the warmth of youthful ingenuousness; but, in truth, the romance of your friend's disposition did not survive her last robe-coat above a couple of years.

That fervent inclination, which, in our first interview, seemed to attach us mutually, has, I flatter myself, a very different foundation from the giddy violence of novel-reading misses,[8] who plight their first-sight friendships with solemn earnestness, because they think it pretty and becoming to have plighted friendships, and because their vanity pants to impart the conquests of the preceding ball. Such nymphs should have this motto on their samplers:

> "We swear eternal truth–but say, my friend,
> "What day, next week, th'eternity shall end?"[9]

I can recollect, ah! it is not such an age ago, when I protested friendship a little in this style; when my pleased heart swelled with conscious importance at the idea of exciting tender sighs and penseroso glances[10] at fourteen, and longed to disclose the triumph.

Though this was in my sallad [sic] days, as Cleopatra says "when I was green in judgement,"[11] yet, believe me, I still blush for that solemn farce of professed confidence which introduced the disclosure of the mighty secret.

Our minds have, I trust, more lasting bands of union. They are, shall I not venture to say, amiable, generous, and sincere; and, what will secure duration to these bands of the same class? Amity towards each other descends to us by inheritance; our mothers passed the halcyon days of youth together. Loveliness was around them like a light, and envy never made them shrink from the lustre of each other's graces. They said, when they last met, a little before the death of your excellent parent, "our children will love each other." Shall they be mistaken? My heart says no! and I dare trust the kind response of yours.

And now, that you may not be absolutely frozen by any apprehension, that sprightly Miss in her teens, is metamorphosed into a rigid Moralizer, "full of wise saws & modern instances."[12] *I must tell you I have heard of your conquests at Shrewsbury—that handsome Cap*[t]*. L— lays his laurels at your feet,*[13] *if indeed he has any to lay. Is your heart impregnable to this new Invader, or has he the glory of having thrown the Garrison into a little disorder? But, without any more figurative expressions, what sort of Man is he?—handsome, I am told, extremely;– but what is his Mind?—of the right Class?—Perhaps I am too curious. If you think so, let me be corrected by your silence on the subject.*

My Father desires his comp[ts]*.*[14]*—my Mother*[15] *bids me say kind things to you from her;– my intelligent & amiable Sister*[16] *assures you of her love, & good wishes—and the Blossom Honora,*[17] *intreats [sic] that she may not be forgotten in the Group of your Friends,—Child that she is, but 12 years old, her sensibility, the exertion of her Mind, wou'd do honor to the ripest years—&, for her truth,*

> *"Ten thousand oaths upon record,*
> *Are not more sacred than her word.*[18]

Adieu, dearest Emma![19] *Do not be afraid that this moralizing Spirit of mine will give you a grave Duenna,*[20] *instead of a confidential Friend of nineteen.*[21] *I am not so romantic as those who dislike me*[22] *may alledge [sic]; but I do not wish to abate one atom of my native*[23] *enthusiasm; of those tender & lively hopes, which are the sources of so many delights.*[24]

My Spirit indulges[25] *the luxury of their charming day-dreams—nor is my scarlet fever intirely [sic] past*[26]*—an epaulet on the shoulder, & a black ribbon in the hat, have not yet lost all their power over the heart of your friend.*[27]

PS. You talk'd of reading the new Eloisa—throw it aside, I beseech you.[28]