DE QUINCEY AND HIS PUBLISHERS
The Letters of Thomas De Quincey
to His Publishers,
and other Letters,
1819-1832

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### The Letters of Thomas De Quincey

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Abstract of Thesis

This work is an edition of letters covering Thomas De Quincey's periodical press context and his relationships with his publishers, from 1819 to 1832. The main focus has naturally been De Quincey's work for his two main publishers during this period; namely, Taylor and Hessey, and William Blackwood. However, I have included all material which relates to a number of other publishers and also to friends and associates, wherever, in the case of the latter, new light is shed on De Quincey's life. It is the aim of the edition to include everything, from manuscripts and from published sources, which falls within these categories. Extended notes form a running commentary on the writing and publishing context to the letters; drawing on both published and unpublished documents. As well as elucidating points in the edited letters, my commentary examines discursively a number of broader points which relate to the production of text, whether in letters or articles. Included are such linked topics as the social formation of authorship; the cultural context to the production of text; text as credit; the politics of (auto)biography; and textual and financial debt, etc., etc.

Declaration:
a. This thesis has been entirely composed by the undersigned.
b. All work on the thesis has been carried out by the undersigned.

Signed: Barry C. Symonds, 1994
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Special thanks to Geoffrey Carnall, at Edinburgh University, under whose auspices this thesis has been prepared. His help and his toleration of my frequent delays and changes of mind are much appreciated. To the English Department at Manchester University I owe thanks for the provision of academic shelter for the past three years.

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This work is dedicated to the memory of my parents.

A NOTE ON TEXTS

Nobody can have much to do with De Quincey's writings without soon becoming aware of the general lack of adequate texts. Most, though by no means all, of his work was originally presented in newspapers or periodicals, and only about three-quarters of this has been republished in book form. Between 1850 and 1890 his collected writings were published in a number of editions. All were arranged on thematic lines and all attempted, in one way or another, to present a rounded, tidy opus; pre-shaping a reader's response within the confining margins of category. This is as true for De Quincey's own Selections Grave and Gay series of desultorily revised pieces as for those collections produced by other editors. David Masson, whose 1890's text is generally accepted as the standard one, has somewhat confused De Quinceyan scholarship. He offers an extended editorial base which includes a puzzling compound of original, revised and self-edited material; though, his edition remains the most complete
one available, and is one that I have referred to often. I have commented briefly on A. H. Japp's editorial work in note 1 to my introduction. Although Japp offers many works by De Quincey which would otherwise be unavailable (see Japp/ in my bibliography), there is some mystery about the form of what exactly is on offer. Even a quick comparison of some of the manuscripts Japp edited for his Posthumous Works of De Quincey (many of which are now held by Dove Cottage in Grasmere), with his published text, will give adequate cause for concern. As with the letters which he has included in his biographical studies of De Quincey, here also he mangles his text, joins unrelated fragments with his own linking passages, and revises and censors at will.

A new collected edition of De Quincey's works is currently in preparation at Manchester University, but won't, alas, be available until 1997-98. In view of the current state of De Quincey's texts, I have been very fluid in the way I have offered my references. If the extent of the range of texts that I have drawn from for De Quincey's own writings seems irregular, I can only plead that the range available is much more eccentric. Grevel Lindop's text of the 1821 Confessions (Conf./1821) is the only work I have used consistently, and I have, of course, drawn on the original periodicals wherever appropriate. I have always tried to match context of reference to type of text referred to, even if it has meant citing more than one work on occasion. A full list of the abbreviations used in my edition is included in the bibliography.
INTRODUCTION

This edition of De Quincey's letters represents the first systematic attempt to locate the writer in his periodical press context. Most of the letters have never been published before and a number have only recently come to light. They cover a period from De Quincey's last days with the Westmorland Gazette (1819), on to his first uneven connection with Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine (1820-21), through his years with the London Magazine (1821-25), to the end of his second term as a contributor to Blackwood's in the early 1830's. Other publishing concerns figure en route and take their place, with greater or lesser significance, amongst these landmarks. Nothing has been omitted from the correspondence or the annotations which bears either on De Quincey's relationships with his various publishers, or the texts that these generated.

Little work has been done on De Quincey's correspondence, not least, perhaps, because, as his most recent biographer put it, "the great mass of papers formerly held by De Quincey's descendants has been dispersed to the four quarters of the globe, some into private hands and some into public collections". Whilst much of De Quincey's correspondence with the firm of Blackwood has remained intact, most of his letters to the editors of the London Magazine were sold by John Taylor's descendants in the early 1900's. Every effort has been made to bring together copies of as much of this holograph material as possible, supplementing it with details from published sources and sale catalogues. Although details of manuscripts' sources for De Quincey's works are available, locations for the letters, beyond the major collections, have not been outlined. My single greatest debt in the initial stages of the project lies with Barbara Rosenbaum, one of the editors of the fourth volume of the Index of English Literary Manuscripts. Without the benefit of knowledge gleaned from her own correspondence with dozens of British and American
archives, my work would have been very much more difficult. The line of access to material which lay beyond the reach of even this information has been, in some cases, labyrinthine. From Maine Historical Society to a tin trunk in a Derbyshire solicitor's office, the process has been a perplexed one.

Although I have presented only just over 120 letters formally, I have seen at least a copy or a transcription of all extant manuscript material, covering all periods of De Quincey's life; amounting to about 1,300 letters, written between 1799 and 1859. What doesn't appear in the main text feeds the commentary, wherever appropriate. In addition I have, as far as possible, looked at related family letters, and researched all relevant publishing sources. Results from the latter have been uneven. Whilst major collections of material exist for Blackwood and to a lesser extent, and more dispersedly, for Taylor and Hessey, other records have not survived. Most of Charles Knight's publishing records, for example, were lost in the blitz, and the larger amount of David Blackie's papers have gone to ground. (My bibliography lists all of the archival sources used in preparing this edition.)

It is difficult to offer De Quincey as a great letter-writer. In Robert Halsband's hierarchy he is decidedly to be placed amongst writers better "noted for their other writings", than with writers "noted mainly for their letters". The letters, though, hold considerable interest, not just for the details they give us of De Quincey's relationship with his various publishers, but also for the way they provide hints at the enabling conditions of his articles. By De Quincey's own account it was the heedless demands of the press that drive "a man into hurried writing", shaping his magazine papers with its "overmastering precipitation". The letters disclose a much more ambiguous situation. Editorial pressure or not, the following statement, by a fellow-writer, can stand as a fairly representative counter, ab extra, to De Quincey's own claims:
"Have you heard lately of that curious production of genius De Quincey? I suppose still writing for Maga [Blackwood's] at the rate of a quarter of a page per day". De Quincey's phenomenology of time was obviously not the same as that of his publishers. On the other hand, if the ad hoc nature of magazine writing needed further illustration, it is given liberal underscoring in De Quincey's letters. From the Confessions of 1821 - "some passages can easily be left out of what I send [...] Yet one is about the best dream" - to a book review of 1832/33 - "having totally forgotten the Art. and [revising] it therefore entirely as a new and unknown tale [...]" - the demands from within the productive nexus are sporadic and variable.  

The ideological nature of the cultural constructs which articulate the creations of the writer/publisher relationship, has been examined in some depth by Jon Klancher. By analysing the social semiotics of the journals of the age, Klancher has exposed the various processes by which publishers sought to exploit a self-created taste for their own products. A periodical's readership, Klancher concludes, "learns to operate those interpretive strategies through which it can 'read' a social world, a symbolic universe, a textual field, and to discover its own purpose within them [...] a powerful transauthorial discourse echoes through [a periodical's] protean collocation of styles, topics, and voices. The readers gathered by this discourse form not only an empirical audience, but a collective interpreter mapping out the cultural physiognomy of Britain".  

This edition of letters shows just how inchoate and brittle such a didactic format could sometimes be for both publishers and contributors. De Quincey is hesitant and confident by turns about the form his own "discourse" should take. Sometimes he could confidently advise a publisher that papers on political economy will most promote the sales of his journal (the London Magazine) "in the higher classes" (see 21 September, 1823 below). It wasn't, though, to be any sort of
political economy but "fundamental views in" political economy (ibid., De Quincey's italics). On other occasions he could send in hopelessly extensive lists of potential articles for his publisher to select from, in the hope that one of them would match the politico-intellectual concerns of the magazine (e.g., 3 March, 1830 below).

During the latter years of John Taylor's editorship of the London Magazine, a situation began to develop which is both revealing and slightly absurd in what it says about the supposedly organic nature of cultural complexes. In 1823 the periodical had begun to lose a sense of direction and gradually - and by default - to assume an overtly utilitarian bias, which would eventually steer it into editorial arms that also embraced the Westminster Review. While the magazine slowly lost most of its original, highly distinctive contributors, however, its readership remained fairly constant; suggesting that the expectations of these subscribers had been shaped as much by the London's cultural development, subject to gradual evolution anyway, as by its local history. De Quincey, the much-liked "X.Y.Z." of the magazine ("one of ['our readers'] favourite writers"), had remained with the magazine some time after the departure of many of his original colleagues (Charles Lamb was to be another, more sporadic, contributor, whose writings promoted some semblance of continuity). However, not only had De Quincey's constancy probably helped to preserve, reasonably intact, the readership of the London, it had also, conversely, served to alienate contributors: "[John] Taylor has lately refused a paper of Proctor's & one of Reynolds's, & kept back Darley's reply [...] for the purpose of introducing that thrice-double demonaic the oeconomical opium-eater. Exit London".

Particularly ironic in all this is the fact that De Quincey's enthusiasm for the "dismal science" of political economy, especially his advocacy of Ricardian economic doctrine, aligned him much more closely in the 1820's and
early 1830's with a supposedly alien liberal, Whig, utilitarian ideology than with his own native Toryism. Edmund Baxter has shown how an obsessional fear of self-erasure is a concomitant of De Quincey's preoccupation with an "alien" science. One might add that political affiliations were much more important to De Quincey in his textual self-constructs than in his textual contexts; a fact that might in itself have induced considerable anxieties on matters of self-permanence. The letters show that he wasn't just a passing acquaintance of the politically liberal publishers, reformers, educationists, and intellectuals of his age, the like of John Taylor, Charles Knight, Matthew Davenport Hill, William Hamilton, etc. There is also evidence to show that he attempted to access the burgeoning mass cheap-books market through that great liberal educative organ, the Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge... at the same time as he expressed interest in writing for the rival Tory mass publications (the subject is developed in my commentary: see below, for example, 31 January, 1830, note 6; 3 March, 1830, note 15; and 10 March, 1830).

Few of De Quincey's strategies for marketing his texts are as naive as they might sometimes appear, even if some of them were the product of desperation. His polymathic talents needed an equally broad-based medium of publication. Both the London Magazine and Blackwood's gave him this for some time. It became obvious after a while in each case, however, that there was to be less and less fluidity of exchange between the various departments of knowledge open to his papers. The professionalisation of knowledge and the growth of specialisation within the periodicals, were developments which meant he had to stretch his canvass by disseminating his texts over a wider range of publications. The Ricardian apologist gained himself much credit, for instance, as a special correspondent on political economy with a number of journals. It was to be a similar matter with his
knowledge of German culture, which appeared in various forms in almost all of the magazines and journals for which he wrote. I have tried to elaborate on this in my notes, but it is worth quoting two summarising remarks on the subject by De Quincey himself. The first comes from a fragment of an unpublished *Blackwood's* review, and probably dates from the late 1830's:

"From the growing demand upon the public attention in journals continually multiplying themselves by subdividing their separate fields of jurisdiction; whilst no increase at all is going on in the range of vision for each individual reader, - the thing to be read eternally widening itself, whilst the eye which reads is eternally within stationary limits - it has become difficult in excess for one twentieth part of what is produced to catch even a random glance from the current eye".  

The second can be found in an article De Quincey published in 1853:

"As the reading public and the thinking public, is every year outgrowing more and more notoriously, the mere learned public, it becomes every year more and more the right of the former public to give the law preferably to the latter public [...] In past generations, no pains were taken to make explanations that were not called for by the learned public. All other readers [...] formed a mob, [now] An attention to the unlearned part of an audience [...] rests upon a basis of absolute justice".

It is beyond the scope of this introduction to advance a detailed argument on the changing ideological constructs that shaped De Quincey's developing periodical writings. It is self-evident, however, that the discursive mode of the 1821 magazine piece, the *Confessions*, with its carefully modulated, ironic feel of familiarity and coterie exclusivity (set by its opening address "To the Reader"), is distant from the vaguely uncomfortable feeling of bewilderment to be found in the unpublished 1830's review. It is further still from the
"democratic" though still ironic tone of the 1853 extract, which is in fact aimed at the "unlearned reader" of a paper titled "On the Supposed Scriptural Expression for Eternity". Despite a continuity in creating ironic distances between writer and reader from the 1820's to 1850's, the changed context to the various modes of address is seen to register as many dissimilarities as similarities.

Foucault has told us that modes of being are produced and defined by an epistemic process which delimits and demarcates fields of knowledge; defining our cultural codes and effectively enabling a discourse of experience. 21 "Man", he concludes, "had been a figure occurring between two modes of language; or, rather, he was constituted only when language, having been situated within representation and, as it were, dissolved in it, freed itself from that situation at the cost of its own fragmentation: man composed his own figure in the interstices of that fragmented language". 22 It is to the issue of figurative structuration, and its links with one element of the reputed editorial meta-construct just mentioned, that I would briefly like to turn in my concluding paragraphs.

Jon Klancher has written at length on the institutionalised nature of journals, which, he argues, tried to merge "writer, editor, and publisher into a corporate, collective 'author'". 23 This item of ideological apparatus has been well located and criticised by Julius Hare, a sometime associate of De Quincey: "A tribe of writers are fond of merging their individuality in a multitudinous we. They think they may pass themselves off unnoticed [...] This is one of the affectations with which the literature of the day is tainted [...] The plural we, though not seldom used dictatorially, rather diminishes than increases the weight of what is said". 24 The interesting point about Hare's criticism is that the writer finds the use of the editorial "we" just about "warrantable" in the reviews, but even in this limited case can't allow that it means "literature". 25 This way of
thinking is also evident in the "Preface" that De Quincey wrote in 1853 for his Selections Grave and Gay; where he relocates his (usually revised) magazine articles well away from their earlier context wherever possible.\textsuperscript{26} It must, however, be evident anyway from what has been written above, that De Quincey's approach to principles of corporate identity was at the very least ambiguous, whatever the demands of the ideological machine, and slip in and out of the system as he did. My notes carry manifold examples of an author as noticeable for his absence as for his presence in an organic magazine structure. The letters themselves carry a plethora of plans and proposals which effectively have to stand in lieu of the finished product. Protestations of loyalty, flexibly applied at best, bear comparable overtones of displacement.

Textual withdrawal is sometimes indicated in the "Lion's Head" references to De Quincey in the London Magazine, where a promise or an apology is the literal substitute for work in progress; for example, "Our friend X.Y.Z. we are sorry to say, is too ill to be able to follow up the subject this month".\textsuperscript{27} De Quincey's frequent appearances in the Noctes sketches of Blackwood's from 1823 as "The English Opium-Eater", hold similar implications. Indeed, on more than one occasion De Quincey's physical absence from the magazine is announced by reference to his metaphorical substitute: "Opium-Eater! [...] when he wons [dwells] in Westmoreland, he forgets Maga".\textsuperscript{28} The appropriation of a designation that should have been De Quincey's own literary property, by J. G. Lockhart and John Wilson (individually and jointly writers of the Noctes), represents a peculiarly Blackwoodian type of theft.\textsuperscript{29} The point I have tried to make in my annotations is that it wasn't so much that De Quincey's various textual signatures weren't usually editorially integrated into a magazine's structure, but more that his resistance to such systematisation was as great as his surrender to it. (There is the further point to be made here that, as my notes show, it was the eventual absence of a central editorial principle in the London in the
latter part of John Taylor's editorship, that was to be blamed for the magazine's downfall.)

If De Quincey himself was later to adopt a peculiarly ambivalent attitude to his most distinctive marketing device, "The English Opium-Eater", accepting and rejecting it by turns, then his publishers were to be much more concerned to use this promotional construct to the full (see 21 September, 1823, note 10 below). De Quincey's unpropertied connection with his own device was to have some curious results. The publisher William Blackwood, for example, was infuriated by the success that his rivals, Taylor and Hessey, had with the Confessions, a work initially promised to him (see 2 November, 1821, note 1 below). It must have been even more galling for him to see the London publishers exploiting the "magic prefix of by the Opium Eater" to the full (see 19 November, 1823, note 7 below). Taylor and Hessey's sense of ownership of their literary property was acute and their control of copyright firm: "we do not like the appearance, even, of losing an Author for whom we have published, or a Work which we have first brought out". The re-emergence of the English Opium-Eater, textual credit from the London intact, in Blackwood's (in 1826), the year after the London publishers had sold their magazine, was a reverse they would not have savoured.

If, as N. N. Feltes has shown, the copyright laws of the age created an alienable (i.e., marketable) property right in what he has termed the "commodity-text", authorial textuality itself could develop an amorphous, infinitely variable commodity mark of its own. The matter of ownership of De Quincey's alienated literary property, in both senses, was to reappear with some regularity during his lifetime. He was himself to give a sign of his own anxiety over it in the Selections "Preface". One "obstacle", he notes there, to the republishing of his magazine papers in book form, had been in part "the shifting state of the law which regulated literary property, and especially the property in periodical literature". Given that this "obstacle", which centred on
property-rights in the Confessions, came close to putting a stop to the Selections series at one point, its implications were serious.\textsuperscript{33}

On an earlier occasion, copyright problems seem to have had a direct shaping effect on De Quincey's text. Indeed in some ways they prevented the writer from making full use of his originating commodity-text, the Confessions. When De Quincey published his Suspiria De Profundis (subtitled Being a Sequel to the Confessions of an English Opium-Eater) in Blackwood's, in 1845, it had always been the intention of both writer and publisher eventually to offer its compound sequence in book form. However, while De Quincey was willing to rely on the inherent power of the original text to carry a powerful residual textual charge in the proposed one-volume Suspiria, his publishers weren't. Blackwood wanted to print the "'Confessions' [... ] along with the Continuation after it has been in the Magazine"\textsuperscript{34}, and duly contacted the copyright holder of the former, John Taylor. Taylor's side of the ensuing correspondence hasn't survived, but one can tell from letters written between various members of the Blackwood family that it wasn't conciliatory.\textsuperscript{35} The recalcitrance of the London publisher, whose asking price for the copyright was one that the Blackwoods wouldn't pay, meant that the Edinburgh publishers were left with a commodity-name but no ready-made commodity-text. De Quincey's Suspiria series was hobbled from the beginning, eventually interrupted by the copyright dispute - a "knock-down blow", in De Quincey's words\textsuperscript{36} - and finally discontinued.

I have dealt with De Quincey's own attitude to his textual designations in some detail below (see, e.g., 21 September, 1823, note 10). It is worth noting now, however, that his ambivalence towards his most famous trademark, the English Opium-Eater, probably originated not so much in his antipathy to its resonant suggestions of drug-addiction, as in an aversion to the way it located him firmly in the ambit of the magazines; a mode of connection which both paid him and
pained him. Even the book publication of the *Confessions* effectively served to return him to the periodicals as a marked and marketable man. It is hardly surprising that he could complain to the publisher William Tait, "others have called me - but I never called myself [...] the English Opium Eater. That was no designation of my inventing".\(^{37}\) As a description of a process of exclusion the account is highly accurate. Since, however, the letters and commentary also chart De Quincey's attempts to break into what was essentially a self-referential system, and to register "the commodity's consciousness of itself"\(^{38}\), its applicability must remain narrow.

I have focused fairly narrowly on De Quincey in this introduction; a necessary course, it seemed to me, in view of the broad canvass of the commentary which accompanies the letters. It goes without saying that the enabling conditions of De Quincey's magazine context were shared by his fellow-writers, differing strategic approaches notwithstanding. One only needs to browse randomly through the Blackwood Papers in the National Library of Scotland, or through the Brooke-Taylor and Cockerton archives in Derbyshire Record Office\(^{39}\), to become aware of the common lot of the periodical press writers of the age. The typically De Quinceyan paradigm of entrapment, of labouring simply in order to earn the wherewithal to continue labouring, is a common one. Attitudes to editors and to the social formation of authorship, likewise, show a commonality of sentiment. These reflect a more general sense of dislocation in modes of cultural practice; the corollary of an ideological shift from a proto-capitalist to a mid-capitalist social structure. De Quincey's letters betray a divided attitude to the new, fragmented productive nexus with its exploitative commercial context. His "gentlemanly" scholarliness seemed to to him to merit the security of enlightened patronage: what he got instead was the insecurity of hack journalism. Thus, the sycophantic outward form of his
letters to his publishers often disguises a more fundamental, if ambiguous, sense of grievance and even betrayal.

One of De Quincey's Edinburgh associates has drawn up an appropriately ironic image for both the larger and more local frames which site the subject of this edition. The last word will be his: "Editors are the Principle of Evil, for monodevilism has now given place to polydevilism - to believe poor De Quincey (who has been in the Carlton Jail lately) it has given way to pandevilism! He thinks 'the devil has at last got fairly the upper hand of The Other'!!".40

Notes to Introduction

1. De Quincey's letters to Wordsworth and his 1850's letters concerning the two collected editions then appearing, are the only other edited letters available (see Jordan/1962, and Bonner/1936). A. H. Japp, De Quincey's early biographer, has included a number of letters in his studies of De Quincey (Japp/1890; Japp/1891, Memls.). Even by the standards of his own age Japp is a highly unreliable editor; dividing the same letter between two dates in some cases, and adding his own linking passages between unrelated fragments in others, to name but two sins.


3. Rosenbaum/1982; The National Union Catalog of Manuscript Collections; Location Register of 18th and 19th century literary MSS and letters (ongoing), at Reading University.


7. NLS/MS 3525, f119 (Robert Macnish to D. M. Moir, 22 October, 1831).

8. a) British Library MS/Add. 37215, f34. b) NLS/MS 4717, ff45-50.
10. Ibid., pp.51-52.
14. For discussions of this topic see Tave/1966, pp.20-21; and Baxter/1990, Chapters 5 and 6 passim. My own commentary makes it clear that De Quincey's politics had an extrinsic and an intrinsic quality: the former dealt with ideas, and was infinitely flexible; the latter dealt with principles, and was fixed. Each could be manifested with equal enthusiasm, and each could have the ring of "conviction".
16. See Feltes/1989, pp.5-7, 40-56; Klancher/1987, pp.47-68. In their very different ways these two texts offer a good overview of the reader/writer/publisher axis in overlapping periods. Brake/1993 examines the way that 19th century periodical writers entered the social construct of authorship. Myers/1983 focuses on the specific case of Timothy Haydn; charting the professional development of the writer in ways that bear illuminating parallels with De Quincey's career.
17. That is, with the Westmorland Gazette, the London Magazine, the Edinburgh Saturday/Evening Post, and Blackwood's.
20. For an examination of this see Whale/1985. Whale's article is a useful one even if it disregards the enabling cultural
forces which shaped the political nature of the reader/writer relationship.

22. Ibid., p.386.
23. Klancher/1987, p.48 (and see Chapter 2, passim.).
25. Hare/1847, p.140.
29. See Murphy/1992 for an analysis of "Impersonation" in the Blackwood's Noctes.
32. Sel./vol.I, pp.ix-x.
34. NLS/MS 4073, ff149-50 (Alexander to John Blackwood, 25 January, 1845). That De Quincey viewed the Suspiria as another Confessions, possibly to supplant the original, is shown in Japp/1890, pp.253-54 (original letter in NLS/MS 10998, ff142-43). See also Lindop/1981, pp.355-58.
35. NLS/MS 4073, ff163-64, 206-7 and 224-25 (1845).
36. NLS/MS 4074, ff184 (to Blackwood, 22 April, 1845).
39. See NLS/, and Matlock/ in bibliography for details - Bakewell MS are also relevant to the London context here.
40. From an article published in *The British Weekly*, 28 September, 1905; also in NLS/MS 1890, ff93–96 (Samuel Brown to George Gilfillan, not dated but probably 1832–33).
EDITORIAL PRINCIPLES

De Quincey's letters present many problems to the editor. I approached the topic, made confident by the comments of others who had seen the writer's letters and manuscripts, with few fears. However, I soon discovered that what a contemporary of De Quincey's found to be "compositions, written in his exemplary hand [...] on little scraps of paper" (Gillies/1851, vol.II, p.218), and a later commentator a "clear and firm" normal script (Eaton/1936, p.409), didn't relate at all well to my own findings. There were, it must be said, plenty of scraps of paper, but much of the holograph material I have seen bore the hallmarks more of an exercise in advanced (if inept) collage-work than of "exemplary" calligraphical polish. Distinctions between drafts and finished letters soon had little relevance. What, for instance, one might have taken for a sketchy draft, bore the certain sign that it was a finished text, in the form of a postmark. It soon became obvious that De Quincey's apologies to his addressees for the torn, dirty, sometimes opium-stained, scraps of paper that passed as letters, were not merely rhetorical.

The debt-ridden and thus furtive life that De Quincey led in the 1820's and 1830's bore directly on the texts he was producing, whether articles or letters. The man who by turns demands that his publishers hide his letters from prying eyes, asks them to mislead enquirers about his whereabouts, gives his address only through the bearer of a letter, or locates himself simply as "The Gent in the Swan" (14 July, 1823) and omits his signature as a safeguard, is not going to allow an editor easy access to a phenomenology of presence. The consequence has been that only by placing a single letter in a complete framework of letters has it sometimes been possible to provide a date, an addressee or a writing locale.

The following points outline my editorial methods and principles.
1. I have examined all available letters both by and relating to De Quincey. This edition consists of those letters by him which bear on his various publishing relationships between 1819 and 1832, and on the writings which were consequent on these. Also included are letters which shed new light on his life. Letters which were ruled out on the grounds of their general irrelevance or chronological unsuitability but which contained materially applicable passages, are duly excerpted in footnotes.

2. With two exceptions all letters are given as fully as possible. I have treated two letters only as special cases in view of their length; these I have noted in the heading as MS EXTRACT. Pieces which represent published fragments or extracts from sale catalogues are so designated in the heading.

3. The letters are arranged chronologically.

4. The name of the addressee is given in the heading. Square brackets are used to indicate my own interpolations, and problematical conjectures are explained in footnotes. I have kept the latter to a minimum, since the line I have taken in assigning many letters to addressees has usually been a matter of common sense.

5. Full details of manuscript source, and where relevant, destination address, postmark, source of any publication (for letters reproduced in their entirety only, if not a fragment) and (very rarely) whether the letter is a draft or finished copy, are given immediately after the letter.

6. Any endorsements by De Quincey on the cover of a letter are usually placed immediately after his signature. Those comments which bear on the way the addressee was supposed to read the
letter precede the writing locale. Endorsements in other hands are placed at the most appropriate point in my notes.

7. Many of De Quincey's finished letters contain clearly-readable deleted passages. I have included these in square brackets wherever they are of special interest. Otherwise what is presented is the letter as De Quincey intended it to be read. Passages obliterated by other hands (Japp's messy erasures are easily recognisable) are restored without comment.

8. Unless they occur near the end of a letter, De Quincey's footnotes, habitually indicated with an asterisk, are placed within square brackets at the most appropriate point in the text and marked f/n.

9. De Quincey's interlineations are incorporated into the text without comment or caret. He doesn't usually punctuate his interlinear insertions: I have added punctuation in square brackets if misreading is possible.

10. Idiosyncrasies in spelling, punctuation and internal layout have been included as far as possible. Anything that might be read as a misprint is noted with a [sic]. It might be mentioned here that a number of De Quincey's letters were written under extreme pressure; something that has often produced a corresponding quirkiness of phrasing. The following editorial departures should be noted:

- De Quincey occasionally, and inconsistently, rules off his paragraphs: I have dropped these lined-off divisions.
- The varying-length dashes which frequently serve as punctuation are normalised to a single hyphen.
- Long S's are modernised.
- The thorn has been replaced by modern spelling.
- I have not retained De Quincey's use of the apostrophe.
in the third person neuter of the possessive pronoun (it's).

11. Underlined words or phrases are italicised if one line is used or italicised and underlined the appropriate number of times for each subsequent line used.

12. Omissions or conjectures in the text are indicated by angle brackets in the case of a torn, stained, or otherwise damaged manuscript; or by line brackets if the words are present but the handwriting can't be positively deciphered. The following conventions apply:

< > or | | (with balance of word inserted) - conjecture based on partially present or partially legible words.
< > or | | (with complete word[s] inserted) - wholly conjectural word(s). An initial question-mark means the reading is uncertain.
<...> or |...| - Conjecture not possible: stops represent number of words missing, estimated when necessary.

If the matter needs elucidating in any instance, a footnote has been used. Square brackets are used if comment is added within the text of a letter.

13. Regardless of whether or not they are placed elsewhere in a letter, I have always included place and date of writing in the top right of each text. My own insertions are placed in square brackets. As mentioned above, De Quincey's need to avoid coming under creditor's eyes meant that he frequently omitted the address of whatever safe house he was lodging in; sometimes offering a forwarding address sometimes nothing at all. In a number of cases, therefore, it has only been possible to give the general locale of writing.

14. Assigning dates to undated letters has been a large problem. Cataloguers have left traces of previous attempts to date letters in a few instances, and in some cases the letter
has been endorsed with its date of receipt. The reliability of
the former is variable, and I have noted my own findings on
the subject wherever necessary. In some cases there is a
suspicion that the original cataloguer had access to more
information than has survived. The details that we have about
De Quincey's movements between Westmorland, Edinburgh and
London have been very helpful in fixing the writer and his
work in progress at various periods. A perpetual calendar has
also proved an invaluable tool, given De Quincey's custom of
only partially dating his letters. Even here, though, his
nocturnal habits have led to allowances having to be made for
his merging of one day into another. I have tried to be as
specific as possible when allocating a date, but sometimes it
has only been possible to delimit a more general period. If
the latter case applies, then the letter is usually placed at
the latest position possible. My own dates are, of course,
given in square brackets, and if the conjecture is open to
further questioning a question-mark denotes the doubtful area.
Notes give further details wherever necessary. As with the
matter of addressees, I have kept these to a minimum.

15. The marginal waifs and strays of De Quincey's more
inventively-crammed letters are placed at the end of each text
in whatever order has seemed most logical.

16. It has been the publishing context to the letters which
has determined the nature of my own footnotes. All references
to people, places, events, books, etc., etc. are identified in
these notes in varying depth and detail, depending on their
relevance to this context and to De Quincey's writings. To
make this context more "organic" for the reader I have cross-
referenced wherever it has seemed necessary. The conventional
[...] is used to indicate omissions from quoted material.
References to dates only in my commentary (e.g., "see 4
November, 1819") apply to edited letters. I haven't recorded
my use of such standard reference texts as the DNB, etc.
LETTERS AND NOTES
Two notes concerning De Quincey's last days as editor of the Westmorland Gazette:

1.(a) TO [JOHN KILNER]¹

[Note on a MS², dated 4 November, 1819. Grasmere]

To Mr. K.

Mr. De Q. begs that this MS. may be returned; and, if possible, the two last MS. - He has received no letter as yet from Mr. Kilner. Of course by his offer to Mr. K. he meant to say that he would withdraw any obstacle to Mr. K.'s obtaining - which mt. arise from himself; not that he had any influence towards positively obtaining -.

[T. De Q.]

1.(b) TO [A GAZETTE PROPRIETOR]⁴

[Draft? on a MS⁵. Undated (November, 1819). Grasmere]

Dear Sir,

In a case of sudden difficulty I take the liberty of a Proprietor of the Gazette. I held the editorship somewhat more than half a year, <...>, after the last payment made to me, but for several weeks I was disabled in one way or other from writing anything. I have also a demand upon the Proprietors for journeys on account of the Gazette; but on this head I found some difficulty in drawing up any statement, because the expenses of various members of my family who accompanied me at different times are confounded in the bills of Mr. Webster [deleted: and Mr. Ladyman]⁶ &c. with my own. - In the mean time I am in a sudden want of a small sum of money upon this occasion: - some time ago I overdrew by twenty pounds the amount which I had in the hands of a gentleman at Edinburgh; and I find, by a letter which unfortunately reached me only yesterday, that this sum must be in Edinburgh by Friday next to meet my bill. I am also indebted to Mr. Cookson⁷ for sums paid for me in Kendal, about six guineas. Now, if the Proprietors would do me the favor to advance me twenty-six pounds on account - and I might further take the liberty of requesting that the money might be paid into the hands of Mr. Cookson, he would (I know) willingly add to his
many kindnesses to me by forwarding that sum to John Wilson Esq., 8 53 Queen St. Edinburgh. But on this subject I have written a note to him.

I beg that you will excuse the liberty which I take in this case and ascribe it to the dilemma in which I am placed. I have also to apologize for the informality of my resignation: the truth is - I was in no intentional fault on this point; for my note to Mr. Kilner was meant only as a private communication to him; but I found that he had laid it before the proprietors when it was too late to recall it.

[T. De Q.]

1. John Kilner was what De Quincey, in a letter to his mother, called his "clerk of the press [hired 'from a newspaper office in Manchester'] to take those duties (in relation to advertisements &c.) which must be performed by some one on the spot" (Dec., 1818: Cumbria Record Office, Kendal, WD/K; and Japp/1890, p.153, who wrongly gives De Quincey's uncle, Thomas Penson, as the addressee and assigns the letter to 1819). As the remark implies, Kilner was to undertake the daily running of the Westmorland Gazette in Kendal, while De Quincey attempted to fulfil his editorial responsibilities from his Grasmere home. Distance and De Quincey's drug habit eventually created insuperable problems, but the Gazette, nonetheless, flourished during De Quincey's editorship (from 11 June, 1818 to his resignation on 5 November, 1819), not least, one suspects, because of Kilner's capable deputising.

Kilner suffered bad press under De Quincey; taking the blame for many of the latter's own errors and shortcomings and for much of his duplicity (see Lindop/1981, p.228; and Caseyby/1985, pp.131 and 141). In his studies of De Quincey's Gazette writings, F. S. Janzow has allotted Kilner a rather
ambiguous secondary role. "The two sentences in the Westmorland Gazette during De Quincey's editorship that can be identified as Kilner's suggest nothing as to his possibly distinctive ideas or literary mannerisms" (Janzow/1968, p.9); "[Kilner's] 'mechanical' assignments, besides printing and proofreading De Quincey's articles and abstracts, and the materials De Quincey had selected from other journals for republication in the Gazette, would have involved hardly more than working with advertisements, with statistical reports [and] with bits of provincial and local news" (Janzow/1974, p.52).

The "ignorant lad", as De Quincey called him in a letter to Wordsworth (Jordan/1962, p.327) - Kilner was then (1819), twenty-three years old - was in fact an efficient, articulate newspaperman, as the ease with which he took over the editorship of the Gazette from De Quincey shows. As well as providing intelligent editorials for the paper, he also, in mid-November, 1819, took over the printing and publishing of the Gazette (see W.G./1819, 13 November, p.3, col.1). On his death in January, 1822 it was noted that "the highly improving state of the Gazette concerns [...] while under his care [ill health forced his retirement in October, 1821], and the well-merited encomiums of the Proprietors, are the best testimonials of his attentive conduct [...] it was his Christian character which shone with the brightest lustre" (W.G./1822, 5 January, p.3, col.5).

While much of Janzow's logic of identification of De Quincey's Gazette writings remains firm (in Janzow/1968) - indeed manuscripts of De Quincey work for the paper serve to underscore it - there is room to argue that Kilner's intellectual contribution as sub-editor should be taken much more seriously.

2. The note is scribbled at the foot of the final page, numbered 11, of De Quincey's manuscript of "The Danish Origin of the Lake Country Dialect", first instalment. Printed in the Gazette of 13 November, 1819, with the MS head-date ("Novr. 4,
1819") omitted, subsequent instalments followed on 4 and 18 December, 1819 and 8 January, 1820.

3. Direct reference to the editorship Kilner was no doubt intent on securing is omitted in this oblique advocacy by De Quincey of his assistant. His letters often show a guarded awareness of potentially hostile eyes, particularly those of publishers, writers, printers, landladies and duns. John Wilson was to complain in 1821, "I see the necessity of secrecy [but] Can you give yr letters a less mysterious outward form" (Japp/1891, Memls, vol.2, p.46). As the following letter (1.b) shows this caution was not always misplaced, even if a little ineffective in the case of Kilner. A meeting of Gazette proprietors on 5 November, 1819 resolved that De Quincey "be respectfully informed that his Resignation is accepted [and] that Mr. Kilner be for the present appointed Editor" (Gazette Committee Minute-Book).

4. The Gazette Committee Minute Book bears the names of some 30 or so proprietors. Perhaps the addressee of this letter was John Huddlestone, to whom De Quincey seems anyway to have written (another?) undated letter (Sotheby's, 28 July, 1932/Lot 577 - untraced).

5. The letter is written on the reverse of part of an unpublished article on Charles I and the Civil War. Its proximity to De Quincey's resignation (note 3 above) sets the date.

6. Kendal creditors. In a note dated 17 Sept., 1818 (written on the MS of a Gazette article, Boston University Library) De Quincey "requests that that Mr. Ladyman will send a chaise to take a part of his family to Kendal." Webster, possibly George Webster the Kendal Architect.

7. Thomas Cookson was the Kendal friend of the Wordsworths and De Quincey, and proved a useful poste restante - and source of ready money - to the latter (see, e.g., Jordan/1962, pp.116, 120, 121). In his Omnium Bonorum of 1833 De Quincey lists Cookson as one of his Kendal creditors "for behoof of the Coal Company there" (Forward/1939, p.523).
8. John Wilson (1785-1854), close friend of De Quincey's during their earlier days as Lake District neighbours. Now, after four years of studying law in Edinburgh and, more recently, as a member of the Blackwood's editorial team, his relationship with De Quincey had become much more formal. See the following letter for more details of this. De Quincey's later, often unfavourable private comments on Wilson, didn't match his amicable, if sometimes ironic, public depictions of him in the 1829 "Sketch of Professor Wilson", the August, 1840 Tait's "Sketch", and the 1850 Hogg's "Portrait". 

9. De Quincey is referring to letter 1.(a).

2. TO JOHN WILSON

Fox Ghyll, Ambleside
Monday
November 27, 1820

My dear Wilson,

For many weighty purposes, which letters could not satisfactorily accomplish, I am coming to Edinburgh: I shall leave this place on Wednesday, and shall therefore (I hope) be in Edinb. on Friday morning. To obtain the means of travelling, I took the liberty of drawing on you for ten pounds: which I would not have done but under a certainty that I should be in Edinb. long before the payment, and should be able to write it out for the Magazine.²

With your last letter I had some reason to be dissatisfied: When did I complain of any man's refusal to cash bills for me (I have always drawn voluntarily at my own peril - that is, saying in effect - "If I fail you with the money, do you return the bill.") Or, am I base enough to expect or to ask of any man that he should entangle himself in difficulties in order to disentangle me? - But more on this subject when we meet. Most certainly I bore you no ill will on any such ground: but, if I could allow myself to harbour any towards you, it would be for your having ascribed to me so vile a
temper of mind. - Here by the bye let me mention that *since that bill for 20£ which I drew on or about June 1st of this year, and for which I sent you two ten pound notes about July 27 (i.e. just before payment came on), I have drawn no bill on you – except the ten pound one of this month (which I have mentioned above). - It is true that sometime in September or thereabouts I wrote a bill on you – and for this reason: that having a sum of money lying in a tradesman's hands at Kendal, and Pearson\(^3\) suddenly asking for money, I thought that the readiest way of paying him – he fancying that he could not wait for the two days required to correspond with Kendal: but upon my stating that I had no money in your hands, and that therefore he must return me five pounds to make up the twenty in conjunction with fifteen of my own – he wrote a note declining to negociate the bill:– I was then in the beginning of my late long and dangerous illness; and neglected to read his note myself: but since my recovery I have observed that he did not return the bill: but however, having written so formal a refusal of the bill I take it for granted that he never did negociate it. This question however I dare not ask – for fear of suggesting to him the sending in of his bill – which I fear is very heavy. But doubtless he cannot have been so great a knave.

My long silence about which you complain so much has been owing simply – as surely you might have guessed – from illness: my laudanum had rendered my stomach incapable of retaining any sort of food for 2 minutes: the consequence has been – indescribable suffering and symptoms of the most dreadful sort. For six weeks I had myself no hope of recovery: and the prostration of strength, still more, of spirits, has been so tremendous that I do not willingly think of it.\(^4\)

My chief subject of anxiety at this moment is that infamous attack on you in the London Mag. by John Scott (I guess)\(^3\):– To speak conscientiously, I cannot wholly approve of every thing you have done: what I should most condemn, if I had any right to be your judge, is the harsh (and latterly to
my feeling more painful than anything simply harsh - good naturedly contemptuous) treatment of Keats\textsuperscript{6}:- but with this I never thought that I had any concern. And, according to my severest judgement of you, I never held your worst offences as more than bagatelles when put in the scale against the Edinburgh Review - Quarterly - or (which is still more to the point) this very Mag. of Baldwins.\textsuperscript{7} - I am burning for vengeance, tho' not myself a party concerned: over and above my sympathy with you individually as a person most infamously calumniated and slandered by a fellow mounting the stilts of Cato\textsuperscript{8} and complaining of calumny and slander, - I do so loathe the vile whining canting hypocrisy of the fellow, that I would myself contribute at any price of labor to his signal humiliation. Before I reach Edinb., your first notice of this beast will have appeared: but surely you will not let it be the last:\textsuperscript{9} No! Wilson, for the love of God, make an example of the Bugger. Lampoon him in songs - in prose - by night and by day - in prosperous and adverse fortune. - Make him date his ruin from Nov.1st 1820.\textsuperscript{10} - Lash him into lunacy. - Tax yourself, as Voltaire did, to produce a pasquinade upon him once a day.\textsuperscript{11} Let the children in the street have ballads on John Scott. Tye him up, as Ajax Mastigophoros did the old buggery ram that he took for Ulysses,\textsuperscript{12} at private opportunities and decent intervals for fractions of his never ending Scourging. You think perhaps I am laughing. No! I am in a hurry, and I take such words as occur to me but my abhorrence of this beast is deep - serious - and morally grounded. - He himself - this pest of literature - who monthly insults his sovereign in the basest way upon his private concerns and in a way which any man but a thing or a Churchman may resent by a horse whipping - who carries the bestialities of Radicalism into literature\textsuperscript{13} - dares (oh! slave - oh! bugger!) dares to make a solemn appeal to the nation against you as not merely the worst - but the sole and original offender in that way\textsuperscript{14} (original, I mean, as the first of a future band of disciples). Now stop, and just put down these
items which out of thousands I select in aggravation of his
damnable scoundrelism:

1. I view this as the case of one professional man
endeavouring to supplant another: a Magazine attacking a
Magazine!! and a Mag. not in sale attacking one having a large
sale! Why the veriest knave of a Sunday newspaper editor - is
too honorable for this: a quack Con-doctor will hardly descend
to it when he is a fraudulent bankrupt.

2. I view it as the case of a vile set of Cockneys who
have been handled with great and deserved severity and wit in
Blackwood, and <thus> would make the world believe that morals
forsoth are at stake because wicked Hazlitt and simpering
Hunt are posted over the universe for - what they are.15

3. About private attacks: produce me from one end of
Blackwood to the other a fouler intrusion into the privacies
of life than that about "the fortunate youth at Abbotsford":16
i.e. - I suppose Lockhart is pointed out as a successful
Fortune-hunter in his marriage connexion with Miss Scott!! -
What atrocious wickedness, if only the young lady's feelings
were taken into the estimate.

But my paper fails: - and time fails.

One thing more:- For the next Magazine - bring on the
sport - you may depend on me for as much as you please.-

Believe me, my dear Friend, yours most affectionately -
Thos. De Quincey

Addr: John Wilson Esqr./53 Queen Street/Edinburgh.
PM: Nov. 29, 1820. Kendal Penny Post.
MS: NLS. MS 9819, ff85-86.

1. "In September 1820 De Quincey [took] Fox Ghyll, a small
house under Loughrigg Fell by the River Rothay, without
relinquishing the cottage at Town End [Grasmere]"
(Lindop/1981, p.241). The cottage was about one mile north-
west of Ambleside.

2. De Quincey's probably vague promises to write for
Blackwood's in the early years of its life had matured into a
firm undertaking by 1820. There is the possibility of his
collaborative involvement, with Wilson and J. G. Lockhart (the main editorial contributors to the magazine), in the production of articles for the magazine before his first confirmed solo appearance in 1821. Letters for December, 1820 and January, 1821 give details of the latter. Provisional examples of the former can be found in Morrison/1992 (review of Shelley's *Revolt of Islam*, January, 1819) and Leask/1991, pp.84-85 (review of Coleridge's *Biographia Literaria*, October, 1817). De Quincey intimated untruthfully to his mother in December, 1818 that he was writing for both Blackwood's and the *Quarterly Review* (see 4 November, 1819, note 1, for details of the letter, and Lindop/1981, pp.234-35 for context). On the other hand, in a third-person address to the readers of the *Westmorland Gazette* (20 March, 1819, p.2, col., 4) he confided, "At the time when he undertook the conduct of the 'Gazette', he was under engagements (through the favor of friends) to furnish articles to two periodical works - one of very great, the other of unrivalled circulation. For half a year upwards he neglected these engagements [...] But it may be supposed that industry thrown into a national channel will be more productive than it can be when exerted within narrower limits." However one balances fact and fiction here, it is probably safest to conclude, as most of De Quincey's biographers do, that after the *Gazette* period he idled purposelessly - with one or two exceptions (see 3 December, 1820) - in ill-health and without money, at Grasmere.

Wilson had less than altruistic reasons for urging De Quincey to write for Blackwood's. As this letter shows, his Grasmere-bound friend was drawing both of them into debt. Articles would of course provide self-sustaining credit. Additionally, in July, 1820 Wilson had been elected, for local political reasons, to the Chair of Moral Philosophy at Edinburgh University. Finding himself hopelessly adrift in a subject about which he knew little, and in which he had to deliver 120 lectures in the five months from 1 November, 1820, he needed his "intimate friend [...] of very, very
extraordinary talents" on the spot (Brotherton MS). (See also Lindop/1981, pp.238-240 and Eaton/1936, pp.257-59. The Brotherton MSS include enough letters to other individuals soliciting advice on moral philosophy, to suggest that Wilson's contribution to his own lectures was declamatory only.) A series of letters flowed from both Wilson and William Blackwood, the proprietor of Blackwood's, between spring and autumn 1820, imploring De Quincey either to come to Edinburgh or to "fulfil your long bygone engagement to the Magazine" (William Blackwood: Oliphant/1897, vol.I, p.424. See also Japp/1891, Memls, vol.II, p.39ff.).

3. George Pearson, Ambleside grocer, later accused by De Quincey of swindling him (see 29 April, 1824, note 4, and Forward/1939, p.523).

4. This paragraph describes the commonplaces of opium addiction; indeed, the almost surreal mixture of the everyday and the extreme in the letter as a whole, typifies the mind of the addict. In his Confessions De Quincey refers the section titled "The Pains of Opium" specifically to the year 1820 (Conf./1821, pp.76-77).

5. John Scott (1783-1821), editor of the London Magazine, and long-term opponent of what he saw as the cavalier, amoral, chauvinistically Scottish (and thus anti-London) nature of Blackwood's reviewing. It was a hostility which was probably "brought to a head by the election of Wilson to the University Chair, and the support given him by Sir Walter Scott" (Prance/1964, p.135). The dispute, which was fomented by the idealistic John Scott and participated in with a distant and mild distain by Blackwood's, eventually led to the famous duel which resulted in Scott's death in February, 1821. The "infamous attack" referred to here is Scott's article "Blackwood's Magazine" in the November, 1820 issue of the London (vol.II, pp.509-21). Amongst other things, Scott maintained (correctly) that "Wordsworth has been outrageously vilified, and zealously defended by the same individual, - one of the conductors [i.e., Wilson - a friend of Wordsworth]!"
(p.512). He also attacked Wilson's character and ridiculed his literary abilities: "hollow-hearted", "larded with cant", "petty" (p.516).

6. The abuse of Keats by the Blackwood's team, particularly Lockhart, was long-standing, dating back to the early days of the magazine.


8. Marcus Porcius Cato (234-149 B.C.), Roman statesman and orator. His support of traditional moral values in the face of what he saw as a threatening tide of Greek decadence, resulted in forty-four court appearances, from each of which he emerged as victor. The "stilts" mentioned in the letter probably refers to Cato's elevated oratorical tone. De Quincey, never a great supporter of moral absolutism, was later to write that Cato showed "too little indulgence for venial human errors" (M/X, p.330).

9. Wilson offered no article on the subject in either the November or December issue of Blackwood's, whose editorial response was "mild" (France/1964, p.137).

10. Presumably a reference to the publication date of the London, although it would have been available slightly earlier.

11. Voltaire's combative irritability quickly transferred itself into print. He is alleged to have written 21,000 letters alone. De Quincey is perhaps referring to the period when Voltaire's ongoing hostility against Rousseau was at its most intense (1755 to 1761), when diatribe after diatribe flowed from his pen.

12. For the insane Ajax's delusive revenge on Ulysses, who had defeated him in the contest for the armour of Achilles, see the dialogue between Athena and Odysseus (Ulysses) at the beginning of Sophocles's Ajax.

13. As his essays on the subject show, the ultra-Tory De Quincey generally - and crudely - saw domestic politics in terms of a balanced unity of Whig and Tory parties, with the
more liberal, radical elements as hostile outliers (see, e.g., his "A Tory's Account of Toryism, Whiggism, and Radicalism", 1835-36, M/IX, p.313ff). John Scott sought to detach the London from direct political affiliations, a very unusual, not to say problematical, thing for the time, and of course a sign of radicality in itself to De Quincey. The latter's initial reaction to the "writer of leaders who argues for principles and not for parties" (Zeitlin/1921, p.328), was overtly antagonistic. For his considerably modified view see 3 March, 1821 below. See also O'Leary/1983 for a full discussion of Scott's place in periodical literature, and Bauer/1953, Chapter IV, for details of the political stance of the London under him. Haefner/1983 puts forward a persuasive argument for Scott's distaste of popular politics à la Cobbett. According to Haefner, Scott's liberalism smacked much more of cultural elitism than political radicalism: "the road Scott was to take [...] was the high road of 'lofty thoughts and lofty conduct'" (p.73 - the final words are Scott's own and are taken from the London).

14. In "Blackwood's Magazine" (op. cit. - note 5; see especially pp.511-13).

15. Leigh Hunt and William Hazlitt were especially favoured Blackwood's targets. The "Cockney School" was a Blackwood's coinage used to denote Hunt and his associates, who at one stage included Keats. As early as 1817 the magazine carried articles with such titles as "On the Cockney School of Poetry" ("No.I", vol.II, October, p.38ff, by J. G. Lockhart and possibly Wilson).

16. In its Lion's Head section for November, 1820, the London carried the remark "The Fortunate Youth seems to improve at Abbotsford. He is stronger than ever in Criticism this month" (vol.II, p.476). J. G. Lockhart married Walter Scott's daughter Sophia in April, 1820 at Abbotsford. De Quincey's dislike of "personalities" was genuine if a little ironic in the light of the criticism he was to come in for in the 1830's and 40's, after the publication of his "Sketches" and "Lake
Reminiscences". The early Blackwood's style, designated an indicator of "manly strength" (Chilcott/1972, p.157) by one contemporary, was never really his.

3. TO ["CHRISTOPHER"]1. Fragment of an unpublished, "epistolary" article.

Fox-Ghyll (or, as the unlearned spell it, Gill)
Near Ambleside
December 3, 1820.

My dear Christopher,

I have thought over all that you have said about -, and all that you mean to say; and therefore you need not give yourself the trouble of saying anything more about it. With most of it you have my hearty concurrence; and, with respect to those points in which you will find that I have ventured to dissent from you, if I do not here give you my reasons at full length - it is partly because I am weary of the subject and partly because I wish to draw your attention to another which at this moment interests me much more. You remember this country?2 Indeed how should you fail to remember it, who forget nothing - not even your old tattered copy of Lord Berner's Froissart (which, by the way, I wish you would forget, as else you will give me the trouble of begging for it in M's name who must and shall have it).3

Well: this country then, which you remember so well, remembering you cannot but love. Your gout indeed, when you were amongst us, did not allow you to avail yourself of all the leisure which your professional business left you. A most accommodating gout it would have been, if it had: for in those times your leisure was, I think, equal to about 24 hours a day; and the only business you had of a troublesome nature, that I recollect, was digestion and that correspondence which you carried on for some reason or other with your old maiden aunt. Charmingly witty that correspondence must have been. I remember, Christopher, you <were> shy of reading us any
extracts from those letters—though abundantly communicative of all <?else>.—I am rambling. To return, then, to this country—this lovely country of the lakes which I love so much and so justly—it will shock you to hear is in a rapid state of decline: and, if something is not speedily done for it, the next news you will hear is that it is all dead and gone. Take my word for it the whole country between Kendal and Whitehaven will vanish like any parenthesis which I have struck out in the—; and some morning Kendal, when she gets up to her breakfast, will find herself united to an ill-looking town that she has supposed to be upwards of fifty miles off. The symptoms are alarming enough, as you would think, if you knew all that I know: but you shall hear.—It is now some years since the country began to look sickly. The first summer that she ailed anything to sickness was that of 1814. In that year you know the Peace came like a clap of thunder: and forthwith John Bull ran over to Paris like a vulture allured by carrion, or like a fine gentleman running away from it. This country, finding herself neglected, naturally fretted: she had been used to a good deal of company, and had been much flattered and admired; so that she could not be expected to bear the change very well. Early in the spring of 1815 Bonaparte broke prison; and the war was renewed; and our patient, together with the newspapers and the corn-markets, began to look up. But then came the battle of Waterloo: and she never looked up again. Waterloo drew over so many people from England that in London I understand there were hardly tailors enough left to make the national breeches: in fact there would not have been enough, but that orders for breeches fell off proportionably. In flourishing parts of Mary-le-bone, where heretofore there had been 81 tailors, there was scarcely left the square root of that number: which, Christopher, in any other case might seem to imply that there were 9 men left: but, if you think it means that number here, it shews you know very little of Algebra as applied to the consideration of tailors: in fact it means not 9 but $\frac{9999}{9999}$.
ad infinitum. In short France drew over far more than 8 parts in 9 of the Britannic tailors. The tailors being gone, it was a matter of course that the leather-breeches makers should follow. The Curriers and the Tanners insisted on knowing whither the leather-breeches makers were going — and what for — and what was the meaning of their absurd conduct: but, as they could not have an answer to these questions without going for it, the curriers and the tanners set off in a body. The shoemakers saw no reason why they should stick to the last, when nobody else did: so they packed up their awls and followed. In short from less to more all the trades and mysteries, arts, sciences and occupations mounted on horseback or on the roofs of coaches &c. on their road to Dover or Harwich. In fact nobody stayed except a few old dustmen, whose personal appearance seemed against their making their way in the fashionable circles at Paris, some scores of persons in gaol and elsewhere who at the particular request of government staid to be hung, and two or three members of the executive department who staid (I suppose on patriotic principles) to hang them. — In this state of things it could hardly be expected that Westmorland should recover her health and spirits: she did not; but went annually down hill and is now nearly at the bottom. To judge of this you must have seen the country as long and as lately as I have. In fact the symptoms stare you every where in the face: the Lakes themselves seem to me as if they were on half-pay; the waterfalls are manifestly on a sort of peace-establishment; and the very echoes, I protest to you, are superannuated; and indeed by next year I question whether there will be any echoes at all. As a proof of this, let me mention to you that the other day, when I was at Patterdale, I bought three ten-penny echoes*5 [f/n. "ten-penny echoes": "in the romantic scenery of the northern lakes," says an ingenious writer (Melincourt, vol.2, p.167) "every wonder of nature is made an article of trade; the cataracts are locked up, and the echoes are sold."6] and I told the waiter to let
them all off at once; and I give you my word of honor that all three together were not equal to one eighteen-penny one that I bought before the battle of Waterloo; notwithstanding I gave them all the assistance in my power by drawing the cork of a bottle of soda water at the same moment. When the echoes decay and grow so consumptive, I need scarcely tell you what happens to the man. In reality our country is the very reverse of those which our great friend at Rydal Mount speaks of — where

— 'Earth with all her pleasant fruits and flowers
'Fades and participates in man's decline.'"

Here on the contrary man is but an appendage to the scenery; the door-keeper to echoes, or the porter at the waterfalls; and he naturally flourishes or decays as they do. Therefore, when the echoes are become so degenerate as that three 10d. ones are equal only (and speaking candidly scarcely equal) to [End of fragment]

[T. De Q.]

MS: Houghton Library, Harvard. fMS Eng 974 (11).

1. What has survived of this "letter" takes up about two-thirds of a single sheet folded into four pages, numbered 19-22, and therefore part of a much larger MS article by De Quincey. The fragmentary preceding section serves to introduce the missive in a mock Lakes-guide frame. "Several classes of the Laker" are to be exhibited in a series of sketches by "our correspondent [De Quincey, of course], who is an old and dear friend of our own, [and] has long been a resident amongst the lakes". Given that this initial letter was supposedly written "six weeks ago", one is led to assume that the introductory part (and thus by extension the whole article) dates from the second week of January, 1821. It could be, though, that De Quincey is putting an epistolary article that he did actually write before he left Westmorland — for the January issue of Blackwood's — into a later and much larger frame. There are enough references to work in progress on what must be this article in the late December, 1820/early January, 1821 letters below, however, to suggest that the date should perhaps not be
taken too literally. De Quincey certainly resorts to fictive
dating in other articles. "John Paul Frederick Richter", for
example, is dated "Grasmere, Oct. 18, 1821", a date when he
was certainly in London.

William Blackwood is probably referring to the article in
a letter to De Quincey, dated 8 January, 1821, when he says,
"if you cannot send me anything better than 'The English
Lakes' it will be quite unnecessary for you to give yourself
any farther trouble about the Magazine." One finds John Wilson
writing to Blackwood in 1822 asking for "'Green's Lakes' &
Gillies for De Quincey's article on that subject & send it to
me" (NLS/MS 4009, ff277-78). In a later letter he complains
that De Quincey has carried off the magazine's copy of
"Green's account of the Lakes" (ibid., ff267-68). An article
by Wilson, "Green's Guide to the Lakes", did appear in
Blackwood's in July, 1822 (vol.XII, pp.84-91). None of it is
culled from the above MS. See also note 6 below and 23 July,
1829, note 9, for references to other possible refugees from
De Quincey's "Lakes"; and 21 February, 1832 for a resurrection
of the title.

(The Houghton Library, Harvard, have a number of undated
MS fragments which probably originated around this period [in
fms Eng 974]. They seem to be "Westmorland" based, and may
have been intended for publication either in the Westmorland
Gazette or Blackwood's.)

The epistolary format was a conventional one in
Blackwood's and in periodical writing generally for the
period. "Christopher", "Christopher North", or "Dr. North"
were similarly conventional ways of introducing articles into
the magazine. What or who exactly is denoted by this address
is a matter of debate. Miriam Thrall's notion (Thrall/1934,
p.240) that the pseudonym was used by "the [Blackwood]
brotherhood" until 1825 (the year J. G. Lockhart departed to
London to edit the Quarterly Review), when Wilson took it
over, seems sensible enough. It might be added, though, that
friends of Wilson may have been consciously addressing him exclusively, throughout both periods of the usage.

De Quincey's interest in the epistolary form was deep-seated. In the *London Magazine*, *Blackwood's* and *Tait's*, for instance, it provides the common format for a number of his contributions, and in the *Westmorland Gazette*, editorial letter-writing became habitual. An 1835 article by De Quincey provides a simple reason: "it had occurred to the writer as a judicious principle, to create a sort of merit out of his own necessity; and [...] to seek after the graces which belong to the epistolary form, or to other modes of composition professedly careless" (*Rec./1970, p.100*). Such at least accords with De Quincey's 1853 statement that "They won't wait an hour for you in a Magazine or a Review; they won't wait for truth" (*Sel./vol.I, pp.vi-vii; M/I, p.6*). Less pragmatically and more contentiously, one might offer the idea that the political control exerted by the rise of the penny post within a government-sanctioned national network for distributing letters, could be subverted by the writer who "posted" his letters in periodicals. De Quincey's distrust of this network emerges time after time in his letters. Magazines at least allowed a fiction of overt control when, as one commentator writes, "The letter's private life and representative power [had] become public property [...] No longer would [it] inscribe the individual within a secure social order" (*Favret/1993, p.34 - see Chapter I and Conclusion generally in Favret's book for a useful discussion of this topic*).

2. De Quincey is referring to Cumberland and Westmorland. The colloquial, familiar opening, with its comfortable rather esoteric coterie feel was common to many of *Blackwood's* epistolary articles.

3. Lord Berners, John Bourchier (1467-1533), English soldier, writer and statesman, translated Froissart's *Chronicles* in 1523-25. "M" is probably Margaret, De Quincey's wife.

4. The First Peace of Paris, May, 1814. De Quincey writes about this period in his "Recollections of Charles Lamb"
(Tait's Edinburgh Magazine, April and June, 1838; M/III, p.60ff). There may be something mischievous in the following passages: Wordsworth himself was in France in 1820. The reference to leather-breeches makers further on in the letter is probably an allusion to the radical reformer Francis Place, who had been a London leather-breeches maker in the first half of his life (see also 24 February, 1825, note 7 for Place).

5. The eighteenth and early-nineteenth-century Lakes tourist, well-read in the tradition of the picturesque, might expect to hear the landscape perform in this way. William Hutchinson, author of An Excursion to the Lakes in Westmorland and Cumberland (1772), wrote of a ship-board artillery on Ullswater: "on discharging one of these [cannon], the report was echoed from the opposite rocks, where by reverberation it seemed to roll from cliff to cliff, and return through every cave and valley" (Nicholson/1977, p.122). A verbal echo of the practice can be found in the revised Confessions of 1856, where De Quincey recalls "an item in a bill [of his sister's, in 1802] at Patterdale (head of Ullswater)- To an echo, first quality...10s./To [an echo], second quality...5s. (M/III, p.320). The custom had anyway become less popular by 1820.

6. The quotation occurs near the end of the first paragraph of Chapter XXV of Thomas Love Peacock's Melincourt (1817). Peacock's political satire deals in passing with picturesque tourism; Melincourt Castle being sited "in one of the wildest valleys in Westmoreland" (Chapter I). De Quincey adopts a similarly facetious tone to that found in his letter in the "Notes from the Pocket-Book of a late Opium-Eater. No III: To the Lakers" (London, vol.VIII, November, 1823, pp.497-98; M/XI, pp.437-39). In his article De Quincey jokingly refers to a plan he, Coleridge, Wordsworth and Wilson have mooted to produce "the Guide" to the Lakes (ibid., p.497; M/XI, p.438). There is also a reference to the "Lakers, [who] have furnished me with matter for a pleasant paper upon them [...] I doubt whether I shall publish it" (ibid., p.497; M/XI, p.437). One might observe that De Quincey himself was very much part of
the tradition he is satirising here, and that his visitors would often be given the full picturesque tour through the region (for examples see - Lindop/1981, p.191; letter to Henry Crabb Robinson, 22 September, 1816, in Dr. Williams Library, no.128a; and Cafarelli/1989, pp.140-41). His view that there was a fall-off of interest in the area, apart from the very temporary ones mentioned in the letter, is an unsupported one.

7. The final two lines, slightly misquoted, from Wordsworth's sonnet "There is a bondage worse" (published 1807).

8. Then as now the public were expected to pay to see some of the more spectacular natural features of the region.

4. TO [ROBERT SOUTHEY]\(^1\)

King's Arms Inn, Keswick

Tuesday night December 5 \(\frac{1}{2}\) past 8. [1820]\(^1\)

My dear Sir,

I have just this moment arrived here on an errand which I thought it would be better to mention to you personally than by letter: and my intention was therefore to have called upon you: but finding myself unwell (for I have suffered under a stomach complaint for very many weeks), and feeling doubtful whether at so late an hour I ought to disturb your family by calling, - I have resolved at last to write a note to you in explanation of my business.

I am called to Edinburgh suddenly upon business: and at latest I ought to be there by Thursday morning. From the suddenness of the summons, no way of procuring money for the journey occurred to me except by paying a small account in a bill: such a bill I drew on Edinburgh in favor of the Innkeeper of Ambleside: he paid it in part of his Rent to Mr. Wilson of Abbot Hall in Kendal:\(^2\) and this gentleman has detained my bill together with all others from my neighbourhood until they are accepted: consequently Chapman finds himself unable to pay me the balance until Mr. Wilson has satisfied his scruples.
In this dilemma, I have determined (having no acquaintance even at Ambleside except Mr. Gee whose bill I found had been treated in the same way by Mr. Wilson) to request of you, if it is perfectly convenient to you, the loan of about 6 guineas for the journey: 5£ would do amply if I should not be obliged to post any part of the way beyond Penrith; but I say 6 guineas for I fear I should.

I hope that this request will not appear to you taking an undue liberty: if it should, or if it is not perfectly convenient to you, (which, from the want of a Bank at Keswick it has occurred to me may be the case) I beg that you will forget I ever made it.4

I beg my best regards to the Ladies of your family; and remain, my dear Sir.

Your faithful friend and servant,
Thomas De Quincey.

I shall be happy to execute any commands for you in Edinburgh.

MS: Harry Ransom H.R.C., University of Texas at Austin. MS (De Quincey, T.) Letters.

1. Recipient and year confirmed by next letter (and see note 4 to this letter). Southey was living at Greta Hall, Keswick. De Quincey's published comments on him suggest that he found his distant neighbour reserved and detached but not unfriendly (Rec./1970, pp.221-234, 236-247). Until De Quincey's "Samuel Taylor Coleridge" appeared in 1834/35, Southey no doubt held him in similar regard. He has "talents, and knowledge worthy of a much better direction" than editing the Westmorland Gazette, he noted in 1819 (Southey/1965; vol.2, p.197). Even after De Quincey's articles on Coleridge were published, he could still, amidst his anger at what he saw as intrusions into the dead poet's private life, feel "sorry for De Quincey" for his "castaway" existence and admire "his extraordinary abilities" (ibid., pp.451-52, April, 1836. For opposite sentiments see Thomas Carlyle's picture of Southey's
"Rhadamanthine rage" at the publication of the Coleridge pieces, Southey/1972, pp.462-63).


3. George Gee, a neighbour of De Quincey's at Ivy cottage, near Rydal Mount. See letters to Gee, 3 March, 1821 and ?1822 (52/II).

4. As the next letter makes clear, Southey complied. He remembered the request in a letter of 1836: "The last I heard from [De Quincey] was many years ago by a note which he sent up from the Inn requesting the loan of six pounds to carry him to Edinburgh [...] I sent him the money, which I could then ill afford to lend [...] A few weeks afterwards he returned from Scotland, brought a gold watch as a present for his wife, and sent for her to meet him with a chaise and four at Penrith!" (Southey/1965, vol.2, p.452). Predictably he was not repaid.

5. TO [MRS] MARGARET DE QUINCEY

[Edinburgh]
Saturday morning December 9, 1820.

My dear Margaret,

It grieves me to think how regularly I have been thwarted in all attempts to write to you hitherto by constant interruptions. Even now I have only time for a few lines; but, remembering that if I were to defer writing until to-morrow's post, the letter would reach Kendal on Tuesday - and Ambleside therefore not till Wednesday (from the want of post on Tuesday), I snatch one minute to tell you that I am tolerably well - much better at least than when I left home - and that all is going well. All my old friends here are more kind than I express: without any trouble on my part they have procured me lodgings - books - and everything that I can wish, or rather ten times more. And Invitations crowd so fast upon me that I hardly know how I shall get through all my writing &c.
In the course of to-morrow I will write a long letter to you: and as I will be careful to put it into the post on Monday morning you will have it by Wednesday (that is to say as soon as if it were put into the post to-morrow).

Write a few lines to me by Wednesday's post to say that all is going on well: no matter how little. Give my best love to the children, and believe me with kind remembrances to <Mary>.³

Yours my dear Peggy
Most faithfully and affectionately
Thomas De Quincey.

Direct to me at
No. 30, Northumberland Street⁴
Edinburgh.

Southey was kind and polite beyond even anything I expected: though he was always as much so as anybody I ever knew.⁵

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Addr: Mrs. De Quincey/Fox-Ghyll/Ambleside/Westmorland.
PM: Dec. 9, 1820.
MS: Private collection.

1. De Quincey's wife, left behind with three young children.
2. This was De Quincey's third visit to Edinburgh.
3. The final "y" only of this word has survived on the MS. Japp (see Publ. details), has Mary (a relative staying with Margaret, perhaps).
4. In Edinburgh's New Town; then as now an expensive place to live.
5. See previous letter.
6. TO WILLIAM BLACKWOOD

30 Northumberland Street
[Edinburgh]

Tuesday morning [12 December, 1820]

Dear Sir,

I do "keep my word" - not "once" merely, but always - when I am aware that it is pledged. The best way therefore for us in all cases will be after any conversation to say to each other - Now let us not part without understanding how far any formal engagement (and, if any, what engagement precisely) has been contracted between us. In the present case, I cannot be in any doubt as to my view on this point - though it seems that you took a different view of it. Which of us is right, I will not take upon myself to say: but here is my conscientious belief about it up to the moment when I saw Professor Wilson yesterday morning. - I had always understood that the 10th was the latest day on which anything could be received with any chance of publication in the forthcoming Number. Under this impression I took care to be in Edinburgh time enough before that day to allow of my writing a sheet: and I put myself to some inconvenience, and an extra expense of 3½ guineas in postchaises, that I might be in time for producing so much. Consequently one of my first questions was - Am [I] in time with one sheet for this month's Magazine? Meaning, if I was in time, to sit down there and then - to call on no soul until it was finished - scarcely to sleep, if that should be necessary. But this question I found it impossible to resolve - whether through you, or through Wilson. "Never mind about that" - you both said: the Mag. is always going on: it cannot come amiss: &c., and so on. Doubtless, thought I, sometime or other the article will be printed, if it is approved. But, if I have lost my pains and needlessly thrown away money in hastening up now - when a week hence would have been soon enough (or perhaps even 3 weeks), why should I sit up night and day to produce by a few days earlier what after all may lie in a drawer for 10 days or a fortnight after it is sent? -- Having
failed with you, I pressed Wilson and Gillies\(^5\) on this point: neither could assure me that it was even possible for me to be inserted this month. Eight pages, the former said dubiously, might get in perhaps: he did not exactly know. "But what signifies that," said they, "if you are paid immediately"? First, that I should write with more spirit — being sure of an early insertion. Secondly, as to money, it is clear that I can be allowed to write more in two numbers (that for this month, and that for next) than for one only. If I have lost the chance for the forthcoming No., all motive for instant and unceasing exertion, thought I, is done away with.

To this account I have only to add 3 memoranda:

1. In spite of my disappointment here explained, in respect to the No. immediately forthcoming — I have been writing keenly: and I hope to send you something in the course of the day: but at latest (and here I am promising) by to-morrow forenoon.

2. I have lost a good deal of labor by having begun upon an article from Schiller, prefaced by a view of Schiller's character &c., which by mere accident Gillies informed me had already been published in an early No. of the Mag. It was the story of Christian Wolf.\(^6\)

3. You remember something about Saturday and Monday: so Gillies tells me. Now my remembrance is this: De Q. - Pray, Mr Blackwood am I in time if I send you some sheets (of letter paper) down by Sat. - Mr B. - Oh! never mind about the time: Send them then, or if not then on Monday morning. T De Q. - Very well.

I am, dear Sir.
Yours faithfully,
Thomas De Quincey.

I had not room to bring in my closing words at the end of my note: they are these. I have fixed a time, as you will see, for my first article. Now, when I once begin, I never leave off. And therefore, as money is by no means disagreeable to me
at this moment, I wish you would allow me to apply to our connexion this line of Macbeth's

"And damned be he who first cries - Hold, enough!"7

1. William Blackwood (1776-1834), Edinburgh publisher, and founder and proprietor of Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine (est. 1817). The two official studies of the firm of William Blackwood and Sons (Oliphant/1897 and Tredrey/1954) are perhaps too reverent to offer the business's founder as a living identity. Other writers have probed more deeply (see, e.g., Robinson/1983, Milne/1984, De Montluzin/1987, and Klancher/1987, the last of whom offers a study of the socio-political enabling forces within which Blackwood's and its peers operated). Milne sees William Blackwood as a "veiled Editor" (p.93) - A reference to the description of Blackwood as a dark figure with a "veil upon his head" in the 1817 "Chaldee Manuscript" - manipulating public interest and opinion with and through his co-editors/contributors. But while Blackwood for the most part remained hidden from the public, Milne concludes, "the great bulk of correspondence with contributors [...] continued to be handled by [him]" (p.97).

Given some of the crass scurrility that was still appearing in the magazine when De Quincey arrived in Edinburgh in 1820, the latter's view of his would-be employer was ambivalent. He certainly shared Blackwood's ultra-Toryism (and could possibly even exploit it, after the publisher's appointment as an Edinburgh City Bailie in 1820) even if he couldn't admire his hard-headed business instincts. De Quincey too was not a little practiced at manipulating public opinion: his Gazette work had involved for one thing supporting the Tory, Lowther cause in Westmorland. William Blackwood, on the other hand, seems to have liked De Quincey enough for his admiration of the writer's abilities to survive
their disastrous 1820/21 acquaintance. The next generation of Blackwoods thought otherwise: "De Quincey was too much even for the generous John Blackwood [who] never forgave him for some of his performances and turned his portrait out of the Saloon" (Tredrey/1954, p.236, quoting a comment made in 1896).

2. Date set by place of letter in run of letters (and dated thus by Eaton – see publication details).

3. The perverse, facetious tone of this letter is no doubt a reflex to remarks from Blackwood that were a little too close to the truth. Such is common to many of De Quincey's dealings with his publishers. In this early run of letters, though, the tone is unusually strident. It is perhaps a sign that the erstwhile editor of newspapers – who formerly had at least been able to attempt to frame the context of his writing, if not control the distributive progress and reception of his texts – bridled at the ready-made context of the contributor to periodicals. The illusion that he could preserve for himself the patrician status of the scholar gentleman, was never entirely to fade in De Quincey. It is there in the diary of 1803 (Eaton/1927), there in the 1821 Confessions (subtitled "From the Life of a Scholar"), present, indeed insistently present, in a letter of 17 July, 1839 (see 10 June, 1826, note 7 for details), and still survives in the 1853 Selections "Preface" (Sel./vol.I, p.vff). De Quincey would have seen an unsettling ambiguity in William Blackwood's belief that he "never will hold out money in itself as the inducement for men of talents to write for 'Maga'" (Blackwood to an unknown correspondent, undated: quoted in Oliphant/1897, vol.I, p.439. See also Devlin/1983, Ch.1 for details of general context). The commodification of the opium-eater as text was yet to come.

4. At this stage in its development, Blackwood's was published on or around the twentieth day of the month, which date would remain "current" for one month. Before De Quincey returned to the magazine later in the 1820's, Blackwood moved everything forwards (or perhaps backwards might be more accurate) so that
issues would be published towards the end of the month but bear the next month's date. Either way, the rubicon of copy-deadlines was repeatedly and irritatingly crossed by De Quincey.

5. Robert Pearce Gillies (1788-1858), advocate, *Blackwood's* contributor, fellow Germanist and friend of De Quincey's. The two writers showed a genuine admiration for each other's work; De Quincey expressed his in "Gillies's German Stories" (*Blackwood's*, vol.XX, December, 1826, p.844-58) and the *Edinburgh Saturday Post* (Tave/1966, p.221ff), and Gillies in his *Memoirs of a Literary Veteran* (Gillies/1851, vol.II, p.218ff). Gillies was ruined in the financial doldrums of the mid-1820's, and De Quincey was later to write of him as "the advocate whose name I repeat with a sigh of inexpressible sadness" (M/V, p.322). What seemed particularly to appeal to De Quincey about Gillies was not so much the breadth of his intellect, which was considerable, as his ability as a translator "to emancipate himself so far from the thraldom to the book before him [...] as to think in English" ("Gillies's German Stories", op. cit., p.857). Adaptation of texts, in translation or analysis, rather than strict adherence to them, was always De Quincey's preference. See also 9 January, 1827; Essig/1951; and Goldman/1965, Chapter 3.


7. *Macbeth*, Act V. Scene VIII, 1.34.

7. TO WILLIAM BLACKWOOD

[Edinburgh. 12 December, 1820]

Dear Sir,

As I have the pen in my hand, and your messenger says he was to wait for an answer (which direction possibly you gave
him under a slight feeling that I might even now be ready for you), - I write a few lines.

From your hint about long letters,¹ - I fear you think I may waste my time in that way. In this you misconceive my ordinary practice. You assign two excellent reasons for not writing long ones yourself: - and just at this moment I have two also, and by accident the very same, for not writing any but the shortest - viz. not to consume my own time and still less yours. - Men of the world now-a-days, as we both know, never write long letters: so much have post offices and other civil arrangements multiplied the number of claims upon every man standing like you in a public situation. If therefore I troubled you with a long letter this morning (as certainly I did), - it was because the case taken in connexion with all that had passed previously seemed to me to demand it. This was one reason: another was - that I had some obscure feeling that by the length of this letter I might do something to balance the want of attention to that number (whether 2 or 3) of yours with which you have hitherto favoured me: - to all persons in the world except Prof. Wilson (my own family not excepted) Opium has reduced me for the 6 last years to one general discourtesy of utter silence. But this I shall think of with not so much pain, if this same Opium enables me (as I think it will) to send you an article not unserviceable to your Magazine.²

If Mr. Bell (the Surgeon) had not been with me - as also Wilson and Gillies - this morning you should have had an article to-night. As it is, <by next> Saturday you shall have too much.

I remain, my dear Sir,
Yours faithfully,
Tuesday, Decr. 12.

To-morrow morning you shall have what I promised.

[Endorsed by De Q. on cover: Excuse the form of my note externally³]
1. A reference to the preceding letter.
2. This "Opium article" is also mentioned in the following letters. Blackwood, however, got only promises for what De Quincey was to publish in the London Magazine, in September and October, 1821, as the Confessions of an English Opium-Eater. In October, 1821, the London carried a "Lion's Head" comment by De Quincey on the Confessions, stating that "the notes and memoranda for this narrative were drawn up originally about last Christmas" (vol.IV, p.351).
3. It is messy, as are the outsides (and insides) of many of De Quincey's letters.

8. TO WILLIAM BLACKWOOD
[Edinburgh. 13 December, 1820]

Dear Sir,

I send you this which in my hand contains twice as much as in that of most persons. More I would have sent, if I could: but, with the interruptions I have had to-day, I could with difficulty do this. As to last night, it was spent much of it in searching for matter in Paul Richter's works: but this article I found would be too long for my first and was obliged after some labor thrown away to abandon: I will make it my 3rd therefore:- My Opium art. being the 2nd.

To-night I shall finish the art. I now am on: if you happen to be sending down this way, your messenger may call as early as he will after day-light. - Then forthwith I shall go to the Opium, which I hope to have ready by Saturday morning. The Opium article will be at least a sheet. The present art. from Schiller will I think be 4pp of the Mag.¹

I am, dear Sir
Faithfully yours

Wednesday December 13.,

Thomas De Quincey
1. Schiller - finished on Thursd. morning by 8 o'clock.
2. Opium article - finished I trust, by 1 o'clock on Sat.
3. Paul Richter - finished on Monday evening, or afternoon, next.
4. Mrs Hannah More - on Wednesday or Thursday of next week.  
5. Kant

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1. As De Quincey makes clear later in his letter, this is part of a translation from Schiller. The piece appeared as "The Sport of Fortune. A Fragment. From a true History. By Schiller", in the January, 1821 issue of Blackwood's (vol. VIII, pp. 375-81). (It was a rendering of Schiller's "Spiel des Schicksals, ein Bruchstück aus einer wahren Geschichte".) For context of publication see Byrns/1956, where the attribution is confirmed (see Morgan/1949, pp. 100-6 for specific details about Schiller's popularity at this time and for a breakdown of publications relating to him in British periodicals). De Quincey's apparent preoccupation with Schiller here probably has a highly practical source. Two years previously the Quarterly Review had sent him the twenty-six volumes of The Works of Schiller for review (Japp/1890, p. 154 gives details - the date and addressee of the letter quoted in Japp are correctly assigned in my letter 1 [a], note 1). There was no response, but it looks as if De Quincey was putting his windfall to good use. William Blackwood was delighted at this tentative sign of literary activity from De Quincey. "I am so happy to receive anything from you that your two pages appear like the 24 of any one else", he enthused on 13 December, "It was the knowing what you could do, if you once resolved to do, which made my repeated disappointments so very mortifying" (NLS/MS 30304, ff194-95. Oliphant/1897,
vol. I, p. 424, has misread the date as 18 December, and so, consequently, have subsequent commentators).

2. Johann Paul Friedrich Richter, pseudonym Jean Paul (1763-1825), German essayist, novelist and reviewer. His writings were introduced to the British public by, amongst others, Coleridge, Thomas Carlyle, George Eliot, and - particularly during his London Magazine period - De Quincey, who named his fifth child Paul Frederick (the "Fred" of the letters) after him. The unique blend of quirky humour and intellectualism in his work made him one of the latter's favourite writers. What one modern critic has called Richter's "expression of an essentially eccentric experience, of a disorientation and dislocation that is always present" (Casey/1992, p. 5), also fits De Quincey well.

3. It did in fact run to just over six pages.

4. Hannah More (1745-1833), poet, playwright and inexhaustible writer of religious tracts. She was a close friend of De Quincey's mother and was duly loathed by the son, who found her writings and her militant evangelicalism repellant. De Quincey didn't write about her until after her death in 1833, when his "Mrs Hannah More" appeared in Tait's Edinburgh Magazine. (An earlier comment, made in the London in June, 1824 ["False Distinctions", vol. IX, pp. 642-3; M/X, p. 440], is totally at variance with De Quincey's later view of her. In this earlier version, though, De Quincey needs to bolster his own critical acumen by showing that his opinions are even more incisive than those of the "brilliant" Hannah More.)

5. De Quincey was not to write on Immanuel Kant and the three economists until the London period.

9. TO WILLIAM BLACKWOOD

[Edinburgh. 14 December, 1820]

Dear Sir,

Last night I lost in this way: G. Bell the Surgeon now attends me; and by his advice I allowed myself to commence a
course of regimen and medicine which at first going off made me very ill indeed. I could do nothing but lie down; and not sleeping until morning I was not awake until your messenger called.

What I send is the product of my labor since breakfast — i.e. ½ past 8 o'clock — interrupted only by two visits. Tonight I shall get on better; but I much regret having begun with this art. which with my care and fastidiousness in translation costs me 5 times more labor than original composition would do: I am persuaded that I could have written 10pp. of my Opium art. whilst I have done these 2: for as all translation is a slow business with me, so this tale of Schiller's in particular happens to run into the English idiom with more than common reluctance.¹

Faithfully yours,

Thursday — near 6 o'clock

Thomas De Quincey.

I send you this to show that I am going on. I shall not stir out till I have finished.

Addr: William Blackwood Esq./Princes Street/[Edinburgh].
Publ: Eaton/1936, pp.263-64.
MS: NLS. MS 4717, f44.

1. A common lament of De Quincey's about translation. He always saw language exchange as operating through an opaque medium, with a free-floating link between signifiers and signifieds which offered only contingent results. See note 5 to 12 December, 1820 (no. 6) above (the final two pages of the "Gillies" article referred to here adduce De Quincey's essential principles of translation). Non-native languages "may be approached, but cannot be reflected as from a mirror", he was later to write ("Protestantism", 1847; M/VIII, p.285).

Schiller's "Sport" might have been specially chosen by De Quincey as either a piece of masochistic self-fantasy, or wish-fulfilment against Blackwood. It involves the malicious overthrow by Count Martinengo of Von G-, an "ardent and enterprising [...] commoner", become arrogant by success and
heedless of the "respectful submissiveness" of others (Blackwood's, vol.VIII, January, 1821, pp.375-76).

10. TO WILLIAM BLACKWOOD
[Edinburgh, 18 December, 1820]

Dear Sir,

The article from Schiller is finished: it was finished yesterday:—so much of it as has been revised and corrected I now send you: the remainder will be at your service in a couple of hours; and would have been corrected and sent before this if I had not been interrupted for two hours by visits this morning.

In one point I find Gillies misled you: I had not abandoned this translation; but finding it a very irksome employment, I had intermitted it for two others far more pleasant to me which I am happy to say are now in a state of forwardness.¹ I work better by much as I go on: and this <week> I shall work like a horse or a country apothecary.

Faithfully yours,
Monday afternoon 4 o'clock Dec 18, Thomas De Quincey

I am now going to dine: and in an hour after dinner I shall have fully corrected the remaining pp.

Addr: William Blackwood Esqr./ Princes Street/[Edinburgh].
MS: NLS. MS 4004, f119.

1. In his 1826 article on R. P. Gillies's German translations, De Quincey notes the "double" responsibility of the "translator of German Tales", who must stand as "translator, and a selector besides" (Blackwood's, vol.XX, December, p.845). Judging from this letter, the latter aspect seems to have been a sticking-point for De Quincey, an habitual vacillator in personal and public matters.
11. TO WILLIAM BLACKWOOD
[Edinburgh. 18 December, 1820]

My dear Sir,

I would not detain your messenger, and therefore did not write an answer. I now send you all of one article except what I will send in the morning. I know not whether I have disappointed you: I cannot help daily disappointing myself: but this I know and can assure you that in my whole life I never did work half so hard; that I have allowed myself time for neither sleep nor eating (at this moment I have not breakfasted); and that I am worn out beyond all I can describe. One single half sheet of the article cost me 14 hours. This I mention only to account for my delay. I have really done all that I could do if I had written to save the lives of my family. This is a humorous article: and I think the latter part will be found diverting enough. But the first sheet reads very dull to me:1 however it is too late to mend it now, and besides I have no power left to judge of anything till I have had some refreshment.

I remain, my dear Sir,

Faithfully yours

6 o'clock

Thos. De Q.

I will correct what remains to-night, and finish another article to-morrow which suits me better.

Addr: William Blackwood Esq./[Edinburgh].
MS: NLS. MS 4004, f122.

1. The latter part of "The Sport of Fortune" involves the theme of revenge set within a gothic context; the earlier part focuses on characterisation.

12. TO WILLIAM BLACKWOOD
[Edinburgh. 19 December, 1820]

My dear Sir,

I was in some hopes that you might be sending down this
way and might order your messenger to call for this conclusion of Schiller's tale. Accordingly I left it on my table directed to you and sealed up when I went to bed. Finding however that no messenger is likely to call, I send it myself. This is the end of it. — The Opium article is very far advanced:¹ and this art. I execute with pleasure to myself.

Yours faithfully,

Thomas De Quincey

Addr: William Blackwood Esqr./Princes Street/[Edinburgh].

MS: NLS. MS 4004, f121.

1. Outside of De Quincey's own letters, the Blackwood Papers in the National Library of Scotland — letter-books, personal and business correspondence included — carry no mention of the "Opium article". This is in stark contrast to the lively interest that surrounded its London evolution.

13. TO WILLIAM BLACKWOOD

[Edinburgh. 1 January, 1821¹]

Dear Sir,

I have not yet written a formal answer to express my readiness to accede [to] your proposals simply for this reason — that I have been very busy both for the Mag. and also for some private business of my own in the South;² and I wished to draw up my engagement in terms of rigorous obligation. Tomorrow however I will send you my bond (if I may so call it) selling myself soul and body to the service of the Magazine for two years (if that term is agreeable to you); and I will take care to word it distinctly and satisfactorily.³

My immediate purpose in writing to you is this:— I am now finishing an article which will more than complete 16pp. taken with the short one sent before:⁴ I know this because I have made an experiment to determine what quantity of my ordinary hand-writing goes to a column of the Mag. Now what I wish to ask you is this: If I send you this article to-morrow by 2
o'clock,\textsuperscript{5} will it be convenient to you to return me 10 guineas? - I am pledged to pay 10£ to-morrow night at 9 o'clock in order to meet a small bill to that amount drawn some time ago: and the sum of money on which I depended for paying it cannot (I now find) be sent to me until after the 5th of this month - my debtor having to sell out of the 3 per cents\textsuperscript{6} which he tells me are shut until that day.

If it is possible, I would request you to return me a line by the bearer.

\[\text{T. De Q.}\]

Addr: William Blackwood/ Princes Street/[Edinburgh].
MS: NLS. MS 4006, f172.

1. Date: The "experiment" mentioned in paragraph two suggests a recent acquaintance with the practicalities of writing for Blackwood's. De Quincey seems only to have been in Edinburgh during December, 1820 and January, 1821 on this occasion. In the knowledge that the letter must date from before the 5th of the month (paragraph two), and with the focus allowed by the note 5 reference, the assigned date is the only feasible one. The MS is endorsed "January 1, 1821?", by an unknown hand (a cataloguer?), traceable to other NLS letters, and usually, though not always, approximately reliable.

2. A frequently-made comment in De Quincey's letters from the north. "Private business [...] in the South" often means a financial transaction with his mother, who lived near Bristol, or with one of the Somerset banks she used. ("My Mother [goes] to Bristol to-morrow [...] to get a proper bill drawn by her banker there" - letter from his sister Jane, 1819: Japp/1891, Memls., vol.II, p.62.) Given what followed, though, it may here refer to the Lakes or London.

3. De Quincey didn't pursue this Faustian pact.

4. A reference to Schiller's "Sport" and probably to the Lakes article mentioned above (3 December, 1820, note 1).
5. See next letter, note 1.
6. Stocks or securities yielding a 3% rate of interest.

14. TO WILLIAM BLACKWOOD
[Edinburgh. 5 or 6 January, 1821]

My dear Sir,

I will trouble you to send me a quire of paper. - For I have none left. I now send one sheet more (or 4pp). The remaining 8pp. are so blotted and interlined that I must copy them out. But that will be done by the evening: Part is already copied. This evening you shall have the whole.

I would be happy to know what is the latest day at which my other articles (Paul Richter &c.) must be sent.1 Because I have various articles in different stages of forwardness - some wanting 1 day - some 2 days - some only an hour or so to finish; and I would select according to the time.

(Prof. Wilson staid from 6 to 11 on Thursday night: so that I lost that night wholly.)

I am, my dear Sir
Yours - T. De Q.

Addr: William Blackwood Esqr./ Princes Street/[Edinburgh].
MS: NLS. MS 4004, f123.

1. William Blackwood responded impatiently to this query. "I must tell you frankly at once", he wrote to De Quincey, "that your mode of furnishing articles will neither answer your own purpose nor mine [...] this article which you have not yet finished you positively promised to have complete on Tuesday by 2 o'clock [see previous letter]. No doubt you may have had many unavoidable causes for the delay [...] It is quite unnecessary as I have again & again told you, to make any enquiry as to when an article will be in time. A good article is always in time" (6 January, 1821: NLS/MS 30304, ff200-201 - Eaton/1936, p.265).
My dear Sir,

I will not dispute with you: in this case I am gagged, having paid away your ten guineas the moment I received them; which I am now heartily sorry that I did.¹

I now send you 4pp. more; the remainder (4pp.) is written, if the printers could read it: but, as I fear they could not, I am copying as fast as possible: and, if you will let me know how late I can send up to-night, I will take care you shall have it.²

'A good article,' you say, 'is always in time.'³ Well: mine is a good one — a very good one, and therefore in time. For he, who does not laugh at the whole latter part, especially from p. 8 to 20, is fit for treason, &c.⁴

You make one mistake, indeed two, but I will notice only one: I have had, you say, no doubt "many unavoidable causes for the delay":— now in fact I have not — scarcely any at all excepting my own native stupidity, which I greatly regret, but cannot remedy. I move slowly whenever I am uncommonly witty. Nevertheless, if you are more particular about quantity than quality, I am perfectly ready to oblige you by changing my style. But articles as droll as this, I really cannot produce faster: dull reviews, morality, &c. and even wit such as some I saw in your December No. as fast as you please.⁵ In fact I have never left my paper except on Thursday once on account of Prof. Wilson — twice during the week to get some breakfast — dinner every day — and to write 3 letters this morning.

[At head of note:] My Schiller art. of 12pp in the MS. is just 5 lines more than six pp. in the Mag. (reckoning 62 lines to a col.); for I counted.⁶ On this proportion, the present of 22pp in the MS will be eleven in type, unless printed in a smaller character.

Yours very truly,

Thos. De Quincey
[Written on cover:] N.B. You have now in all 18pp. of this art. in MS. (and, by what you will see inside at the head of my note, that will be rather more than 9pp. of the Mag. - Here then the art. may close if you like (which I mention that you need not fear to put it to press): it would close very well at the last word of p.18. Nevertheless I shall have the 4 last pp. ready to-night."

Addr: William Blackwood Esqr./[Edinburgh].
MS: NLS. MS 4006, f169.

1. If the ten guineas was for the "Sport", Blackwood had been generous. This was what he usually offered per magazine sheet, which consisted of sixteen printed pages of closely-spaced double-columns. It was a fairly modest rate, and didn't compare, for example, with the average of twenty or so guineas per sheet paid by the Edinburgh Review (Cockburn/1852, vol. I, p.125ff). The occasional Blackwood's contributor Mary Russell Mitford, would grumble to William Blackwood in 1826 that "Ten guineas a sheet is very bad pay for a magazine in double columns" (Wellesley, vol.1, p.8).

2. See note 4 below.


4. De Quincey seems to be making reference throughout this letter to his article on the Lakes (see 3 December, 1820, note 1). The preamble runs to p.20 where, two-thirds of the way down the page, the letter to "Christopher" begins.

5. About a fifth of the articles in the Christmas number might be considered amusing; which particular piece of "wit" De Quincey is referring to isn't clear.

6. The "Sport" did in fact overrun by 6 lines.

7. These "4 last pp." only have survived as an isolated fragment. Page 19 begins "As to what John Paul observes as a noticeable phenomenon of the continental laker".
16. TO WILLIAM BLACKWOOD

Noon

Monday morning, [Edinburgh. 8 January, 1821]

My dear Sir,

As you did not send me word whither and how late I might send on Saturday night, the MS lay here all yesterday. For on Sunday I know not where any man's abode is. This morning I have only just got up:— from what I said on Sat. night I concluded you would send for it: but, as you have not, here it is — as soon as I have seen the light.

If Wilson and Lockhart do not put themselves forward for the Mag. I foresee that the entire weight of supporting it must rest on my shoulders: I see clearly that I must be its Atlas. For excepting our friend Gillies's translation (from a cursed dull thing though), and excepting that spirited Political article at the end, — a more dreary collection of dullness and royal stupidity never did the world see gathered together than the December No. exhibits.¹ Positively it would sink any work in the world. No, no! I see clearly that I must write it all myself — except one sheet which I will leave to Gillies and a few pp. to the other man.

And this horrible dulness, which is enough to inflict apoplexy, happens to coincide with those infernal articles from London.² And to these it seems we are to knock under. What a craven the fellow must be who advised such a piece of devilish cowardice: whoever he be, I hope to God he may soon meet with a halter — even if it were my dear friend Prof. Wilson.

I am hard at work, being determined to save the Mag. from the fate which its stupidity merits.³

Yours, my dear Sir, ever —

Thomas De Quincey.

Addr: William Blackwood Esq/Princes Street/[Edinburgh].
Publ: Eaton/1936, pp.266-67.
MS: NLS. MS 4006, f171.

1. It must be said of the December issue, that even the "wit"
De Quincey refers to in his previous letter appears amidst an abundant wealth of allusions to death. Gillies's (and Lockhart's) "translation" was the "Horae Danicae"; the "Political article", "On Domestic Politics", by George Croly.

2. The *London Magazine* for both December and January (which De Quincey could have seen by this date) contained articles in which John Scott continued his attack on Blackwood's. In December, 1820 appeared his "The Mohock Magazine", adumbrating new levels of hostility against Blackwood, Wilson and Lockhart, who appeared to have retreated "even from an attempt to defend their conduct" (vol. II, p. 671). "They have outraged private character, prostituted principle, insulted decency, [and] perverted truth", he went on to say, not inaccurately, in the January, 1821 issue (vol. III, p. 77). His belief that Blackwood's was now virtually "crushed" proved to be a fatal error: on 10 January Lockhart's second, J. H. Christie, was to visit Scott and set in motion the events that were very shortly to lead to the editor's death in a duel (see France/1964, p. 136ff. For Coleridge's ambivalent if more detached place in the whole business, see Erdman/1975, p. 29ff).

3. William Blackwood's response to this letter was predictable: "I can only excuse your letter [...] by supposing that you were hardly awake when you wrote it. When I apply to you to be the Atlas of my magazine it will be time enough for you to undertake the burden [...] If you cannot send me any thing better than 'The English Lakes' it will be quite unnecessary for you to give yourself any farther bother about the Magazine" (8 January, 1821: NLS/MS 30304, f 204 - Eaton/1936, p. 267).

When he was in London in 1821, De Quincey recounted this episode in his conversations with Richard Woodhouse, confidant of Keats and member of the *London* circle (see Rollins/1948, vol. I, p. cxxlv, ff for details of Woodhouse). Blackwood, Woodhouse recorded in the notebook he kept of his conversations with De Quincey, "had written to him [De
Quincey] 'hundreds of letters', begging him to write for his magazine. "But because", he continued, quoting De Quincey, "in a note to one part of the article [on the Lakes], I had ventured jocularly to complain of the dullness of the articles of his preceding number, B. flew into a violent rage, he returned me the article in the most offensive way, with an intimation that if that was a specimen, I need not trouble myself to send any more articles for his magazine." The article, De Quincey lamented, was "one of the best things I had ever written" (15 November, 1821: Woodhouse MS/f18. Hogg/1895 and Garnett/1885, provide incomplete versions of Woodhouse). The offer to write the whole magazine is now shown as a "pleasant extravaganza"...a rather cruel joke, in fact, against a man who was "morbidly sensible on the subject of the Magazine" (Woodhouse MS/f23, 23 November, 1821).

17. TO [WILLIAM BLACKWOOD]

[Edinburgh. 9 January 1821]

My dear Sir,

You are pleased to doubt whether I was awake when I wrote my note of yesterday morning: with a good deal more reason might I doubt whether the person were awake who either read my note or wrote the answer to it which I received last night.¹ I shall not however enter into any dispute; and shall as little as possible in future, whether our connexion be long or short, trouble you with any notes at all - sleeping or waking.

If I expressed my opinion too freely (as it seems) on your Magazine, - I did so in the full belief first, that you must by this time be perfectly indifferent to the opinions of any one or of any thousand persons on the whole work even (much more on any single number); and secondly, that the relation in which I stood (or fancied I stood) to the Magazine, as a regular Contributor elect, entitled me to any number of comments or of jokes on the work; (I myself being at all times tolerant of jokes,
whether good or bad, on my own compositions). - In this I might be wrong; and, if I gave you any pain, I much regret it. On the other hand it does not appear to me that, if my MS. did not happen to suit your work, you were therefore entitled to favor me with your criticism upon it. The Magazine, which I criticised, was not (I believe) your own composition; and according to the usage of the world, if I took any liberty and some retort seemed to you necessary, I believe it would have been quite a sufficient one to throw back upon my hands the labor of a week.

As to my being 'the Atlas' of your Magazine (though I suppose no person could gather from my note that such a post was the object of my serious ambition), you will give me leave to observe that - on the supposition of my being a contributor to that work - it could not depend either on your will or mine whether the readers of it should regard me in that light.

I have only now to add that I shall complete my 24pp.; and you will of course exercise your discretion in determining whether they shall go into your Magazine. I remain, my dear Sir,

Sincerely yours,

Thomas De Quincey

Tuesday morning, Jany. 9

Publ: Eaton/1936, pp.267-68.
MS: NLS. MS 4006, f170.

1. See previous letter, note 3.
2. See 12 December, 1820 (no. 6), note 1. Unlike most of the publishers De Quincey was to deal with, William Blackwood was not a seasoned writer. He seems to have produced just three pieces for his magazine, one of which was a review of a children's selection (vol.I, April, 1817, pp.79-80, and see Strout/1959, p.24). Oliphant/1897 (vol.I, p.125) refers to his "curious" position as editor of Blackwood's; understating the perplexed editorial ambiguity of the periodical. John Scott fixed upon, by turn, Wilson, Blackwood, and Lockhart
individually and collectively as editors: De Quincey seems to have been similarly puzzled.

3. In his 1850 article on Wilson, De Quincey referred to his friend as "not the editor of [Blackwood's, but] its intellectual Atlas" (M/V, p.293).

4. De Quincey did not publish anything after the "Sport" in Blackwood's until 1826, and it is unlikely that he made any serious attempt to do so. He probably returned to Fox Ghyll shortly after writing this letter (Lindop/1981, p.245). Wilson wrote to him there in the middle of February, complaining about the bills that De Quincey was drawing on him, offering blandishments about his employment prospects with Blackwood, and trying to solicit advice for his forthcoming lectures on "Cause and Effect" (Japp/1891, Memls., vol.II, pp.46-48).

18. TO GEORGE GEE¹

[ Fox Ghyll, near Ambleside. 3 March, 1821 ]

My dear Sir,

Your note has given me the very greatest concern. Last night for the first time since I returned from Edinburgh I was able (from a rheumatic affection of my face) to get out: and happening to meet Mr. Dawes2 I was so much interested for poor Scott that I took the liberty of stopping Mr. D. (though scarcely acquainted with him) to ask for the latest news of his case: Mr. D. assured me that the ball was extracted; and that, by the latest account he had seen, S. was in a fair way for recovering. I fear however, from the style of your note, this must be a mistake.³

I agree with you that "his loss will be sincerely regretted": for myself I can say that, though I never saw him, I have felt the deepest anxiety about him and sorrow for his death; and the more so, because I learnt enough when I was at Edinburgh to acquit him most fully of all injustice in the main matter of his charge against Blackwood.⁴ One or two passages in another part of the London Mag. I still condemn
for the manner and, because to some degree they offended in
the very way which that Mag. was setting itself (so justly, I
think) to reprobate in Blackwood. But I was told, and from the
internal evidence it seems probable, that Scott was not
concerned in those passages.\footnote{5} - For the general style and
execution of what is indisputably Scott's part, nothing can be
more excellent as it seems to me. - In many very important
qualities I do not think he has left his equal behind. - But I
am running on further than I intended: however I thought it
right, out of respect to Scott's memory, that I should let you
know that my means of further information on this subject in
Edinburgh had enabled me to retract anything I and others
might previously have felt inclined to urge in deduction from
the general merits of his services in a case when they have
unhappily proved so fatal to himself.

I send you all the numbers of the Lond. Mag. which can be
found; viz. two. There is a third, which after a long search
is not forthcoming. But I will send it as soon as it is found.
Pray keep them as long as you or the ladies may wish; and
Believe me, my dear Sir,
Most faithfully yours,
Saturday March 3, 1821.
Thomas De Quincey.

Addr: George Gee Esqre./Rydal.

\footnote{1. De Quincey's Rydal neighbour. See 5 December, 1820, note 3
and ?1822 (52/II).}
\footnote{2. Revd. John Dawes, Ambleside schoolmaster. Hartley Coleridge
moved to Ambleside in 1822 to attend his school.}
\footnote{3. See 8 January, 1821, note 2. Scott was wounded in the duel
on 16 February. There were early hopes for his recovery but he
died at Chalk Farm Tavern, near the scene of the duel, on 27
February. De Quincey offered his own thoughts on duelling -
unresolved, of course - in 1841 (\textit{Tait's}, February, pp.97-109;
M/III, p.180ff).}
4. These are interesting comments in the light of De Quincey's evident — and never explained — hostility towards the Blackwood's set-up during his first connection with it. This late recognition of Scott's "excellent" abilities was to be modified a little, after De Quincey had been associated with the London for two years, by the knowledge that the former editor's "command of languages or subjects was not extensive" (British Library MS, Add. 37215, ff11-12). Scott's position in the affair with Blackwood's, has been generally vindicated by twentieth-century commentators (see references in 27 November, 1820, note 13).

5. Scott did in fact admit to writing those articles, referred to in De Quincey's previous letters, which most directly attacked Blackwood's editorial policy (London Magazine, vol.III, February, 1821, eight-page insert. See also Riga/1975, entries 253, 284 and 316, e.g.)

19. TO JOSEPH COTTLE

Thursday August 2, 1821.

Mr. Bothe's, 4 York Street, Covent Garden. [London.]

My dear Sir,

I take the liberty, in consideration of our ancient friendship, to request a pecuniary service from you — if it is convenient to you to render it at this moment. On Wednesday next, August 8, a Bill for £35 drawn on me — and which a few days ago I accepted — falls due:— Could you lend me this sum for a few weeks until I pass through Bristol in my way to Westhay? My reason for asking it — is simply because I yesterday learned that a tradesman in the North, who owes me something more than that sum, is unable to meet his engagement. On him it was, in consequence of his positive promise, that I depended for the amount of the Bill: and, under the suddenness of this notice, I know not how to face the demand within the time. Before I leave London I shall receive a considerable sum of money from Murray for a work I
am now at his request preparing for the Press; my stay in London being solely on that account.⁴ Out of this, or on September 25 out of my regular income,⁵ I could with convenience repay you: and if from any cause you should want it before that day, I could (on your apprising me of that fact) immediately request my mother to repay you.

It will naturally strike you as extraordinary that I do not apply directly to my mother at this time. My reason for wishing to avoid such an application is shortly this:— through the ill offices of some malevolent persons, for the last two years there has been a coolness between her and myself amounting to a total breach of all intercourse.⁶ On coming up to Town however lately I took occasion, when writing to her on a matter of business, to make frank and cordial advances towards a reconciliation. She had been in bad spirits; and she met these advances in the same spirit of peace and good-will. We are therefore now reconciled, and upon our old footing. But for that very reason I do not wish, if I could avoid it, to ask her for an assistance which might reflect back a mercenary character, or at least a character of self-interest, upon my own most sincere overtures towards this renewal of our former amity. More especially because she sent me of her own accord a present, which unfortunately I applied to another purpose — from not having until yesterday at all anticipated the emergency which has now arisen.

Having no friend after my mother excepting Southey (and he is at too great a distance to be sure of communicating with him in time) in whose kindness I had so much confidence as I had in yours, I have ventured to hope that you will do me this service; but in any case I shall always remain, with kind regards to the ladies, your faithful friend,

Thos. De Quincey.

P.S. If it does not suit your convenience to lend me the whole sum I have mentioned, — perhaps you could furnish me a part; and I will think of some other way for the remainder.
1. Joseph Cottle (1770-1853), Bristol bookseller and publisher. It was through his agency that De Quincey had been able to introduce himself to Coleridge and ultimately to Wordsworth. In 1807 he dealt with De Quincey's "anonymous" gift (or loan as it was later designated) of £300 to Coleridge (Japp/1891, Memls., vol.I, Chapter XI, and Lindop/1981, pp.140-48). He had access to the West Country Evangelical circles that De Quincey probably alludes to in this letter (see note 6). De Quincey also wrote to Coleridge himself early in August, doubtlessly playing on the ambiguous nature of the gift (which Coleridge pretended to accept as a loan), to seek its repayment (Col/Let., vol.V, pp.161-164). He had no luck.

2. J. H. Bohte, "Foreign Bookseller to his Majesty" as De Quincey called him (29 April, 1822/no.47), and frequently mentioned in these letters. His address was to be De Quincey's London lodging house for much of his stay in the city: a very useful residence for a recluse Germanophile like De Quincey. Bohte's name also occurs in the correspondence of Coleridge and Carlyle, who both relied on him as a supplier of German books. Lowndes/1861 notes that the Confessions "were written in a little room at the back of Mr. H. G. Bohn's premises [Bohn didn't set up as a bookseller here until 1831], No. 4, York Street" (p.2026; see also Rayment/1913). One supposes it is to Bohte's shop that De Quincey refers in "Gillies German Stories" when he writes that, "some years ago, we took lodgings at a German circulating library and read a 'matter' of three thousand tales" (Blackwood's, vol.XX, December, 1826, p.852. London street directories for the period give Bohte as a bookseller only). By a strange irony De Quincey had chosen to establish himself in the former lodgings of the previous editor of the London Magazine: he was living in "Mr. [John] Scott's appartments, at Mr. Botte's [sic], in York-street"
(Reynolds/1973, p.27, note 3): perhaps he was sleeping in the bed of his dead sometime adversary.

De Quincey had probably travelled to London from Fox Ghyll in May or June, 1821, "armed merely with a letter of introduction from Wordsworth to Thomas Noon Talfourd, the distinguished barrister, [dramatist, and contributor to the London]" (Eaton/1936, p.271, and see De Quincey's own version of the story in M/III, p. 127ff). Talfourd quickly introduced him into the London Magazine circle: "From him, also, I obtained an introduction to Messrs. Taylor and Hessey [the magazine's publishers]" (M/III, p.127).

3. Westhay, the house of De Quincey's mother, near Wrington in Somerset. The familiar reference to the house suggests that Cottle knew it well.

4. John Murray (1778-1843), publisher, briefly a partner in Blackwood's (which he left because of the magazine's splenetic "anti-Cockney" stance), and proprietor and manager of the London-based Quarterly Review. There is probably an element of truth in what De Quincey says here, the large caveat being that he habitually inflated his prospects whenever he needed to impress a would-be lender. The "work" he refers to - a substantial-sounding one - remains a mystery. Perhaps he was simply hoping to have articles accepted for the Tory Quarterly: a lucrative prospect. Guides to the attribution of articles in the magazine (Shine/1949 and subsequent additions by various writers), have left few gaps for 1821-22, and none of the unattributed pieces seem to be De Quincey's work (such is the case for the Quarterly generally). Similarly, none of Murray's book publications for the period can be ascribed to De Quincey. In 1820 Murray inaugurated what was several years later to become a lengthy series of travel books, by publishing a guidebook to the continent. Although it seems unlikely, De Quincey might be talking about a guide to the Lake District here. This is certainly the case in his letter of 10 March, 1830 to J. G. Lockhart (see below), a close associate of Murray. It seems probable, though, that in his
later comments on the subject, De Quincey is talking about a Lakes book for Murray's "Family Library" series of cheap educative works, which dates from 1829 (see also 17 August, 1831). Murray's archive has not thrown any light on the matter.

De Quincey referred to his London dealings with Murray in some of the conversations recorded by Richard Woodhouse. He was quite specific about a work in progress. "I saw Murray in Westmoreland [...] he offered me 100 guineas for a good classical article for the Quarterly [...] My object [in visiting Murray in London] was to treat with him for a work I had in prospect: he offered to read a volume of it, & to give me his opinion whether it would answer [...] But I felt it would be quite impossible that I could write it, without a certain market for it" (3 November, 1821: Woodhouse MS/f19). Murray's behaviour towards De Quincey in London, "was quite different from what it had been in Westmoreland, when he pressed me for an article, and insisted that I should never come to town without calling on him [...] But three hundred miles makes a great difference in some people" (ibid., ff20-21, 17 November; Hogg/1895, pp.79-82). When De Quincey and Murray met "in Westmoreland" isn't clear. There would have been a number of opportunities over the years, and the early efforts of Wordsworth and Southey to recommend De Quincey to Murray as a Quarterly contributor would have left a favourable mark (Lindop/1981, p. 235, and Southey/1965, vol.2, p.197). On the other hand there was still the unreviewed collected Schiller to sour matters (see 13 December, 1820, note 1).

5. What exactly De Quincey means here is unclear. It has been generally assumed that apart from £18 a year, his share of the warehouse rent stemming from Thomas Quincey snr's business days (Jordan/1962, p.290), he didn't have anything resembling a fixed income until 1825, when his mother and his uncle, Thomas Penson, arranged an allowance for him (Japp/1891, Memls., vol.II, pp.128-130). Even this was supposedly "entirely subject to Mrs. Quincey's control and good will"
It is evident, though, that he received - however unreliably - "an annual remittance" in mid-July from his uncle, in addition to the warehouse rent. In 1819 the two amounted to £116: £84 from Penson and £32 warehouse rent (Japp/1891, Memls., vol.II, pp.62-67). In 1821, when "a great part of his patrimony had melted away, and [...] he was in difficulties" (Japp/1890, p.166), De Quincey also relied on loans or gifts of money from his mother and uncle, or perhaps Mrs. Quincey even set up an ad hoc system for transmitting money to her son. (N.B. De Quincey's mother had dropped the De from her name by this stage.)

6. Probably Evangelical friends of Mrs Quincey; a group never trusted by the son, whose work, nonetheless, bore traces of Evangelical "self-examination" (Lindop/1985, p.102ff).

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20. TO [JOHN TAYLOR]

[London]
Thursday August 9. [1821]

My dear Sir,

I thank you very sincerely for the obliging and delicate manner in which you last night remitted to me the Cheque for Ten Guineas <on> Messrs. Gosling and Sharpe. - I will avail myself of your kind permission to delay the conclusion for a day (or two), because I shall thus be able to execute some parts of it in perhaps a more satisfactory manner and because I shall have time to write it more legibly - and with less interlineation.²

The last No. of the Mag., with which you were so good as to furnish me, strikes me as being very interesting. - I have not, I think, read the whole: but what appears to me likely to be of great service to the Mag. (omitting Elia, who of necessity, will always be a Pillar of strength) - are the Coronation Report (which bears the same relation to all others I have seen - that a Picture of a landscape does to a Map), and the Life of Warton, and the account of Madame Catalani.
(By the bye, she ought to pay for this: for the writer is the most effective proneur of her wonderful powers I have yet met with.)

I wonder much who is the author of the *Lines to Elia*. They are manifestly from a man of genius; and to my feeling have some beautiful passages. But I cannot myself relish, in point of *taste*, I mean, the way in which the last recesses of human hopes and fears are brought into combination with grotesque and fantastic ornaments such as the description of Cathedral stone-work ('Key-stone Angels') &c.

I remain, my dear Sir,
Most faithfully yours
Thos. De Quincey.

MS: Pierpont Morgan Library. MA 1708.

1. John Taylor (1781-1864), author and publisher (perhaps best known, with his business partner, J. A. Hessey, as Keats's publisher). His miscellaneous writings included by 1821, four works on the identity of Junius (he offered, probably correctly, Sir Philip Frances), two introductions to volumes of John Clare's poems (whose publisher he was), and a tract on political economy, a subject always close to De Quincey's heart (Blunden/1936, p.249). As well as compiling many of the "Lion's Head" editorials, he contributed two dozen or so miscellaneous articles and poems to the *London* (see Riga/1975, pp.228-29). Taylor and Hessey took over the *London Magazine* after John Scott's death; publishing their first monthly number from Fleet Street, in July, 1821. Despite suffering severe nervous problems, Taylor - along with a series of editorial assistants (chiefly the poet, Thomas Hood) - acted as managing editor of the *London* until late 1822, when he resigned much of his work to his assistants. Hessey's editorial function seems to have been a more ad hoc one, though judging by the specific detail on *London* matters in De Quincey's letters to him, not as insignificant as most commentators have supposed. He dealt much more with the
commercial and financial side of things, and was thus rapidly deemed the most suitable target for De Quincey's letters. The so-called "golden" years of the London are well documented: see books on the subject by Blunden/1975; Bauer/1953; and Chilcott/1972. If its fame was great its circulation was small: around 2,000 in August, 1821, compared with Blackwood's own (probably over)estimated high point of "SOMEWHERE BELOW 17,000!" per month average around this time (Blackwood's, vol.VIII, October, 1820, p.81; Chilcott/1972, p.133 and 149). Under Taylor and Hessey the "prominence given [to] political essays and political comment [...] abruptly stopped" (Bauer/1953, 119). Whilst Bauer's notion is not quite accurate - the London's liberal idealism continued - it would be true to say that the magazine went on more to try to reflect the artistic than the political context of its age. It did of course remain a firmly London-centred periodical, just the vehicle for De Quincey's London-biased Confessions. And paying up to twenty guineas a sheet (16 magazine pages) as it did, its terms were, as De Quincey put it, "ultra-munificent" (M/III, p.128). Riga/1975 notes that "Taylor was at least paying [...] ten guineas a sheet for prose and fifteen for verse [...] some variations were made [...] Lamb [got] twenty guineas a sheet" (p.xxviii). De Quincey's own rate varied, as his letters show, between about twelve and sixteen guineas a sheet. He received an initial payment of between forty guineas and sixty pounds (depending on which source one believes) for the Confessions, a work which ran to about $2^{3/4}$ sheets (see 2 November, 1821, note 1 for further details).

De Quincey's own comments on Taylor appeared in his December, 1840 Tait's "Sketch". He believed the publisher had "merely trifled" in his writings on political economy, and that in religious matters he was "a dissenter [...] of illiberal spirit" (M/III, p.128ff. On this occasion, Taylor vented his fury in a letter to his brother, taking comfort in the promise of his friend Julius Hare, Archdeacon of Sussex [and former London contributor] to write a refutation [29
December, 1840: Bakewell MS].). In the 1820's the relationship between the two men went the way of many of De Quincey's publishing relationships: it started well, faltered and then fell apart. Such, though, was also the case with many of the writers Taylor was publishing. John Clare offers a good summary of the matter: "[Taylor] works himself into the good opinions of people in a moment; but it is not lasting, for he grows into a studied carelessness and neglect that he carries into a system. [He] is very fond of arguing about the Latin and Greek poets [...] He sifts a theory of truth [...] with much ingenuity and subtlety of argument" (Blunden/1931, pp.117-119). Keats, Clare, Thomas Carlyle and De Quincey were all to react angrily to this "system" (Chilcott/1972, passim). It must also be said, though, that both Taylor and his business partner developed unusually close associations with their writers in an age of increasing commercial detachment. The monthly London dinners, held in the early 1820's, and short-lived as they were, have become a paradigm for editor/contributor harmony.

2. The reference is to the Confessions, the first part of which was then undergoing revision. This first instalment, Confessions of an English Opium-Eater: being an Extract from the Life of a Scholar, appeared in the London in September, 1821 (vol.IV, pp.293-312), and "Part II" in the October issue (vol.IV, pp.353-79). (The official publication date would have been the beginning of the relevant month in each case.)

3. De Quincey writes here about the August, 1821 issue of the London (vol.IV), which contained Charles Lamb's ("Elia's") "Jews, Quakers, Scotchmen and other Imperfect Sympathies". "The Coronation" is by J. H. Reynolds, the article on Warton ("Continuation of Dr. Johnson's Lives of the Poets") by H. F. Cary, and the piece on Catalani is in the unattributed "Report of Music". Madame Catalani had been a renowned coloratura soprano in De Quincey's younger days. He met her in 1807 and recorded his impressions of "that marvel of a woman", in 1839 (Rec./1970, p.126). Bizarrely, J. G. Lockhart drew a parallel
between William Blackwood's and Catalani's features, in his Peter's Letters to his Kinsfolk (Lockhart/1977, p.98).

4. The "Epistle to Elia" is the work of Charles Abraham Elton (1778-1853). It is, in fact, a rather maudlin reflection on mortality. The image De Quincey finds particularly objectionable occurs on p.138 of the magazine: "Or prim as key-stone angels, perch'd aloof,/With Atlas palms up-propping th' old church-roof".

21. TO JOHN TAYLOR

[London]
Friday morning August 17. [1821]

My dear Sir,

It must have surprised you that I have not transmitted the remainder of the MS. before this time; and I fear that, under the peculiar circumstances of this case, my seeming negligence must have worn an appearance not very creditable to me.¹ - I should indeed take shame to myself if I had been capable of any intentional delay for a single hour. The case is simply this: the Bill, which I had accepted (as I think I mentioned to you), became due on Thursday the 9th inst: part of the money, on which I relied for paying it, did not arrive (owing, as I have since learned from the Old Bristol Bank to the negligence of a person in Somersetshire in sending the order to that Bank):² under the circumstances I was advised, for the sake of avoiding arrest, to leave my lodgings for a few days. This I did on the evening of the 9th: and it was not until Tuesday that I found myself able on that account to return hither: and from illness, I did not in fact return until last night.³

Meantime, in the tumult of coffee houses where I have lived for the last week I have found it difficult to write at all: for it happened that the only coffee-rooms, where I was known enough to expect credit, were those of great Coach-Inns.⁴
This evening, or to-morrow morning early, I will return the Proofs (which I found here), and the remainder of the MS. with an answer to your letter.

Believe me, my dear Sir,

Most faithfully yours,

Thomas De Quincey

The Proofs are fully corrected: but I am anxious to apply the best remedy in my favor to the objection you have suggested. In fact this objection occurred to me from the first: but the method of evading it which you propose is hardly shaped to meet the course of what follows. 5

Addr: John Taylor Esqr./Fleet Street/[London]


1. The work under discussion throughout this letter is the Confessions.
2. See 1 January, 1821, note 2.
3. As De Quincey was fully aware, London debtors were much more likely to end up in prison than were their Edinburgh counterparts, who could take refuge in the debtors' sanctuary at Holyrood. The "political" stigma of ending up in a London debtors' prison would have been great to him for more than the obvious reason: only recently had debtors jails been the focus of "ultra-Jacobin agitation in London" (Thompson/1982, p.691).
4. There is a direct reference to this period in De Quincey's "Recollections of Charles Lamb - No. II" (Tait's, vol.V, June 1838, p.358ff; M/III, p.71ff): "I began to view my unhappy London life - a life of literary toils, odious to my heart - as a permanent state of exile from my Westmoreland home [where he had left his wife and three children.] I was obliged to relinquish my daily walks in Hyde Park and Kensington Gardens, from the misery of seeing children [...] intellectual exertion [was] performed under opium [...] with a sense of disgust" (ibid, Tait's, p.358). Of the Confessions he commented "the narrative part was written with singular regularity..."
dreams had been composed slowly [...] at wide intervals" (ibid, p.360).
5. The "objection" is possibly referred to in the next letter.

22. TO [JOHN TAYLOR] Sale Cat. Extract
[London, 18 August, (1821)]

The title leading the reader to expect a record of the effects of opium, he must naturally be on the fret whilst reading anything which baulks his expectation, and no story in the world could stand up against such a disadvantage. In some way or other this must be mended. The question is, How? In the MS. I had left a blank, as I remember, before the paragraph beginning, "I have often been asked how I first came to be a regular opium eater." This blank I meant, but forgot, to have filled up with some such title as Introductory Narrative or Preliminary Confessions, &c.²

Sale cat: Sotheby's, 8 & 9 June, 1903, Lot 579. This is described as a 2pp. letter "principally on the subject of [De Quincey's] opium-eating habits."

1. Day and month given in sale catalogue.
2. The manuscript has a blank two-inch gap above the passage referred to (Dove Cottage, p.5 recto). The haste with which De Quincey was working is well illustrated by the fact that, in the absence of his MS, he had forgotten that he had already written "Preliminary Confessions" a few paragraphs earlier.

23. TO JOHN TAYLOR
[London. 22 August, 1821]

My dear Sir,

I am exceedingly pleased that you approve of my article.¹ The Black² will explain: for I am in great pain. One half sheet (of letter paper) will complete the first part:- this I
will, if it be possible, have in your hands to-morrow morning by 9 o'\clock. Will that be too late?

I have several shorter articles which I send to fill up a page or so here and there, if you want such.

Most faithfully yours

Aug. 22.

Thos. De Q.

The noblemen alluded to are the present Marq. of Sligo, then Earl of Altamont, and his father. ³

I was sorry that I was out last night: I usually walk out from 6 o'\clock till ½ after 9 or 10 to keep up any degree of health.

Addr: John Taylor Esqr./Fleet Street/[London].
MS: British Library. Add. 37215, f3.

1. In view of the stir that the Confessions was to create, Taylor had reason to be pleased. He wrote to his father on 22 August, 1821 that, "One Gentleman has begun a long Article [...] his Copy comes in so very slow that I cannot complete anything more for want of it. That Article will be found a very curious one - it is on Opium-eating [...] I sometimes wonder whether my Opium Friend be in his Senses" (Taylor/1925, p.262).

2. One of the firm's press runners.


24. TO JOHN TAYLOR [Note on MS of the Confessions]¹

Note to John Taylor Esqr. I have paged - A, B, C, &c having forgot the course of the numeral paging.²

My dear Sir,

For want of paper, and that I may not detain your messenger, I write to you in this unceremonious way. - Your messenger asks for an answer to your last note:- I have read
it over this moment again, and cannot exactly determine what point it is to which you wish an answer.

What I now send is the product of this morning: my infernal persecution, the Rheumatism, as usual not allowing me any respite from 5 o'clock to 6 this morning. I had miscalculated: but I am now sure that what remains will not be more than two of my pages.

MS: Dove Cottage. Box DC MSS 15 &19 (page D).

1. Of the first part of the work, that is. The note occurs on page D of the MS, which is paged by De Quincey from 1 to 39 then A to J (it would appear on p. 30 of Conf./1821).
2. The note gives another sign of the white heat of composition. The numbered section was snatched from De Quincey while he was mid-sentence (on p. 39 in the MS), and taken to the printer. At the head of page A he scribbled a hasty note to the compositor, announcing his change to letter pagination for "want of knowing" the number he had reached under the old scheme of paging. The above note was probably written shortly before the last letter, but since there is an element of doubt (in De Quincey's statements about stage of composition, for one thing), I have placed it here, which is its latest possible point of sending.

25. TO JOHN TAYLOR

[London. 25 August, 1821]

My dear Sir,

This morning I deferred answering your letter that I might not detain your messenger: and for the same reason I now answer it briefly. The remaining part, i.e. the proper Confessions, will make at least 16 printed pp. such as yours; but I think as much as the part already printed.¹ I observe the close which you probably allude to - as one of the good ones; I suppose it to be - at - 'how it happened, the reader will learn from what remains of this introd. narrative.' But,
from the certainty that the rest will not be much (if at all) less than what is already printed, perhaps you will think it best to publish the whole.\(^2\)

For the due continuation, and by an early day, you may depend upon me fully.

I cannot thank you adequately for your inclosure in such a hurry. The same kindness, which led you to send it, will make it pleasing to you to hear — that it is the most *seasonable* supply I ever received in my life; and has relieved me from a load of anxiety.

I return the Proofs corrected: and remain, my dear Sir,

Ever and most faithfully yours,

Sat. evening. Augt. 25. Thomas De Quincey.

John Taylor Esqre.

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MS: Harry Ransom H.R.C., University of Texas at Austin. MS File - Letters.

1. The second part of the *Confessions*, proved to be a third longer than part one.

2. Taylor’s suggested "close" would have made part one a third shorter than what was eventually printed in the September number of the *London* (the whole of the MS, from 1 to J, that is). See *Conf./1821*, p.23 for the position of Taylor’s close.

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26. **TO JOHN TAYLOR**

[London]

Monday Augt. 27. [1821]

My dear Sir,

It has just occurred to me (for a purpose which I will explain to you in a note which I shall have occasion to write this evening or to-morrow) that it would be very useful to me to have a copy or two of the Confessions — so far as they have gone already — struck off on any sort of paper: in fact the very same slips as were sent for correction would answer my purpose if it is consistent with the customary regulations of the Press. I fear that I am too late in this application: if
not, and there is no difficulty in complying with my request, I should be much obliged to you to give orders to that effect. Or, if you will allow me, I will send a message to the Printers.

I am, my dear Sir,

Ever yours most truly

Thos. De Quincey

Addr: John Taylor Esqr./Fleet Street/[London].


26 (II). TO J.A. HESSEY

My dear Sir,

I am truly sorry, knowing how important it must be to an Editor to have all engagements punctually executed, that I fear my first portion cannot be ready for the Press before to-night: but at the earliest moment you choose to send to-morrow morning it shall be delivered. —

I have exerted myself as much as I possibly could, and without any intermission. But on Friday night, from the insufferable heat increased by a fire which I was under the necessity of keeping in all night, I flung off the bed-clothes in my sleep: and rose with a sore-throat which towards evening increased into a return of fever: and, though I am now again better, yet from the oppression on my spirits I could not work so fast: and the dove-tailing [of] the different parts I had prepared into each other obliged me to so many alterations that some parts are still to be re-written, and an introductory part is now wanting to give them their proper effect under the new arrangements.

I have now so cast the whole, that I shall flow along without further hindrance. The truth is, I am obliged to compose the whole almost in my mind before I can write a line.
I remain, my dear Sir,
Very sincerely yours,
Thos. De Quincey

Addr: J.A.Hessey Esqe./Fleet Street/[London].
PUBL: See note 2.

1. For details about J. A. Hessey see note 1 of the next letter.

2. In an article which appeared in Notes and Queries in September 1958 (N.S., vol.5, no.9, pp.392/93, "A Thomas De Quincey Letter"), David Bonnell Green has given two possible dates for this letter, a transcription of which he includes; viz., 27 August, 1821, or 30 December, 1822. Green argues, quite rightly, that the work referred to in this letter to one of the London's directors, appears to be a substantial one which was being written in London ("send to-morrow morning"). During his London Magazine period, De Quincey was only in the capital between June, 1821 and 29 December, 1821; between 12 December, 1822 and 5 August, 1823; and from June, 1824 to mid-October, 1825. Green concludes, again accurately, that the work in progress for the London, must be the Confessions or the Letters to a Young Man whose Education has been Neglected (published between January and July, 1823). (De Quincey's 1824/25 "translation," Walladmor, separately published in book form, can be excluded on the grounds that the piece referred to in the letter was for the London itself). Basing his calculations on weather reports for the months preceding the publication of the first part of the articles, and on a wrongly-deduced publishing schedule, Green duly reaches the dates given.

Weather reports notwithstanding - of dubious use anyway when the response comes from a drug-addict - it seems most likely that it is the Confessions which is under discussion here. As the letters for 24 October and 8 December, 1822, note 13 below indicate, the Letters seem to have been well in hand before De Quincey left his Lake-District retreat for London in
December, 1822. The first sentence of the letter suggests that the relationship of "Editor" and writer was of fairly recent origin; or, anyway, that the former had not yet had much experience of just how consistently unpunctual the latter could be. I would also suggest that the letter has that slightly breathless quality which is there throughout the Confessions period. The "dove-tailing" of the parts seems to describe well De Quincey's fitting together of the individual sections of a partly-prepared article, such as we know was the case with the Confessions. A fairly early date in the month preceding the publication of each part of the Confessions, therefore, seems most likely. The later date must be the favoured one on account of it being Hessey who was generally De Quincey's later addressee - but the dates are conjectural.

27. TO J. A. HESSEY

4 York Street
[London]
Friday Sept. 7 [1821]

My dear Sir,

I am much concerned to hear of Mr. Taylor's indisposition to whose kindness and yours I have been so much indebted, and hope most heartily that I shall have the pleasure of seeing him in good health again before I leave London.²

I was obliged to let your messenger return without an answer (except a verbal one) from want of paper, which I could not immediately procure - having no servant or attendant but the single female servant of the house. - I now write to put you in possession of my case, as respects the main business of your letter. I came up to London ill: and for the whole of August nearly I felt that some malady was hanging about which, in spite of all the excercise I took, would probably lay me in a sick bed before long. Last week, accordingly, immediately after breakfasting I was seized with a violent shivering fit
succeeded by such ardent fever and other symptoms as took away from my own mind all hope that I should outlive the week: insomuch that I made every preparation for death, and requested Mr. Bothe (with whom I lodge) to send an express into Somersetshire for a person to whom I wished to make a communication before I died. This was to have been done on the following morning: that night however a general change took place suddenly in my pulse &c.; and I have since been daily growing better; except from one relapse into a state of great pain from having accepted an invitation to dinner with my worthy landlord, whose kindness is so great that I could not well resist it. - I trouble you with this account, simply to explain how it is that you have not already received the Second Part of the 'Opium-Eater' - and how I stand at this moment with respect to its final execution. From weakness I have not yet been able to go out for the benefit of the air: and until yesterday I was so weak as hardly to be able to hold a pen, or to think almost. But this afternoon I am going out: and I now increase so much in strength and especially in spirits (this illness seeming to have carried off some great weight of oppressive feelings) that I mean to set to work this evening; and I doubt not to accomplish much more in any given time than I could have done a fortnight ago. - I can therefore promise to let you have some quantity (say 5 or 6 of your pages) on Monday about 2 o'clock: and I could engage to keep up every following day with 3 pages more, as I would not allow any other call upon my time to interfere with it. If you think that this would not answer the purpose, or fear the apparent hazard of it, perhaps it might be better not to place my article first (which intention in regard to my article, by the bye, Mr. Taylor did not communicate to me): however, I am sure that I could depend upon myself for finishing the article by Friday next (this day week). One disadvantage certainly attends the mode I proposed of following the motions of the Press 'currente calamo' and finding from day to day, that it occasions awkwardnesses from premature arrangements to which
the course of what follows does not always accommodate itself, and many slips and inaccuracies of language. I felt this in the article I have already sent you: for I was obliged to fight with a host of letter-writing besiegers, duns, &c. with one hand - whilst my other was busy on the article: - I have to thank you, or Mr. Taylor, for removing many innaccuracies and impurities of language which I remembered but not in time to correct. 

During my illness I have been much entertained with your last No. The 'Old Benchers' &c. is to me a delightful paper; even more than usually so, tho' all Elia's are delightful. The passage about Sun-Dials and many others are to my thinking as good as anything in Sir Thos. Brown - who yet is my favorite author of that class. - When Elia's papers are all collected, it seems to me that they are as much entitled to take this station as a legitimate English Classic in a region of our literature not very crowded as Addison's Sir R. de Coverley or any other the most exquisite that can be produced. 

The Antiquary - English Eating - and Leisure Hours - were all very lively and amusing to me. 

'Epitaphs' is an interesting paper to me, and apparently from a man of fine tact and feeling: but I must complain of his choice of illustrations which besides, being many of them too trite, are often not good or bad enough - and that in a class of composition which is so remarkable that if it make any pretention at all it is always either very good or outrageously bad. - Besides he should have looked into Weever's Fun. Monuments: and into Wordsworth's Essay on Epitaphs who has in my mind fully developed the principle which should govern the composition of an Epitaph. It is a subject on which I should wish to try my own hand - having often thought of it.

The Review of A New Hymn Book strikes me as remarkably good: and I know not whether you observed a review of a French book (Lamartine) in which, though not otherwise very
noticeable, there is an uncommonly happy translation of two stanzas — especially the second.\textsuperscript{11}

I trouble you with my comments, supposing that from all quarters it may be useful or interesting to an Editor to know exactly what has given much pleasure.

With respect to my own I am much gratified to hear what you report of its reception: and shall do my best to make the next part as interesting as possible.\textsuperscript{12}

I remain, my dear Sir,

Most faithfully and truly yours,

J. A. Hessey Esqe.

Thos. De Quincey.

\textsuperscript{1} James Augustus Hessey (1785-1870). Hessey has come down to us as a rather indistinct figure, screened by the larger personality of John Taylor. Declared bankrupt as a bookseller in 1829, he went on to become an auctioneer before settling down as a schoolmaster (Chilcott/1972, p.188). According to Blunden/1975, he was "a steady man with good sense as his mainstay [...] well schooled [...] and he accepted the position of second in command" (p.23). To Thomas Carlyle he was "the gum-gawed habble tree, vacillating Mr. Hess[e]y" (CL/vol.3, p.160). Although we have none of his letters to De Quincey, it remains a fact that Hessey was able to manage the drug-addict well enough to keep him writing for the London until 1824 (when its best days were over anyway) — no small miracle given the few weeks William Blackwood had been able to detain him. (See also 9 August, 1821, note 1).

\textsuperscript{2} Taylor was probably suffering one of his periodic fits of depression. These frequently drove him to seek refuge at his brother's house, in Bakewell. De Quincey didn't leave London until the end of December.

\textsuperscript{3} Perhaps with his mother, or her banker! For all that he was later to say that opium had preserved his health, De Quincey's letters document illness after illness, doubtlessly opium-
induced in many cases. The emblem of approaching death was something of a conventional usage with him. For Bohte see 2 August, 1821, note 2.

4. Not only did "Part II" lead the October number of the *London*, but Taylor introduced it in a "Lion's Head" eulogy "calling the attention of our readers to the deep, eloquent, and masterly paper which stands first in our present number" (vol.IV, p.351).

5. "with a running pen".

6. Differences between MS and first printed version are surprisingly few. De Quincey was on dangerous ground here, though: Taylor, in common with many publishers of his age, was an habitual, unauthorised modifier of his writers' manuscripts. (For De Quincey's apparently relaxed attitude to editorial meddling see also 20 October, 1821. Bauer/1953, pp.42-3 and 71-3, and Chilcott, chapters on Keats and Clare, passim, deal generally with the matter).

7. De Quincey is referring to the September issue of the *London*. "Elia's" (Charles Lamb's) paper is "The Old Benchers of the Inner Temple", and the "passage about Sun-Dials", a meditation on the measurement of time - "sun-dials, with their moral inscriptions, seeming coevals with that Time which they measured" (vol.IV, p.279).

Sir Thomas Browne (1605-82), prose writer on a wide variety of subjects. His work, especially the "Hydriotaphia, or Urne-Buriall", with its powerful, measured cadences, exerted a strong, and self-acknowledged influence on De Quincey's prose style. Lamb's passage perhaps exemplified De Quincey's notion of Browne's manner as "deep, tranquil, and majestic" (M/X, p.105).

Sir Roger de Coverley, fictional member of the *Spectator* "Club", was the invention of Richard Steele but was taken up and developed (as a slightly different character) by Joseph Addison. The de Coverley "papers" began to appear in the *Spectator* from March, 1711 onwards.

9. "Epitaphs", a sometimes irreverent article about epitaph poetry, by Allan Cunningham (see De Quincey's letter to Cunningham, 20 March, 1823). John Weever's *Antient Funeral Monuments of Great Britain* was published in 1631. Wordsworth's *Essays upon Epitaphs* (1810), drew, for one thing, on Weever. By his own account De Quincey did try his hand on the subject: in a letter dated 26 May, 1838, he says he has written thirty-six lines "for a Cenotaph to Major Miller [an Edinburgh friend], of the Horse Guards Blues" (Eaton/1936, p.377). The theme occurs a number of times in his writings, and is most fully developed in his essay on Dr. Parr (*Blackwood's*, vol.XXIX, May 1831, p.777ff – M/V, p.99ff). De Quincey's comment to Taylor was to bear curious fruit shortly afterwards. In November, 1821, the publisher asked him to write an inscription for a memorial plate for the popular former curate of Grove and East Retford Parish Church, Joshua William Brooks. Taylor wanted a good job made of it: Retford was his home-town and his father still lived there. De Quincey procrastinated but eventually produced a number of Latin inscriptions from which Taylor could take his choice. "'To Joshua William Brooks, adorning the sacred office at Retford by his learning, wisdom and general deportment' - or something to that effect", wrote Taylor to his brother at the end of December, 1821, translating manfully the chosen text (Matlock/Box 3592, no.4, 29 December, 1821).

10. "A New Hymn-Book", by J. H. Reynolds. This is a very critical review of The beauties of Mozart, Handel, Pleyel, Haydn, Beethoven and other celebrated composers, adapted to the words of popular psalms and hymns, (London, 1821). Reynolds regarded the work as a corrupt "marriage of the chapel and the ball-room" (op. cit., p.324). Reynolds's explicit criticism of the evangelical movement in his article would doubtlessly have pleased De Quincey.
11. A review by H. F. Cary of Alphonse de Lamartine's *Méditations Poétiques* appeared in this number of the *London*.

12. The reading public were instantly fascinated by the exotic events De Quincey recorded in the first part of his *Confessions*. Taylor's intention to open the October number of the *London* with "Part II" (the first part fell into mid-position, and finished with the hopeful editorial note, "The remainder of this very interesting Article will be given in the next number"), and his subsequent editorial eulogy of the piece, is one sign of this (see note 4). That the public had already become very interested in the Opium-Eater himself, can be seen from the short chronology of events that De Quincey also wrote for this number ("Lion's Head", October, 1821, p.351). In October, John Taylor was able to tell his brother, "the Opium Eater is coming to see me to [sic] tea for the first time. I find everybody who noticed magazines at all is interested in the Fate of the Opium Eater" (24 October, 1821: Bakewell MS).

The work was published anonymously, the usual convention in the periodicals of the age. De Quincey does refer to himself as X.Y.Z. - a common pseudonym, occasionally adopted by J. G. Lockhart in fact - in the body of "Part II" (*Conf./1821*, p.51). According to instructions in the manuscript, later dropped or ignored, he also intended X.Y.Z. to be his signature after the brief introductory section to the first instalment, "To the Reader". It was to become his usual pen name in the *London*. Intimates saw through it immediately. Charles Lloyd, De Quincey's friend from the early years in Grasmere, articulated a common critical reaction to the *Confessions*: "Do you suppose it is to be considered as a true history? Is it not very singular that we should have associated with him for several years pretty confidentially, & should never have heard him allude to one of these adventures?" (letter to T. N. Talfourd, 4 October, 1821: Keats House MS). De Quincey was to spend no small amount of time defending his veracity. In an open letter - dated 27 November,
1821, and signed X.Y.Z. - which appeared in the "Lion's Head" of the December number of the London, his first defence appeared. Responding to doubts raised by the poet and occasional London contributor, James Montgomery (1771-1854), in a generally favourable review in the Sheffield Iris, over "whether this character, be real or imaginary", De Quincey remained firm. The Confessions, he argued, were "drawn up with entire simplicity and fidelity to the fact" (see Hayter/1978, p.118ff, for De Quincey's letter and details of the context - the letter can also be found in M/III, pp.464-466; Eaton/1936, p.273, quotes De Quincey's conversation with Woodhouse on the same subject). Perhaps the frequently-promised, but never-to-appear, third part to the Confessions, was originally conceived to respond more fully to these charges.

28. TO J. A. HESSEY

[London]
Saturday morning, Sept. 8 - [1821]

My dear Sir,

In a great hurry I write to request that, if you can conveniently, you would lend me a copy of Wordsworth's Excursion (from which I want a quotation)¹ and also of Keats's Poems.² - The second I think is your own book: as to the other, if you cannot without trouble procure me a copy, I mean at any rate to purchase the 8vo. edition sooner or later, and can as well do so now.

I am exceedingly careful of books, - bound, or unbound: perhaps as much so as any person you can ever have known; so that you need not fear my abusing them as so many literary men do.³

 Believe me, my dear Sir,
Most truly yours,
Thos. De Quincey

Addr: J. A. Hessey Esqre./[London].
MS: Manuscripts Division, Bryn Mawr College. Adelman Collection, no.39.
1. De Quincey quotes from *The Excursion* on three occasions in "Part II" of the *Confessions* (*Conf./1821*, p. 49 - twice - and p. 71). The octavo edition De Quincey mentions was published by Longman (London) in 1820.

2. Although there are no direct references to Keats's work in the 1821 *Confessions*, it may be that De Quincey had the "Ode to a Nightingale" in mind when he wrote the famous Liverpool opium reverie in "The Pleasures of Opium". The "Ode" was included in Taylor and Hessey's 1820 edition of Keats's *Lamia...and other Poems*, so would at least have been "current". A verbal echo runs between "The weariness, the fever, and the fret" in Keats (1.23), and "the tumult, the fever, and the strife" in De Quincey (*Conf./1821*, p. 49). An organic context embraces both works in that Keats's poetic of dissolution works through "some dull opiate" (1.3) and De Quincey's "brief oblivion" is triggered by the "potent rhetoric" of "mighty opium" (p. 49). As in the case of John Clare, John Taylor, Charles Lamb and those other "Cockneys" of the time, De Quincey wasn't to write about Keats until much later in his life (see Jordan/1973, p. 381ff; pp. 469-70). Even here he has little to say about Keats's poetry and nothing to say about the "Ode to a Nightingale". (See also 18 October, 1821, letter and note 8.)

3. Hessey would soon discover that although De Quincey was indeed careful with books, he rarely returned them.

29. TO [J. A. Hessey]

[London]

Monday Sept. 17. [1821]

My dear Sir,

I am truly concerned to hear of your distress. The croup is a complaint which two of my own children have had: and it gave way in them to medical remedies in a few hours.
In a good hurry I send a part from the middle of the 
Pleasures of Opium which happens to be corrected: though I 
have been up all night, I have no more quite corrected. ³ But I 
have taken an hour's rest and shall get on very fast this 
morning.

In great haste and that I may not detain you, I remain, 
my dear Sir,

Yours most sincerely,
Thos. De Quincey.

Perhaps you will not look at the MS. before it goes to 
the Press: if you do, I must beg that you will not judge of 
the article from this part, which is the worst and most 
unsatisfactory to my mind. The Pains of Opium, and a few other 
parts, are those on which I depend.

I have not paged the MS. but marked the order of 
succession by letters. ⁴

MS: Harry Ransom H.R.C. University of Texas at Austin. MS File – Letters.

1. The letter is catalogued under Taylor's name, but is 
evidently to Hessey (see paragraph 1: Taylor was unmarried). 
2. De Quincey was to think differently about the complaint 
shortly afterwards (see 11 October, 1821).
the two main sections of "Part II" of the Confessions.
4. The same method he eventually used with the first part (see 
Letter 24, notes 1 and 2). De Quincey wrote to Hessey the next 
day with the news that, "I hardly know how to arrange the 
paging so as not to confuse the printer until I have put the 
whole together" (Berg Collection, De Quincey MS). The 
manuscript of "Part II" has not survived.

30. TO [TAYLOR/HESSEY]

[London. 20 September, 1821]

My dear Sir,

I have told the Black to come down to-day and will send
up by him what I have finished: for the earlier parts I want at this moment to refer to:— and the close of the *Pleasures*. I could not fully satisfy my mind in the composition of last night; and wishing to push on I left it for the benefit of my second thoughts to-day. Yet if it should be much wanted I can send it at a short-warning. But I much wish to see the whole lying under my eye finished all but final corrections.

I am much obliged by your remembering my request: and am, my dear Sir,

Most truly yours,

Sept. 20

Thos. De Quincey.

MS: King Library North, University of Kentucky. W. Hugh Peal Coll.

31. TO [TAYLOR/HESSEY]

[London. mid-September, 1821]

My dear Sir,

I send the only passage I can with safety spare.

And now the case stands thus:

The two passages wanting to fill up the beginning of what you received to-day will make about half a sheet of letter paper:— this and so much more as will complete at least a sheet (16pp. of yours) will be ready at 6 o'clock in the morning if you choose to send so early.

Then, for the remainder, if you can — you must allow me to 11 or 12 o'clock. But thus much is clear to me:— that the space required for the [?due] completion of the article will be the most that you can allow: if even 24pp. were at liberty, I could fill them.¹ And what remains is incomparably the best.—

Do not think me unreasonable in talking of such a length. I am perhaps excluding better men than myself. But I speak merely of what is necessary to the best execution of the art, which in some measure will determine its own length.
This Malay story might be left out, easily if you think so. My reason for introducing it I have told in the text.²

Yours very truly
Thos. De Quincey

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MS: British Library. Add. 37,215, f35.

1. "Part II" of the Confessions ran from p.353 to p.379 of the magazine (vol.IV).

2. De Quincey had good reason to be circumspect about including the Malay episode in the Confessions (Conf./1821, p.55-58). Critics were soon to light on the highly dubious authenticity of the piece. A writer in the New Edinburgh Review, in January, 1823, for example, offered a source for the episode. "This incident is related very minutely", he wrote, "but in the first place, the story is somewhat improbable [...] it is little more than a parody of 'The Adventures of Basil Lee,' one of Mr. Hogg's Winter Evening Tales" (where an "old Highlander" is given vitriol instead of whisky, but - as with De Quincey and his Malay, who bolts a large piece of crude opium - isn't, as feared, found dead the next day), (New Edinburgh Review, no.4, p.267). De Quincey's sensitivity to the charge is shown by a totally arbitrary footnote which he places in his brief article "The Services of Mr. Ricardo to the Science of Political Economy" (London Magazine, vol.IX, March 1824, pp.308-10). He protests that he has recorded the Malay incident "most faithfully" and that the New Edinburgh reviewer "makes me indebted to a book which I never saw" (ibid., p.309; M/IX, p.39).

For an interesting modern discussion of the Malay sequence see Rzepka/1993, where the potential fictionality of the episode is dealt with as an expression of De Quincey's "psycho-economic" drive. Barrell/1991 sees the gift of opium as an indicator of De Quincey's psychopathological view of "foreignness"; where the drug will either destroy the Malay or "provoke him to an indiscriminate massacre of innocents" (pp.74-76, 128-29). The Malay was, anyway, as Barrell points
out, a conventional image for drug-induced deviant behaviour. It is interesting to find De Quincey and the Malay dealt with on the same page in *The Anatomy of Drunkenness* (1827), by a friend of De Quincey, Robert Macnish. Macnish writes of the "powerful and interesting 'Confessions' [which] have excited so deep an interest" and goes on to point out that "the Malays are strongly addicted to opium. When violently aroused by it, they sometimes perform what is called *Running-a-Muck* [...] murdering every one who comes in their way" (4th edition, Macnish/1832, pp.68-69).

Another undated note, probably originating from around the same time as this one, further underscores just how ad hoc a work the 1821 *Confessions* was: "Some passages can easily be left out of what I send:—I have kept back several sheets, convinced that you will have too much. Yet one is about the best dream. I will, for a chance of having your opinion, send it by the person who brings the Proof" (British Library MS/Add.37215, f34).

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32. TO [TAYLOR/HESSEY]  

[London]  

Sat. Sept. 22. [1821]

My dear Sir,

In the first Slip — There is a correction which I cannot make apparent to the printer: it is in the left hand col. about § way down. — I had said 'uglier visions' &c. than haunted Orestes.¹ This seems presumptuous: besides the logic is much better, as the word unhappier follows, to say as ugly: and the logic then is, — In general as ill off as Orestes, and in one point worse. This explained, — what I wished to say either — {as ugly visions, and phantoms as ghastly

or {visions as ugly, and as ghastly phantoms

But I will wager that the Printer puts it

either — {as ugly visions, and as ghastly phantoms

or {visions as ugly and phantoms as ghastly
Could you direct his eye to the right arrangement? It seems a trifle but it sounds to my ear an inartificiality not pleasant to the ear in either of the latter arrangements.

Is there such a word as impolite (3rd. slip)? I declare I cannot satisfy myself.

By the bye, there are two citations which I fear may not be accurate:—that from Chaucer (5th slip)—It occurs, you will recollect, in the Prologue to the Cant. Tales. Is it 'sweet'—or 'kind' men or what—'to give absolution.'

The other (2nd slip) about Robert Shallow Esq. from I think that 1st part of Henry IV. remains upon my memory as having real existence: but, if not, it will look odd.

Now—as to the Final Passage, I found, when you had gone last night, that I did not fully comprehend what you wished: for it struck me that it would be likely to offend a reader more to be only conditionally or problematically promised what you rightly (I think) judge him to have had ground for expecting than he could be offended by any deferring of it to the next month. And therefore when I came to consider for what reason you had desired me not absolutely to promise any more, I could not but surmise that it was because you thought me not a person altogether to be relied on for punctuality, and that you naturally shrunk from a repetition of such a season of toil as you have had this month. But, if this be the truth, I shall be grieved: for it will lead me to suppose that you are not aware of what is really the truth—that, if any personal sacrifice or privation could have enabled me to finish earlier and to save you the immense labor and also the expence incident to this delay, I would not have hesitated to have made it. I was unhappy from the delay but I could not work better for that, but far worse.

Well, to go on, if this be your objection, I pledge my word to you that you shall have what remains for the next No. on any day you will fix. I will set about it now. And really, this morning, I find so much which will to many perhaps appear the best parts—that it would be a pity, now that the subject
has been touched at all, not to publish them. - You say that the continuation of the subject will not be objected to as oppressive. I must not have presumed this myself, but as you have said it I may assume it: that being so, what objection could there be to a close simply such as this:

Circumstances, not interesting to the Public, having greatly interrupted the author in the progress of this article, he has latterly found himself obliged very much to hurry his execution of it; feeling that an engagement once made to the Public ought to be fulfilled at whatever inconvenience, or whatever injury to the article. The author is aware however that the article has thus suffered as a composition in its latter parts, and that his materials have taken a disjointed shape not the most favorable to the orderly development of the effects, as they arose in succession, from the continued use of opium. This further ill consequence has followed - that he has not found it possible to crowd the whole of the narrative into the space alloted: under a better arrangement, and by judicious compression, this might have been effected; but at present not without still greater injury to the effect that has already arisen; and, under these circumstances, he has the Editor's permission to trespass on the attention of his readers at a future occasion by a few more pages: these will be published next month.5

I have spoken of the inconvenience, and the injury to the article, only to give value in the public eyes to the act of fidelity to engagements: seeing no reason why any body should let the Public remain insensible of its obligations. A Mr. Partridge from Westmorland called this morning and interrupted me much: he was in great affliction from a recent domestic loss, and also brought news &c. so that I could not explain to him my hurry.6

Most truly yours, - Thos. De Q.

1. The passage occurs in the second paragraph of "Part II" of
the Confessions. The following quibble typifies De Quincey's constitutional wariness of printers; a sentiment they no doubt reciprocated. In the event they produced the second variant of his favoured choices (Conf./1821, p.35).

2. "impolite", acceptable usage since the seventeenth century, was adopted (Conf./1821, p.43, 1.7).

3. "Ful swetely herde he confesioun,/And plesaunt was his absolucioun" (Canterbury Tales, "Prologue, 11.221-22; Conf./1821, p.53).

4. Justice Robert Shallow appears in Henry IV, Part 2 (as well as in The Merry Wives of Windsor). De Quincey alludes to Shakespeare's works a number of times in "Part II", but not to Henry IV.

5. Having extracted De Quincey's copy with such difficulty for the first two parts of the Confessions, Taylor and Hessey were wary of promising a continuation. In the event, the December issue of the London carried both an editorial assurance that a future number would contain "The Third Part", and an undertaking by De Quincey, in an open letter, that he would "send [...] a Third Part of my Confessions: drawn up with such assistance from fuller memoranda, and the recollections of my only companion [his wife] during those years" (vol.IV, p.584; and see sources for the open letter referred to in 7 September, 1821, note 12).

6. Mr. Partridge is possibly a member of the Partridge family of Covey Cottage, at Ambleside. Dorothy Wordsworth refers to the family in her journals (e.g., 27 May, 1800, and 22 August, 1800). He was probably owed money by De Quincey.

33. TO J. A. HESSEY

[London]

Sat. October 6. [1821]

My dear Sir,

Excuse me that for want of paper I take the back of your note for my own.
I did not suffer in any respect from the air last night; but a little from having ventured to taste Brandy, - such is the crazy state of my stomach.

John Paul could be ready certainly by Wednesday, which is (I think) the 9th.¹ But if you wish for it earlier I will do all that I can: and at any rate you could have part on Monday. I will, in the course of this night and to-morrow, prepare as much as possible.

With many thanks for your kind enquiry.

I remain, my dear Sir,

Most truly yours,

Thos. De Quincey.

Excuse the want of a seal: the truth is, I am lying down for a few hours; and am undrest; and as it happened without a fire.

Addr: J. A. Hessey Esqr./Fleet Street/[London].

MS: Harry Ransom H.R.C., University of Texas at Austin. Wrenn MS (MS File - Letters).

1. De Quincey's "Jean Paul" Richter translations did not begin to appear in the London until December, 1821. "Wednesday" was in fact the 10th.

34. TO [J. A. HESSEY]¹

[London. October 11, 1821]

Nothing pressing in this letter: the main business is to offer Richardson's works, 19 vols. - and the Ancient Brit. Drama (both uncut) to yourself or any friend of yours, for £3 to make up a sum of money: - and to explain my delay in regard to J. P. - I mention this, to prevent your losing any more important employment to read it.

Oct. 11, - 1821.

My dear Sir,

When your messenger came this morning, Mr. Wilson was with me; and I could not immediately write:- he has, I find, called upon you; and, at a moment of more leisure, I have something to communicate to you in reference to him.² At
present I write to make an explanation to you on a matter which makes me very uneasy.

Your generous and friendly conduct to me has made it so much a <?point of duty>, as well as of inclination, that I should consider it my first and paramount business to exert myself in every way for the service of your journal, - that I am unhappy at the bare possibility of seeming to have neglected or delayed the fulfilment of my engagement. When however you hear the peculiar circumstances under which I have for two days (Monday and Tuesday) been carried off from my article on J. P.,³ - I hope that you will acquit me of anything so unprincipled (I may now call it so) as neglecting what relates to your Magazine. - On Monday morning I received a letter to inform me that one of my children, - who had, when I was in Edinburgh last Christmas, been attacked by Croup - was again attacked and so much more violently that he was not expected to live: on Tuesday I had another account - that, after an interval of amendment, he was again seized by a violent return of the malady. - Yesterday morning I had much better accounts; and an assurance that, if none arrived to day, I might consider him as safe. None has come; and I am at ease on this subject.

Meantime, as it never rains but it pours, at the very same moment that the Postman brought his afflicting letters to me on Monday morning, a clerk from a Bank presented a bill* for payment. [f/n. *Never having been presented for acceptance, and my wife having only mentioned it to me lately without specifying the date (which turned out to be Sept. 5), - I had hoped to be able to meet it out of some money which is due to me in Somersetshire.]⁴ It was the last of the whole family of bills (in all amounting to £230) which partly from private funds of my own as they became available and partly from your great kindness to me, I had encountered since coming to London. All were cancelled but this one: and this was only for £15: but I had only £3 remaining. And what made it worse it was drawn by my wife. A Bill drawn by Margaret De Q., as
every holder would see, on Thos. De Q. I could not suffer to be returned if possible. No way of raising the money however occurred but the sale of books. Throughout Monday then I paced up and down London offering my Chalmers's Poets. To prevent trouble, I offered it for £10: not a soul would buy it:—Priestley's young man told me, he would not buy it at any price. Some said £10 was far too much: Nunn, in Gt. Queen Street, said — No: it was not too much: it was cheap at £10: but he had 11 copies already. — Thus, after all, I could not sell it. The Notary came at night with his raven voice:— I was obliged to send him away, and let him note the Bill for non-payment. — On Tuesday I offered it to Lamb: he did not want it, but promised to mention it. Bohte endeavoured vainly to sell it for me: and I concluded that I must allow my wife's bill to go back. — However I hunted out, on Tuesday, the holder of the Bill — a Merchant in the city: he proved to be a very good natured man, and promised to keep it. — Meantime yesterday I was enabled to receive £5 from one quarter: and from another £7, but on the condition that about £6 should be returned as soon as possible: in fact, if I could, to-morrow.

Now then I have here Richardson's Works 19 vols. Millar; and the Ancient British Drama, 3 vols.7 which last I hear is rather a rising book — rising, I mean, from its depression. — Having brought my deficiency down to so small a sum as £6, — I feel less scruple to apply to you: but I apply, from the bottom of my heart I protest to you, simply in the character of a seller applying to a purchaser. Would these books be worth jointly three guineas to you, or to any acquaintance of yours? — I ask this doubtingly, knowing the immense depression of the trade in books. The Richardson was published at £7. 12. 0.: I should think myself fortunate to get 30 shillings, or 25 even, for it. The other I forget the price of. — These now are books I do not value: of the Ancient Drama indeed I have a duplicate in Westmorland. The Poets I should have been rather sorry to sell: but not at all to sell these. If you could
without trouble procure me £3 for these, I have a certainty that I can obtain the other £3 in another way.

Thus I have not scrupled to trouble you with my embarrassments. So long as I wanted nearly the whole, I more willingly suffered the bill to be noted &c. than apply to you. But now that I have brought it down to a sum (£3) which it may answer to you to give for the books, - I do not hesitate. Yet reject them, I beg, if they are not worth that to you.

Meantime, during Monday and Tuesday, I could do very little at J. P.: my time being so much occupied in running about - from Leadenhall St. to Bond Street. On Monday night, when I believed that my wife's bill was irrecoverably gone, and feared from my want of money that I could never see my little boy's face again, I had the weakness to drink nearly a pint of rum - to quell, if possible, my disturbance of mind. And that again, as it never fails to do, made me dreadfully ill for the two succeeding days. - But to-morrow, at 12 o'clock, I will send you what I have now done and shall do in the course of to-day. - I have also twice been interrupted for some hours by Wilson.

Most faithfully yours,

Thomas De Quincey.

MS: Harry Ransom H.R.C., University of Texas at Austin. Wrenn MS (MS File - Letters).

1. That Hessey is the addressee of this letter, is confirmed by Taylor's comment on Wilson in a letter to his father (see following note), and by De Quincey's opening comment in the following letter about the books he is trying to sell in this letter.

2. John Wilson was down from Edinburgh on a one-month visit to London: "Last week who should call here and introduce himself to Hessey but Blackwood's famous Blackguard John Wilson, the professor of Morality" (Taylor to father, 15 October, 1821: in Taylor/1925, pp.262-63). He is mentioned frequently by De Quincey over the next month (see next letter [final para.], 18
October [final para.], and 2 November, 1821). General suspicions about his motives for visiting were probably not without grounds.


4. See 1 January, 1821, note 2.


6. De Quincey was working hard here: he was covering a considerable area of central London from his Covent Garden address at Bohte's. As well as trying the major bookdealers, such as the ones he mentions, he probably also took in the numerous bookstalls that would have lain in his path to Bond Street and Leadenhall Street (see final paragraph). Lamb is of course Charles Lamb, something of an authority on bookdealing in London.


35. TO J. A. HESSEY

[London]

Oct. 12, - 1821

My dear Sir,

I felt, after you were gone, that - as you were so kind as to undertake the trouble of disposing of the books for me - I, on my part, ought not to increase your trouble by sending you merely what I happened not to want and which might be the most worthless part of the collection and the most difficult to get rid of. On this consideration I set to work to unpack the whole: but, the whole making 13 parcels and 4 boxes (some nailed, corded, &c.), - this is a work of some little time;
and I carry it on only at intervals of resting from my labors on J. P.\textsuperscript{2} - To-morrow, I will either call, or send you a list of all worth putting down, that you may make your choice. Till then I return you the Cheque: and am, my dear Sir,

Most sincerely yours,

Thomas De Quincey

When I see you again, I will give you my second thoughts on Wilson and his purposes, which your suggestions and my own reflexions have led me to regard more suspiciously than I did at first. - God knows what he means: but assuredly he has lost all the uprightness and ingenuousness that he ever had, in the service of Mr. Blackwood.\textsuperscript{3}

Addr: J. A. Hessey Esqre./[London].
MS: Ella Strong Denison Library, Scripps College.

1. See preceding letter.
2. John Paul Richter.
3. In a letter to his father (15 October, 1821; see note 2, preceding letter), John Taylor outlines De Quincey’s initial reaction: "De Quincey [told] Hessey that [Wilson] had called on him and proposed to be a Contributor to our Magazine. He wished to write an Article for us boasting of the unexampled Success of our Work [...] The Circumstance of Wilson's wishing to write for our Magazine a little puzzles us, but Hessey expressed to D. Q. his suspicion that the whole was a Plot to obtain some knowledge of the Conductors of the Work, and that then they would attack us. D. Q. says he can scarcely conceive Wilson capable of such atrocity [but] admits it is not improbable that he might mean to prove a Traitor".

36. TO J.A. HESSEY

[London]

Monday morning Oct. 15, - 1821.

My dear Sir,

It is better to send something if not all. - I fear I
must ask till to-morrow morning for the rest:— J. P. is in some parts an untranslatable author, not from language but from thought and images and succession of thoughts: their juxtaposition often sounds immediately harsh in English.¹ —

The Swedish Parson which I send is complete:— the word 'await' recurs too close together in one part (p.2), as you will observe. Can you suggest in either place another word? I have hammered my asinine brains for an hour, and cannot.²

My introduction, on Germ. Lit. generally and on J. P., together with Francis Horn's character of J. P., will be just 5pp. — What I have sent will be merely 4; or, at least, 3½, I should think.³

Believe that I do not willingly delay:— except to Lombard St.⁴ on Sat. night I have never left my work since I saw you on Thursday night. But J. P. is an intractable author, — fantastic and capricious and mystical often beyond what the English public would bear.

Yours most truly,
Thos. De Quincey.

Let me thank you for your obliging note on Saturday.

[Endorsed by De Q. on cover: I have not sent more, because every other part wants either correction or completion.]

Addr: J. A. Hessey Esqre./[London].


1. "John Paul Richter stands absolutely alone in this department [embracing German 'tales of sentiment'], and he is all but untranslateable" (De Quincey writing in "Gillies's German Stories", Blackwood's, vol.XX, December, 1826, p.850). The problem, as De Quincey saw it, concerned the multiform allusive quality of Richter's writing, and the translator's need of large "resources of art for modifying the naked and direct expression of the sentiment" (ibid., and see 13 December, 1820, note 2). Thomas Carlyle expressed similar sentiments when he wrote about Richter in 1827: "so fantastic, many-coloured, far-grasping, everyway perplexed and
extraordinary is his mode of writing. To translate him properly is next to impossible" (Carlyle/1872, p.5 - Carlyle evidently didn't know about De Quincey's London translations in 1827: he refers to a "saying, imported by Madame de Stäel", as the "only thing" connected with Richter that had then reached Britain - ibid. See also CL/vol. IV, p.226 for a note on De Quincey's possible influence on Carlyle's approach to Richter's work).

2. "The Happy Life of a Parish Priest in Sweden", from Richter's Flegeljahre ("Fledgling-years", 1804), appeared in the December, 1821 issue of the London (vol. IV, p.606ff). It was prefaced by an introductory letter (dated "Grasmere, Oct. 18, 1821", from "Grasmeriensis Teutonizans" - the Grasmere German scholar), fussily showing off De Quincey's skill in German, and followed by another translation from the Flegeljahre, "Last Will and Testament...The House of Weeping". (M/XI, p.259ff, carries an imperfect but adequate version of the essays.) Perversely, in the introductory letter De Quincey tells his readers that Richter's language presents few problems to the translator.

The published version runs "they must wait a while/At home he is awaited by a warm study" (paragraphs three and four; p.613 in the London, and p.275 in M/XI).

3. The December introduction gives only general "advice" - to an imaginary student - on studying German authors, especially Richter, and adds a few comments on translating from that language.

Franz Horn (1781-1837), German novelist and critic. De Quincey probably refers to his Umrisse zur Geschichte und Kritik der schönen Literatur Deutschlands, während der Jahre 1790 bis 1818 (Berlin, 1819), a work also admired by Carlyle. Horn is not mentioned in the introductory letter, and it would be kindest to say that De Quincey does not air his own knowledge of Richter's "character" with ostentation (see also 18 October, 1821).
My dear Sir,

It gives me the greatest pleasure to find you were pleased with J.P.

What I now send wants 2 of my pp. which I have kept back. It grieves me to seem so slow: but several parts translated from J.P. I have been obliged to reserve for the assistance of a German friend of Bothe's: for the difficulties relate to local usages, courts of law &c: 1 and Bothe, tho' a German, cannot explain them.

I hope Mr. Taylor is re-established in health.

To-morrow morning I will send up my Introduction and the rest of the translations. 2

Yours most truly
Thos. De Q.

MS: Taylor Institution Library, Oxford. MS.8°E21/B.

1. That is, in "Last Will and Testament..." (note 2, preceding letter). De Quincey was to come clean about the translations two years later. In a footnote to an essay on Herder, "Death of a German Great Man", which appeared in the London in April, 1823 (vol.VII, p.373ff), he apologised for the poor quality of the "Parish Priest". It had, he said, been executed, "at a pace of almost furious speed, [and] I was obliged to content myself with such specimens as I had at hand: and with respect to one of these (the Swedish Priest), I sent to the press a translation executed in [1811]" (ibid., p.378; M/XI, p.273). Even in the 1821 originals he was prepared to admit that the "two specimens are adopted hastily and translated hastily" (P.S. to the introductory letter).
2. John Taylor had already decided that De Quincey's article was running too late for the November number. On 16 October he wrote to his father that "Our Opium Friend is getting on with a curious German article for the next No. but one, it will not be in Time for this [one]" (Keats House MS). De Quincey's champion, and editor of the Sheffield Iris, James Montgomery (see 7 September, 1821, note 12), found the article curious enough to lift part of it from the London for his own paper. "Happy Life of a Parish Priest in Sweden. From the German of Richter", appeared in the Iris on 1 January, 1822 (p.4, cols.1-3).

38. TO [J.A. HESSEY]

[London]
Oct. 17 [1821]

My dear Sir,

You have now 20pp. of mine, i.e. about 8½ of the Mag. according to former experience. - I could have sent you this earlier: but I wished to accompany it with one on which I have been working for 24 hours fm. the Hesperus¹:-- these 2 already sent, by the way, should have prefixed or postfixed - 'From the first vol. of the Flegel-jahre.'²

I get on so slowly that I have thought it better to go from the Hesperus to the Introduction: because, that done, I can write onwards as long as you are disposed to go.

This employment, tho' very pleasant to me, is more difficult by infinite degrees than I anticipated or could have believed. - I bind myself to a faithful translation in all cases: for any latitude of interpolation or what is generally called freedom, leaves one without any limits or determining forces as to the degree in which one shall take liberties with one's original. This being my principle of translation, I find it very difficult to apply it to such an author as J.P. and yet to keep him in a readable and fluent state.³ I hope that you and Mr. Taylor will be satisfied with the translation,
however little reason (as it seems) you have for being satisfied with my pace.

I remain, my dear Sir,

Yours most truly

T. De Q.


1. Apart from the two pieces mentioned, no more of De Quincey's translations from Richter appeared in the London until 1824. The "Analects from John Paul Richter" (vol.IX, February, 1824, pp.117-121) contain a number of passages from Richter's Hesperus (1795). See Burwick/1968 (p.2) for details of De Quincey's - mostly unspecified - original sources.

2. The postscript to De Quincey's introductory letter in the December, 1821 London carried the introductory statement, "Two specimens chosen at random from the Flegel-jahre I subjoin". The complete December article ran to about fifteen pages.

3. Compare this statement about translations from the German with that offered in 12 December, 1820, note 5. One can conclude either that De Quincey is being inconsistent or that Richter just doesn't fit a general principle of translation. Goldman/1965 (p.92) offers the review of Gillies referred to in this note as De Quincey's "locus criticus". More specifically, Goldman quotes De Quincey's wish to "call the attention of translators to the necessity of applying, on a much larger scale, [the] principle of adaptation, rifacimento, or remaniement". Of course no such consistent "principle" ever existed for De Quincey. At the same time as he accepted the idea of linguistic relativity - open-ended, untranslatable nuances of language "that express shades and modifications of meaning" ("Goethe...", London Magazine, vol.X, April, 1824, pp.192-3) - he also articulated the need for the sort of closure that we find outlined in this letter. Playfulness - or superficiality - is often the product of this tension, and De Quincey is left to conclude that his translations will be "executed in the most finished style that I can command"
rather than in the most finished style possible (1823 Herder footnote, see reference in previous letter, note 1, p.378).

39. TO [J. A. HESSEY]

[London]

Oct. 18 [1821]

My dear Sir,

Kabel's Will &c. closes with the part I sent last night:— the chapter goes on further: but a new scene, as it were, commences — of the same character, but interesting chiefly as preparing for the rest of the work:— to preserve the unity therefore I broke off at the termination of the House-of-Weeping scene.¹

My introduction will decidedly be finished to-morrow morning by 8 o'clock:— it has swelled to a greater length than I expected: but still so much is done, that I am sure of this: tho' I hardly ask you to be sure of it, after my mistake about the translations. — But the introduction is not so shaped as to require any special reference to itself in the arrangements of the specimens:— and, if you will allow me to intrude with my advice in such a matter, I think that — considering the vast extent of J. P. R.'s works (at least, I conceive, 70-90 vols.), every page of which teams and overflows with fancy and wit and pathos, — it would be as well to print these two at any rate — even if you cannot wait for the introd. till to-morrow morning:— supposing, that is, that you have disposable space for them.² — I am the more anxious about this, because I have racked my brain of late to think in what way I could do anything to serve your Magazine — or at the least to express my wish to serve it; and a vast multitude of projects has in consequence risen up in my head some of which you would perhaps think worthy of notice: and I am anxious to hasten on to the execution, which would, if J. P. still stood between me and those projects, be thrown to a great distance.³ — Without particularly mentioning J. P.'s name, but simply saying From
the German, if you dislike having a second article on one man, - a selection of articles from him would always, I think, make an agreeable variety: for his variety and difference even from himself is inexhaustible. - These articles, if you chose, might be so published: or with a notice that you would next month give an account of his merits and pretensions generally. - But, in all this, I am stepping out of my province: - but if I take a liberty, - I do it, and hope you will think I do it, with the intentions of a friend. 4

By the bye, - would not Greek Epigrams &c. be of use? - I should myself have fancied not: but I was told that Mr. Blackwood found bad Latin verses contribute so much to his success in Oxford, at one coll. of which (Queen's) to my knowledge there were 17 copies taken of his journal, - that he retained Wrangham to wash all his Scotch latinity and Scotch metre clean, and fit to appear in English company. - If so, as Q. Eliz. said, - I shall 'scour up' my rusty knowledge in that line. 5

At any rate I will send you my Introd. to-morrow; and what more of the translations I think eligible. - My Introd. has taken the more time; because to make it better, I ran over - yesterday night - several German works (Bouterweck's, Horn's, and Richter's own most brilliant book) on the history and character and revolutions of German Literature. 6

In great haste, most sincerely yours,
Thos. De Q.

I think I have discovered that one great motive with Wilson for wishing to write in your journal - is, that having discovered which way the tide is now flowing and has been flowing for six months past or more, - he wishes to be able to say that he wrote up your Magazine. - I would not willingly wrong him: but I have seen him again once or twice: and his conversation is in a most diabolical spirit: - like an Arab's, his hand is against every man: excepting only those who are too rooted in public favor or notoriety to care for him: those he honors with prostration and genu-flexion. 7 As I said,
Wilson did not know there was such a Poem as Hyperion: (it [is] not in the Title-page). 8

Publ: See Grantham/1945 for a brief (and misleading) article containing extracts from the letter.

MS: Boston Public Library. Mss. Acc. 27.

1. The published translation of "The Last Will and Testament" from Richter contains the first three clauses of Van der Kabel's will. It breaks off rather abruptly with "but they staid to hear the rest of the will, which they now awaited in a state of anxious agitation" (London Magazine, vol. IV, December, 1821, p. 620; M/XI, p. 283)). Publication of it was not continued.

2. See 15 October, 1821, note 2. Translations and introduction were of course published together in the December number. The introductory letter, addressed from "Grasmere", bears the same date as the present letter. (Carlyle/1872, p. 7 notes "The expected Edition of Richter's Works is to be in sixty volumes").

3. Such sentiments were habitual with De Quincey; they tend, in their general drift, to be conventional amongst those addicted to opium and its derivatives. De Quincey's relentlessly-detailed, large-scale plans were a sort of work-replacement exercise with him, and they figure often in these letters. (See, e.g., Hayter/1971, passim, and Berridge/1987, Chapters 4, 5 and 9.)

It looks as if De Quincey's credibility was high at this time. In its "Lion's Head" column for December, 1821, the London carried a close-of-year list of future contributions. De Quincey was down for a "Third Part" of the Confessions and the "Letters to a Young Man of Talents whose Education had been neglected" (which was to run for five months, under a slightly different title, from January, 1823). He was also to furnish articles on "Translations in Prose and Verse from the most eminent of the Fine Writers of Modern Germany, with a Character of the Genius of each Author, forming an Anthology of their finest Passages. By the English Opium-Eater; vide the
Articles on Richter in our present Number" (vol.IV, pp.583-84).

See Chilcott/1973 for a transcription of De Quincey's own unpublished editorial proposals for the London in 1822, which were drawn up at the request of the proprietors, and intended for publication in the December number. Amidst extravagant plans for the London to offer translations from classical texts, German prose writers and poets, and a proposed explication of "the Transcendental Philosophy", De Quincey notes that his own versions from Richter in the current issue have "been chosen [as] the Prelude or Overture to this undertaking" (Chilcott/1973, pp.17-18; original MS held at the Pierpont Morgan Library - MA 1225). There is an obvious similarity between the all-embracing scope of De Quincey's plans for the London, and the wide-ranging nature of the published "Lion's Head" proposals. Richard Woodhouse set down in his notebook a conversation in which De Quincey outlined a like medley of ideas perorating on "...a closing address to the volume of the London Magazine ending December next, and give No.3 of the Opium-Eater's 'Confessions' for the February number" (3 November, 1821: Hogg/1895, p.77).

Had he wanted it, it appears that De Quincey could also have got himself a position as a regular contributor to the Classical Journal around this time. This ran until 1829 and was edited by the London publisher Abraham Valpy (1787-1854). Henry Crabb Robinson recorded in his journal, on 7 November, 1821, that he "took occasion to recommend De Quincey for the classical journal and Valpy will be glad of his assistance" (Robinson/1938, vol.I, 275). The offer was not followed up.

4. There was silence on the subject until December.

5. Rev. Francis Wrangham (1769-1842), renowned classicist, poet, theologian, close friend of Wordsworth, and occasional contributor on classical subjects to Blackwood's, which frequently admitted Latin poetry into its pages. An unattributed review of his The Lyrics of Horace (1821) appeared in the London in March, 1822 (vol.V, pp.277-81. This
doesn't look like De Quincey's work - see Riga/1975, p.53). Greek and Latin literature played a major part in the London, which believed that "words should burn into English - should flash into the new tongue" (Bauer/1953, p.282). De Quincey was never to make an impact in this branch of knowledge in the magazine.

6. Friedrick Bouterwek (1766-1828), German critic, literary historian and philosopher. De Quincey probably refers here to Bouterwek's Geschichte der Poesie und Beredsamkeit (Göttingen, 1801-19; vols.IX-XI deal specifically with German culture). In his 1823 "Letters to a Young Man", De Quincey dismissed his work as "worthless" (London, vol.VII, March, 1823, p.330; M/X, p.43). Franz Horn, see 15 October, 1821, note 3. Which work of Richter's is meant isn't clear, perhaps the Vorlesungen über Aesthetik of 1804, which De Quincey describes as "surcharged with quicksilver" in his December article. In view of the rather shallow "Introd." that emerged from these texts, one imagines that De Quincey wasn't doing much more than running his eye over Bohte's book stock.

7. Carlyle, who knew Wilson, was to offer similar sentiments after the latter's death. "[I] really rather loved him [he] had much nobleness of heart [...] but the central tie-beam seemed always wanting [he had a] religious nature, not strong enough to vanquish the perverse element it is born into" (Froude/1885, vol.2, p.157).

Whatever the London team feared would be the issue of Wilson's visit, very little ensued. Taylor wrote to his father on 31 December, 1821 that Blackwood's "contains nothing peculiarly offensive to us, but it is full of the old kind of story - and there is an imitation, for the sake of burlesquing it, of the Opium Eater, which is a plain admission that the 'Edinburgh Gentry' are a good deal moved with the evident
effect produced by that article" (Matlock/Box 3592, no.4). The "imitation" he mentions seems to be "Singular Recovery from Death" (vol.X, December, 1821, first part, pp.583-587), possibly by D. M. Moir (1798-1851), who was later to become a great admirer of De Quincey. The tentative identification is from Strout/1959, p.89, who notes that the story might be a response to an article by William Maginn - Taylor, on the other hand, would have seen as many parallels with the Confessions. It concerns a nightmare brought on by a combination of fever and the results of a lengthy drinking session. The narrator can only bring himself to "obtrude upon the world" his story for the sake of a "momentous moral": a similarly-phrased reticence to that found in the Confessions (e.g., Conf./1821, p.1). There is the same allusion to the cloud-city image in Wordsworth's Excursion that one finds in the Confessions (Conf./1821, p.71), and another parallel scene where the narrator's nightmares are broken into by familiar family voices (Conf./1821, p.74). It is a clumsy piece of writing that would take its place amongst numerous parodies of the Confessions. They started to teem after the publication of the Confessions in book form in 1822. In a short period in Blackwood's alone, one can find "The Confessions of an English Glutton" (January, 1823), "The Confessions of a Footman" (November, 1823) and "The Confessions of a Cantab" (October and November, 1824). Of course "confessional" articles had been appearing in periodicals for some time before De Quincey's Confessions materialised. Now, though, it appeared for a while to be de rigueur to include at least a set of allusions to De Quincey in such writing.

8. Hyperion first appeared in Lamia, Isabella, The Eve of St Agnes, and other Poems (Taylor and Hessey, 1820). De Quincey was quite correct in saying that it was not mentioned on the title-page. The reasons for its inclusion in the book were, however, given in an unauthorised "Advertisement", inserted in the volume by Taylor and Richard Woodhouse. De Quincey found that the poem possessed "the majesty, the austere beauty, and
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the simplicity of a Grecian temple enriched with Grecian sculpture" (Jordan/1973, p.389 - The comment was made in 1846, but refers to his first reading of the poem in 1821). Blackwood's did not review the volume. (See also 8 September, 1821 and note 2.)

40. TO JOHN TAYLOR

[London]
Sat. night, Oct. 20 [1821]

My dear Sir,

I have been obliged to keep your mess. waiting longer than I had hoped. Do not scruple out of any tenderness for my trouble, to cut away without limit:— whatever best suits the interests of the Mag. is what I am both bound to like best—and do like best.¹

I hope you are restored by your excursion: and am, dear Sir,

Yours most truly,

Thos. De Q.

Addr: J.Taylor Esq./Fleet Street/[London].

MS: Berg Collection. De Quincey MS.

1. See 7 September, 1821, note 6 for details of editorial textual modification. De Quincey still believed the Richter article would make the next number of the London (see 16 October, 1821, note 2). The novelty of Richter to the British public perhaps furnishes one reason for De Quincey's wish to get his article into print quickly. While "Dr. [Thomas Lovell] Beddoes [was] the first man who uttered the name of John Paul Richter in an English book [...] I myself was the first (December 1821) who gave in English a specimen of Richter's style", he was later to boast accurately (M/IV, p.343 - 1854 note to 1827 paper; Morgan/1949, p.352 confirms De Quincey's assertion; see also Casey/1992, pp.41 and 301).
41. TO J.A. HESSEY

[London]
Friday Novr. 2. [1821]

My dear Sir,

Just after you had gone out, in came Wilson:— he goes on Monday to Edinburgh; on Monday at the latest:— and, as he dines out to-morrow and Sunday (indeed he stays only for the purpose of dining out) — I find that, unless I can accept his invitation to-night, I cannot see him again. On many accounts this would be very inconvenient to me; and also, from old remembrances, I should be sorry to refuse an invitation on which he had lain so much stress — when it may be the last I shall ever be in the way of accepting from him.¹

This being the case, I presume on your kindness to allow me to exchange to-morrow night for this. I will call therefore to-morrow night and take my chance of finding yourself or Mr. Taylor at home.

Incognito, to play upon his name, deserves to be better known whoever he is: for he is a very clever fellow.²

I have read Mr. Taylor's Tract, and have written some notes upon it. I think I understand it thoroughly. For indeed it is written with a clearness unusual to Economists.³

Yours most truly, my dear Sir,
Thos. De Quincey.

Perhaps you could send for the Books after 2 o'clock? — A vol. of the Poets is mislaid somewhere: and, if I should not be home early to-night, I may not have found it before 2. — At 2 it will be perfectly convenient.⁴

Addr: J.A. Hessey Esqr./Fleet Street/[London].

MS: British Library. Add. 37215, ff4-5.

1. Richard Woodhouse's notebook gives the best insights into De Quincey's attitude to Wilson at this time, and probably of the strained tenor of De Quincey's mind as well (Woodhouse MS/passim; summarised in Eaton/1936, pp.279-285). On the one hand, there was perplexity over the context of imminent
perfidy to "old remembrances" - he felt someone, "not improbabl[y... ] Wilson", might do him "at some time a great and irreparable injury" (Eaton/1936, p.284). On the other, there were the not unconnected violent swings of feeling, "approaching paranoia" in Eaton's words (p.285), about Wilson. Perhaps, though, the Blackwood's team held similar sentiments about De Quincey. Woodhouse noted on 20 September, 1821 that "Blackwood's magazine decreased very much in sale after the death of poor [John] Scott", the London's previous editor (Woodhouse MS/f8). William Blackwood, ever touchy about his magazine, also had to put up with the like of Wilson "maliciously" observing that "the writer had got £1000 by writing [the] O. Eating articles [...] once intended to have been written for B.'s mag." (Woodhouse MS/f18). Depending on which source is the most reliable, the actual sum was either "forty guineas" (Robinson/1938, vol.1, p.275); "£50" (Wilson to Blackwood: see 21 September, 1823, note 1); or 20 guineas per sheet, around £60 for the whole work (The New European Magazine, vol.III, October, 1823, p.298). Perhaps a footnote to the whole, rather ludicrous, if potentially serious, affair can be seen in a letter De Quincey wrote to Hessey from Westmorland on 9 February, 1822. "Mr. Blackwood's assertion", De Quincey added as an afterthought to a letter on financial matters, "or insinuation, whichever it be, - I suppose you view in its just light as an infamous calumny - devised to injure me in your opinion. - So far from making offers even for Mr. B. - Wilson always (when on his guard) spoke of himself as having quitted him" (Bath Reference Library MS/A.L.1293). Although we don't know the nature of Blackwood's "assertion", it looks as if De Quincey's immoderate suspicions about Wilson were well founded. The latter certainly seemed to make a habit of coining stories about him to aggravate Blackwood's already wounded pride.

2. "Incog." (as it was printed) was one of the pseudonyms used by the poet Thomas Hood (1799-1845), then sub-editor of the London. He had two items, "The Departure of Summer" and "A
Sentimental Journey, from Islington to Waterloo Bridge, in March 1821", in the November number of the magazine. De Quincey and Hood were to get to know each other well in London, and were later to write about each other with affection. Hood recorded his "frequent and agreeable" visits to the chaotic "German Ocean of Literature" that was De Quincey's room (Hood's Works/vol.II, pp.379-80). De Quincey in turn referred to the poet as a man of "memorable genius [with] nobility of heart" in his 1850's autobiographical writings (M/I, p.74). He also contributed generously to a public appeal in 1852 for money towards a commemorative monument for Hood (DICKENS'S LETTERS/vol.VI, p.779).

3. A reference to John Taylor's pamphlet The Restoration of National Prosperity shown to be immediately practicable, published in 1821. Woodhouse recorded on 3 November, 1821 that De Quincey was "to write a few notes to it" (Hogg/1895, p.77). Given that the pamphlet was published in July, 1821, these notes cannot have been intended for inclusion in it.

4. See 11 and 12 October, 1821.

42. TO [JOHN TAYLOR]

[London]

Monday morning November 19 [1821]

My dear Sir,

I do not know whether I am doing wrong. - I hope I am doing nothing that can seem to indicate any forgetfulness for a moment of the extraordinary kindness I have already received from you, when I ask you - Whether it would be convenient to you and Mr. Hessey to let me have, either to-day - to-morrow - or Wednesday, the sum of twenty or twenty-five pounds in any sort of bill that you please. -

I ask it on this consideration, - that possibly it may make no difference to you; if so, it would release me from that portion of my debts in Westmorland which being for small sums I am harassed about at least every other day by letters
and urgent remonstrances of the claimants - some reasonable, some unreasonable. But do not think me so extravagant in my expectations as to imagine that any pressure upon myself gives me a title to ask from you anything that can inconvenience yourself - or - is at all out of the ordinary course: more especially having experienced so much liberality that must be out of the ordinary course.

Before I leave London, I will of course give you any sort of written engagement for the fulfilment of my contract: and let me add that, in the event of any accident befalling myself, - my mother, who enjoys for her life about £900 per ann. of my father's property, and to whom I am joint heir with 2 brothers and 1 sister, will pay all my debts - if they were far greater than (I thank God) they now are. She is offended with me for having married a wife with no fortune; and being now 70 years old, I fear has listened to one or two present about her so far as to have become violently prejudiced against me who was living 300 miles off. I judge this from her letters, and from her having latterly refused to lend me the sum which would have washed out my debts - though she is by nature exceedingly liberal in regard to money, and though she must have known (unless her ear was besieged with constant misrepresentations of the case) that they were inevitable; for she herself suffered to the extent of a thousand pounds by the same failure which in part caused my difficulties. Whence she drew these feelings towards me, I can only suspect: having parted with her in 1814 in perfectly good understanding, nay at that time her favorite. - With all these feelings towards me however she lately wrote to assure me that in her will I stand not only to the extent marked out by my father's will, but also as the eldest son and the only one who had or was likely to have children. - Thus in the event of my death my interests, as regards my family and my creditors, are secured - independently of my uncle, whose heir I shall probably be. I trouble you with all this account of my private affairs, simply to say that I have the power to secure you and will by
my wife secure you against all possibility of loss in the accident of my death. Yours, my dear Friend, most faithfully - Thos. De Quincey

MS: Rare Books Room, Pennsylvania State University.

1. See De Quincey's letter to Cottle of 2 August, 1821: the rhetoric of raising loans had already become conventional. He was in fact misleading Taylor: his mother, constitutionally disapproving as she might be, was "greatly rejoiced to find that [Mrs. De Quincey] answers your wishes as a Companion and a Wife" (mother to De Quincey, 23 December, 1818: Japp/1891, Memls., vol. II, p. 123). Mrs Quincey paid her son's debts with apparent reluctance and only after making a great deal of moralising noise. The "failure" mentioned here stems from the financial mismanagement of the De Quincey estate after the death of De Quincey's father in 1793 (Lindop/1981, pp. 12-13 and p. 21).


43. TO JOHN TAYLOR

[London. 20 November, 1821]

My dear Sir,

As two persons have ordered people in London to call upon me for small sums (about £4 each)1 - the sum of £15 would answer my purpose. - I inclose the Address: and with the deepest acknowledgements of your kindness.

I remain

Tuesday Nov. 20

Most faithfully yours,

4 York Street

Thomas De Quincey.

Could you let me see any former Address of any Magazine? I am not stopping in my composition for it: but I should be glad to see how far mine is on the usual model.2
1. De Quincey later named one of the creditors as "a Mr. Manwairing, Chichester Rents, Chancery Lane", whose demands, he told Taylor, he was refusing to acknowledge in full (8 December, 1821: University of Kentucky/Peal MS).

2. This looks like a reference to the review/proposals "address" that De Quincey must then have been drafting for the December number of the London Magazine (see 18 October, 1821, note 3, paragraph 3). It may be that a MS fragment held in the Pforzheimer Collection at the New York Public Library (S.ana 11, "Continuation of the Note XYZ") also belongs to this draft, which was never published in the London, or to the editorial letter by "X.Y.Z." which was published in the December issue. It develops "a favorite scheme" of De Quincey's for compiling an "Anthology [...] of the Grecian Drama", and proposes that Shelley translate the "Persae of Aeschylus and above all the Prometheus". Whatever the case, the December London provides a sure sign of De Quincey's rapid rise to something resembling fame, or at least to a position of significance: there were the Richter pieces, editorial mentions of forthcoming articles by him, his own two-page editorial letter, and the intended "address" just mentioned. John Taylor's life seemed to be De Quincey laden as well: "It is now ½ past 12 [a.m.] and the Opium Eater has just left me. No one can attend to this kind of Business except myself" (letter to father, 21 November, 1821: Taylor/1925, p.263). Taylor didn't object: he enjoyed his conversations with De Quincey immensely and recorded some of them in his commonplace books (see Chilcott/1972, pp.138-39).
My dear Sir,

I had vowed to accept no more invitations: and yesterday evening accordingly took no notice of one from C. Lamb, nor in the morning of two others from less intimate acquaintances: - However, as an hour's conversation will do me some service, I must accept yours; and will be down at 7 or earlier.¹

As the light is now going, - indeed, as the auctioneers say, going, going, gone, - the services of Thomas will be more useful to me in the morning, if you can then spare him.²

Whilst I think of it, let me beg you to use your influence for the condemnation of Mr. Black's article on the Scotch:³ - I do verily believe it will lose you all your subscribers in Edinburgh; and, what is worse, when combined in people's recollections with Lamb's article it will mark a persevering intention to attack whatever is Scotch that will not be forgotten in Scotland and will surely tend to prevent any new subscribers arising.⁴ - I condemn myself for having uttered a needless truth about Scotch Professors: that it is a truth, makes it of course the more unwelcome. - I give you my opinion, you see, pretty freely: I hope it is yours. At any rate, you understand my motives: - on reviewing the case in my solitude of late, I have become very anxious about it.⁵

Yours, my dear Sir, Most truly, - Thos. De Quincey

Addr: J. A. Hessey Esqre./ [London].

MS: Pierpont Morgan Library. MA 1225.

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1. After a rather cool start to their friendship in 1805, De Quincey and Charles Lamb, a London mainstay, now met frequently. "This day I dined with the Lambs, that is Charles L. and his sister", De Quincey wrote in an undated memorandum, "Poor dear creatures, attractions of splendour and luxury these dear friends had none to offer. But happier I was in the
anticipation of this evening party than of any which has fallen to my lot for years" (Georgetown MS. See also M/III, pp.71 and 78; M/V, p.245ff; Lucas/1905, vol.II, pp.66-69; and Lindop/1981, p.252). That dining out wasn't always so pleasant is shown by the continuation to this note: "In general, and I confess almost unavoidably, a dinner party is made into a regular scene of martyrdom" (Japp/1879, vol.I, p.377 - Japp doesn't offer the first part of the Georgetown MS). Such accords well with other contemporary accounts we have of De Quincey as dinner guest. John Taylor, for example, recorded De Quincey's depressed mood at a dinner for London contributors on 6 December, 1821: "It was a pleasant party [but] De Quincey was [...] out of spirits & he was then very ill" (Taylor/1925, p.263). De Quincey later admitted his lack of "attention" on this occasion (which, probably confusing this dinner with another, he assigned to November - M/V, p.246). At the same time (1848) he documented his delight in subsequently discovering that he had eaten his dinner with Thomas Griffiths Wainewright (1794-1847), the poisoner-in-waiting and coming-on opium-addict (M/V, pp.246-247). Social antipathies notwithstanding, De Quincey's circle of fellow-writers, literati, and stray acquaintances, whether friend, colleague or ephemeral companion, was extensive (see particularly his own articles on the subject in the Tait's "Sketches" of October and December, 1840; M/III, p126ff; and Woodhouse MS/passim).

One of the peculiarities of the period is De Quincey's apparent lack of direct contact with his old friend Coleridge, then resident at Highgate, in North London, with the Gillman family. Coleridge was quite active at the time; he had direct connections with the London circle and Taylor and Hessey (who published his Aids to Reflection in 1825), and he had written to De Quincey - at Bohste's - in August, 1821 (see 2 August, 1821, note 2). Perhaps it was the embarrassing financial trappings of the latter, or the oblique references to Coleridge in the Confessions, that kept the two apart. De
Quincey blurred the matter in his later reminiscences, feigning not to know that Coleridge was at the Gillmans' house until 1823 (Rec./1970, p.97). The two figures are readily bracketed in a letter written in 1823 by Thomas Carlyle, who has been told he might increase his knowledge "by conversing [in London] with Coleridge and the Opium eater" (CL/vol.2, p.459).

2. Thomas Bennion, Taylor and Hessey's servant.

3. It looks from this paragraph as if De Quincey was trying to get an article by a would-be contributor, in prospect for the January number of the London, rejected. There are no references to "Mr.Black" in any commentaries on the magazine, and the name isn't indexed in Riga/1975. An unattributed article, "Letters from London to a Friend in Edinburgh", does appear in that month's magazine, but it could not be construed as being remotely offensive.

4. The anti-Scottish sentiments of Lamb's article "Jews, Quakers, Scotchmen and other Imperfect Sympathies" are not muted: "I have been trying all my life to like Scotchmen, and am obliged to desist from the experiment in despair" (London, vol.IV, August, 1821, p.152). Both the London and Blackwood's had advanced their commodified corporate status on relatively narrow cultural, sectarian and nationalist lines (see Bauer/1953, pp.63-66, and Butler/1979, Chapter 8, passim). The fact of John Scott's death and the publication of De Quincey's "London" Confessions, could be said to have developed from the same growth of London/Edinburgh, "Cockney"/"Mohock" antagonism. This latter wasn't necessarily primarily political in its origins, but, as one discovers throughout Thomas Love Peacock's novels, has as much again to do with cultural linguistics.

5. De Quincey was never particularly fond of "Professors" as a species, even if he got to know and like a number of Scottish professors in the coming years. The "needless truth" to which he refers here is probably that mentioned in the Confessions. This concerns the "the moral faculties [of intuition] for the
vision and mysteries of our human nature" needed by philosophers, and "possessed [by] Scottish Professors in the lowest" degree. (Conf./1821, p.5.) The particular example of John Wilson was obviously not a good one in this area.

45. TO J. A. HESSEY
[London. 27 December, 1821]

My dear Sir,

Such is the bad fortune which attends my movements just now - that, when you were able to offer me the services of your man so often and earnestly, I on my part was not in a condition to accept them: now, on the contrary, when I am ready and have been since Saturday night, you I suppose cannot spare him. On Saturday he came, and I was not quite ready for him: but on Monday I told him I should be. That same night all was in readiness. Monday however, I now consider, was Christmas Eve: and indeed a double cause occurs to me as making it difficult for you to send him: 1. That it is Christmas week: 2. That it is the Magazine week. If this be so, you will perhaps let me know:— for whoever packs the books — I ought to see and give some directions to, before I leave London.

Since Monday night I have been very unwell: and I find I must give up Bristol: for my anxiety is now so great, that I could not endure such a delay. — Could you in any way have this inquiry made for me: 1. From what Inn the Manchester Express goes: 2. The fare, in order that I may compare it with the Mail which, as well as the Light Coaches, was 3½ guineas. 3. The maximum of Luggage which they allow to each Passenger. If there is no severe regulation on this point (mine will be perhaps 40lb. or thereabouts), and if [the] Fare is not materially higher than that of the Mail, — perhaps you will have a place taken for me in to-morrow's Express — if any is vacant: which at this season I should think was very probable.
I remain, my dear Sir,
December 27, 1821
Most faithfully yours,
Thomas de Quincey

Would you order Dr. Darling's\textsuperscript{4} Prescription to be made up for me? I am in great distress (bodily I mean) every evening—and all the night through.

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Addr: J. A. Hessey Esqre./Fleet Street/[London].
MS: Tracy W. McGregor Library, University of Virginia. MS 10,547.

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1. The January number of the \textit{London} was about to be published.
2. Perhaps De Quincey had intended to make a pre-Christmas visit to his mother, who lived in the Bristol area. Alternatively, he might simply have been awaiting a bank-draft from her.
3. As Richard Woodhouse noted, De Quincey left London on 29 December: "This evening I saw the Opium-Eater into the mail; he was about to return to Westmoreland" (Hogg/1895, p.102). Like most of De Quincey's journeys this one progressed like a mismanaged military campaign. Planning commenced mid-December, and we find John Taylor reporting on 18 December that De Quincey was "much disturbed and troubled by his preparations for leaving Town" (Matlock/Box 3592, no.4). On departure day, Taylor noted that he "never saw an instance in which much Reflection so completely deprived a Man of active Energy as in De Quincey" (Taylor/1925, p.265). A few days later Hessey received a letter from De Quincey, who was at Fox Ghyll, tracing what had turned out to be a dreadful journey, and fretting over the possible loss of his luggage in Manchester: "if it [a trunk containing all his papers] is lost, I am ruined for life" (Sotheby's, 12 November, 1963/Lot 38). The fear no doubt turned out to be an unfounded one. The next occasion De Quincey wrote about this journey, he simply said that the "Manchester Mail [was] at the Manch. Post Office 1/4 bef. 6 - leaving Cornhill exactly 1/4 after 8: i.e. the journey was performed in 21\frac{1}{2} hours" (De Quincey to Monkhouse, 20 April, 1822: Cornell MS).
4. Dr. George Darling was John Taylor's physician, with "a large practise among men of letters and artists" (Rollins/1948, vol.I, pp.lxxiv-lxxv). He had attended Keats and looked after the dying John Scott. De Quincey mentions him often in his London letters.

46. TO J. A. HESSEY
+Mr. Monkhouse is a Relation (I know not what) of Wordsworth's.

Fox-Ghyll
Saturday night, April 20 - 1822.

My dear Friend,

Mr. Monkhouse, a present neighbour of mine (i.e. for the last 3 or 4 weeks), a man of letters and of fine taste, I have been told - and a former acquaintance through Wordsworth, - called yesterday to say that he should this evening go up to Town for a short time. Having so short a notice, - I am sorry that all my efforts to avail myself of his offer to take a parcel &c. has been in vain: - an hour or two more would have allowed me to finish a paper I am preparing: and by Monday's post I will certainly send it. But I doubt, after all, whether you will esteem it of much importance. It is a sort of Ana (I call it Pandects - or Universal Receiver - not using the word in the Civilian's restriction): - and contains remarks on all subjects; amongst which I have taught my readers to expect the outlines of some important philosophical doctrines. - Southey's Omniana may give a rude notion of it: but I aim at something more important; and at laying a ground and paving the way, by short - insulated - and apprehensible explanations on cardinal points, for my Transcendental Letters and for many other subjects more likely to be popular. History - Criticism - Human life - Love - Marriage - Courtship - Polit. Econ. - Literature - Anecdotes of lit. men - Mathematics - Morals - Coleridge - Wordsworth - Myself in childhood in ref. to Educ. - Germ. Literature - &c. &c. &c. &c. in short the
flower of all my reading, thinking, and scheming for twenty odd years - will furnish the matter of these Ana, which I shall make as entertaining as possible; but with a special attention to communicate in every No. some knowledge that the reader is likely to value.  

I am wretchedly ill: but so far likely to be better - that, whereas through all the winter in addit. to far worse ailments I have been so possessed by rheumatism as never to be free from it for 36 hours, so that I could not attempt even to walk - being generally unable to stand upright or rise without help, - now at length I am beginning to get out for daily exercise of 15 miles a day.

Mr. Monkhouse will perhaps call on you: if so, do not forget that he is a great friend - admirer - and further near relation of W. W: of whom (in Certain* ways he has of annoyance) I wish I could say that he never more will trouble you - trouble you [sic]!!

Most faithfully, my dear Friend, yours,

Thos. De Quincey

*which I mentioned to Woodhouse: who possibly to you.  

Addr: Messrs. Taylor and Hessey (J. A. Hessey Esq.)/93 Fleet Street/London.  
MS: British Library. Add. 37215, ff6-7.

1. Taylor and Hessey were probably frequently in touch with De Quincey in 1822, fruitlessly trying to extract more copy for the London. In a letter of 9 February, 1822, De Quincey refers to Hessey's "letter of Jan. 19 [which] did not reach me till Feb. 2" and complains that "I write under depression of spirits so profound - that it is with difficulty I can raise myself to an exertion even such as this" (Bath Reference Library MS/A.L. 1293). It was of course opium, or probably De Quincey's uneven attempts to renounce it, which persistently recycled the theme of "depression" found in so many of these letters.

Taylor and Hessey did in fact have something to worry about at this stage in their magazine's life. Its circulation, generally around 2,000, had dropped early in the year. "I
wonder the Magazine does not sell better at the beginning of the New Year", Taylor wrote to his father, on 31 January, 1822, "it is so superior to the others. The Flam of Blackwood and the namby pamby of Colburn [in his New Monthly Magazine] are more suited it seems to the Taste of the Age" (Taylor/1925, p.264). Although sales were to rise slightly in the spring, they were to fall to 1,600 by November (Chilcott/1972, p.158). De Quincey's promised third part to the Confessions, not to say delivery of at least some of the articles pledged by him - on his own and the magazine's behalf - in the December editorial, might have improved things. On 10 April, 1822, Hessey was sanguine about the May issue: "Papers are crowding in thick and fast for the Magazine, and I am likely to have a capital number" (Blunden/1975, p.138). Of De Quincey, though, he seemed to have had fewer hopes: "I have heard from De Quincey and so has Woodhouse - but no Article - He has been confined by Sickness and harassed by Duns, and seems almost out of his mind. - He is now going to sell his Library [...] It appears that instead of being freed from all his Debts he was still £200 minus" (ibid., pp.138-39). (For details of De Quincey's library sale see 29 April, 1822/letter no.48).

2. Thomas Monkhouse was a cousin of Wordsworth's wife, Mary. Although mostly domiciled in London, he made numerous visits north to the Wordsworths, who would in turn frequently call on Monkhouse and socialise with his "many literary acquaintances" on their visits to the city (Moorman/1968, p.313). Mary Wordsworth was in fact willing De Quincey to leave Fox Ghyll so that Monkhouse could take the house (Jordan/1962, pp.291-95). De Quincey wrote an amiable, chatty letter to his neighbour the same day as the current one. "I trouble you with a letter to Mr. Hessey's", he opens, "If you could communicate your address to them, they could send a letter through you on your return" (Cornell MS). See also note 8.

3. It remained unsent - See 29 April 1822 (no.48).

4. Ana...Pandects, table-talk...digests, the sort of [Add. 4. Pandects, historically, the 50 books of Roman civil law compiled on the order of the Emperor Justinian, and published as the Pandectae in 533.]
anecdotal, disconnected writing suited to De Quincey's drug-eroded concentration, though he was obviously thinking of an organised commonplace book. Perhaps he had in mind what came to be published in 1823 in the London as the "Notes from the Pocket-Book of a late Opium-Eater" (the title wasn't used until three of the brief pieces had been published in the "Miscellany" section and elsewhere in the magazine). He had been thinking of a similar series for the Westmorland Gazette: "the second number will contain [...]"

3. Memorabilia from the pocket-book of a scholar" (W.G./1819, 29 May, p.2 - see also letters for 26 August, 1823 and 3 March, 1830 below).

5. Omniana, or Horae Otiosiores, 2 vols., 1812 (by Robert Southey, also with articles by Coleridge).

6. The "Transcendental Letters" emerged in the London in 1823 as the "Letters to a Young Man whose Education has been Neglected". These were of course more a series of extended memoranda on literature, language and philosophy than philosophical explications. Richard Woodhouse knew about them, or about De Quincey's plans for a "series of letters" on linguistic style anyway (particularly relating to Wordsworth), in December, 1821 (Hogg/1895, p.95).

7. Most of these subjects were to appear, in one form or another, during De Quincey's long career as a writer for periodicals. (Mathematics, though it remained untreated, was a serious consideration: "I hoped to be the re-establisher in England - with great accessions - of Mathematics" [1818, Japp/1891, Memls., vol.II, p.111.]) In 1822, however, the only work by him that surfaced in the pages of the London, was an "Appendix" to the Confessions (vol.VI, December, 1822, pp.512-17). There was also the book publication of the Confessions, the proofs of which, by De Quincey's own account in the "Appendix" (dated 30 September, 1822 and which also appeared in the book), he "could not even bear to read [...] over [during the summer of 1822] with attention enough to notice the press errors, or to correct any verbal inaccuracies"
8. Woodhouse doesn't reveal in his notebook (Hogg/1895, p.71ff and Woodhouse MS) what De Quincey said about the annoying "ways" of Monkhouse and Wordsworth. There is a suggestion here, picked up in Jordan/1962 (pp.294-95), that De Quincey might have been airing his grievances about Wordsworth — considerable in number — to Woodhouse. The headnote and footnote to the letter do suggest that De Quincey could have been cautioning Hessey not to repeat anecdotes that might offend Wordsworth if passed on to him. Intention to caution is also indicated by the outline of a hand which De Quincey has drawn against the opening of the paragraph preceding his complimentary close.

47. TO ROBERT BLAKENEY¹

[Fox Ghyll]

Monday, April 29, 1822.

Sir,

Some little delay has arisen from the sudden departure of Mr. Bohte² to attend the Leipsic Fair: Mr. B. is Foreign Bookseller to his Majesty; and was to have received a sum a money accruing to me in London from various quarters; and to have paid any bills on my account. At his request I have drawn all bills lately in the shape of Promissory Notes payable at his house — rather than of Bills on him. A Bill of this form, I presume, will be agreeable to you: and that the delay may not operate to your disadvantage, I have drawn it at one month from April 30.

I shall be happy to accept your house for one year on the terms you offer of 60 guineas a year. Many points occur to me as requiring some notice amongst those which you have referred to in your last letter. But these I am under the necessity at this moment of leaving to another opportunity.
The Bill, you will observe, is for the sum of £55 only: my reason for which is — that in autumn last, when I was in London, the sum of £2. 5. 3. was paid by my family to Mr. Cookson of Clappersgate for taxes: and last week (Wed. April 24) I myself paid the same sum to the same collector on the same account. These two sums, making jointly £4. 10. 6, leave a balance of nine shillings and sixpence due to you which I will pay to your order at any time, or to your servant if he should be soon over.

You speak of an intention of coming over to this place yourself in May. Until the latter end of the month I am afraid that I shall have no bed to offer you: but at any time I shall feel obliged by your making this house your home in all other respects. Until the 21st of May however I shall not be at liberty to pay you so much attention personally as I should wish to do.

I remain, Sir,
Your faithful humble Servant,
Thomas De Quincey.

Addr: Robert Blakeney Esqr./Whitehaven.
MS: Berg Collection. De Quincey MS (H.).

1. Robert Blakeney of Whitehaven was the owner of Fox Ghyll. This is one of a series of letters to him from De Quincey on the subject of the cottage (the others are dated 21 January, 7 April and 26 May, 1822, and all are held in the Berg Collection). It must be said that this is the politest of the letters, the others being mildly hostile protests at Blakeney's demands for rent. Blakeney's formal acquaintance with Wordsworth led him to complain to the poet that, "I do not understand Mr. De Quincey; he has promised by two different Letters to pay his rent, but the Bill is not yet come to hand" (letter dated 25 April, 1822: Armitt/1916, p.684). Blakeney died in November, 1822, after which his agent John White had to battle it out with De Quincey, who somehow managed to hang on to Fox Ghyll until 1825. Until the current
letter was written the whole matter had been at a point of stasis: De Quincey would stall by alleging that Blakeney had promised to build him a library, and Blakeney of course refused to make any move until De Quincey paid his rent. See Lindop/1981 (pp.255-58) for the context of De Quincey's life at this juncture, under siege from publishers, landlord, mother (to whom he had written for money) and opium.

2. J. H. Bohte, De Quincey's London landlord (see 2 August, 1821, note 2).

3. De Quincey could not meet the bill for £55 when it was initially presented by Blakeney, the excuse given being that "a sum of £100 due to me on a balance left unpaid last autumn by two Lond. Publishers [Taylor and Hessey] cannot be paid until Monday June 10" (letter to Blakeney, 26 May, 1822: Berg Collection). The "taxes" referred to here are of course assessed taxes, a form of property tax.

48. TO J. A. HESSEY

[Fox Ghyll. 29 April, 1822]

On the other side (p.2-3)¹ you will see that I have applied to you on a matter of business:— you must not suppose that in any other case than this peculiar one I should have done so:— On the contrary in many a difficulty that has nearly overwhelmed me since I saw you, no such thought ever occurred to me: what makes the difference in this, you will see. — I owe you a balance of I think £12. 10. out of the bills:— this, and far more than this, I could never obtain from the person to whom the bill for £66. 13. was paid. — In fact, bills that — split into 5 or 6 — would have paid 9 or 10 creditors — being so large — and the Bank of Wilson and Co., Kend.[al] refusing to discount them² — paid only 3 in the end.

Fox-Ghyll — Monday night, April 29 — 1822

Read this letter, if you please, as soon as you conveniently can.

My dear Friend,
In what way I was prevented from completing to my mind the paper which I promised in my letter by Mr. Monkhouse3, - I forbear to say: my own mind recoiling both on your account and my own from the labor of detailing endless suffering and endless troubles. The sum of the matter is - that I found it not in a state that I could myself approve until the 22nd or 23rd: and at that time, as it could not reach you until the 25th, I thought it would be too late for the forthcoming No.: and I detained it therefore for further additions &c. - I am now promised a private conveyance by a Kendal tradesman on Monday next at farthest: and by the same opportunity I will send you some other articles. As to the Opium-Eaters Part 3. - I do not know whether I told you that I am selling my library and my furniture (my house here being a furnished one): from the one I expect from £400 to £650: from the other about £200. This done I shall breathe again and look up once more in this world: but the sale of the first, which was to have begun on the 22nd. (last Monday) has by Mr. Richardson's advice been delayed a short time on account of the Westmorland Yeomanry who meet in a few days at Kendal - and also on account of the absence of a Mr. Johnson, a lawyer of literature and abilities who is a main pillar of book sales in Kendal4. The moment I am free from the hideous oppression of this labor, I will write without delay such an article as I can: yet I foresee, and always have foreseen, nothing but disappointment from it - and, what is worse, that it will reflect disgust upon the former parts. I was constantly told that I had left one point imperfect5:- this might be so: but it was too late to mend it - at least as a sequence to the 2 first parts: any improvements could properly, I have always felt, be introduced only in a remodelling of the whole. Let me do all I can. [p.2 begins] I am satisfied that those, who are most friendly, will say - when asked their opinion of it - 'Oh! a poor thing - mere spinning out' - &c. And this time next year there will not be one soul who cares anything about it but will say - 'What a pity that you should ever have spoiled that article of
the Opium-Eater by a 3rd part.'— However, injudicious or not, the engagement is made: and must be kept, and if it were labor only that were wanting, I would wear out an arm or two in writing it: and after all one consolation is — that nobody will ever ask me for a 4th part. — To return — when my mind is free to think for 10 minutes consecutively and not employed (as alas ever since I saw you I have been employed — morning, noon, and night) in beating off creditors, — I will do my best. The Novel is a far easier task: nay, 20 novels would not task me so heavily as one Opium-Eater: this shall be in your hands, if you do not now prefer being repaid from the proceeds of the sales (now, I mean, when the season is so advanced) — in a very short time. As to the other papers promised for the Mag. — the moment I am free from daily anxieties and fears of arrests, executions &c., they will be a perfect pleasure to me.

I inclose, as you will see, a Promissory Note at one month for £20: and my purpose in doing this is connected with a request to yourself — which is the immediate occasion of my writing to you.

When I was in London, Mr Bohte volunteered to lend me books for the service of the Magazine. About the same time, I had authority from Mr. Taylor to procure from him the works of Richter. Depending on Mr. B.'s offer, I did not scruple to desire that 4 philosophical works — viz. the Phil. Histories of Buhle (2) — Tiedemann — and Tennemann — might be added to the parcel. I knew they would not be injured; and might be returned; or at worst might be sold at some loss — which I should have been willing to bear. My purpose was just to use them for my Transcendental Letters and then return them. For this purpose, by the bye, they are wholly useless — only one of them touching on Kant: and that one which does [p.3 begins] go so far, treating the subject in a most superficial and ignorant manner: in fact being no more than a verbal index to Kant's works.
What followed?
At the very moment I was going away, in fact whilst you were at the door with your watch in your hand — supposing that I was making ceremonious delays, — I was stopped by Mr. Bohте — pressing for payment at that moment. I compromised the matter by promising a bill at 3 months from Westmorland. The bill for these books, to my horror, amounted to £39. I gave a bill for £30 dated Jan. 7. On April 1st, — when torn to pieces by creditors here, — I was obliged to pay this bill. The only way I could contrive to do this — was — that I sent a £20 note, and a bill for £15 at one month dated April 1 — which Mr. B. got discounted.

Now this £15 bill becomes due at Mr. Sheldon's, 2 Moor Street of course on Friday 3rd May (it is a promissory note in favor of Mr. B.).

Could you then get me this £20 bill at one month in any way discounted — so as to meet the £15 bill. Cannot such things be done at discounting offices: or by my purchasing something or other. If the book-sale had come on, as I had been prepared to expect, on the 22nd — it wd. have been met by that.

In this case why do I apply to you? — Simply on this account — that, though overwhelming misery and troubles have prevented me from executing the articles I intended, yet it is true that not one of these books was procured except with a view to those arts., knowing that in Westmorland I could borrow nothing. — I do not say this as meaning that you can be any ways answerable in a matter on which you were not consulted. Mr. B. in fact it is who could be thought answerable. Yet, as the Richter's works amount to between 7 and 8 pounds — perhaps you will, if it be in your power, assist me over the whole by means of my promissory note.

I remain, my dear Sir, —

Most faithfully yours,

Thos. De Quincey.

Addr: J. A. Hessey Esqr./Messrs. Taylor and Hessey's/Fleet Street/London.
1. Pages marked in bold brackets in text.
2. De Quincey didn't have much luck with Wilson: see 5 December, 1820.
3. See 20 April, 1822.
4. Thomas Richardson was the main Kendal bookseller. A letter to him from De Quincey has survived. Dated 25 April, 1822, it outlines an advertisement that De Quincey thought should be used for the sale, which was to consist of around 650 books, part only of his entire library: "Select Library for Sale in Kendal. On Monday May 13 will commence at the Kings Arms Inn in Kendal the sale of a Library in the principle languages of modern Europe, together with a collection of Ancient Classics &c." (British Library MS/62943A). The presence of James Johnson, a Kendal attorney, was, De Quincey insisted, "a conditio sine qua non: his judgement being so much looked up to in literature". That the sale was a failure, it raised only £170 (£32 of which went in fees), is revealed in 24 October, 1822 (postscript) below.

Questions about the nature of De Quincey's library are interesting ones. There is plenty of reason to think that despite a lifetime of complaining about his lack of access to books, he did in fact have a sizable, if fragmented, peripatetic, and fluctuating collection of his own. Large acquisitions of books are instanced a number of times in his own and other writings: in childhood - "very soon I had run ahead of my allowance" through book purchases (Susp./1985, p.130); in 1807 - "he was living in book-shops" (Eaton/1936, p.145); in 1809 - packing 2-300 books just acquired in London (Jordan/1962, p.236); in 1812 he was in London, "attending the sale of the great Roxburghe library" (Lindop/1981, p.195); in the 1810's (and possibly in the early 1820's) - "For some years [Henry Crabb Robinson writes] I was the depository of a large collection of books which were kept in my chambers to save warehouse rent, till they were sold to supply his wants."
They were classical works & I believe of value" (Robinson/1922, p.58); in 1818 he admitted that out of his inheritance, "about £700 or £800 was spent in books" (Japp/1891, Memls., vol.II, p.113); and in the 1821 Confessions, he claimed that "of [books], I have about five thousand, collected gradually since my eighteenth year" (Conf./1821, p.60).

Various sets of De Quincey's books, papers and manuscripts frequently seem to have been impounded or held hostage by his unpaid landlords and landladies. "One set lost in Cumberland by knavery in my absence. One set held by Miss Miller [an Edinburgh landlady]. And this set under the grasp of a needy man [an Edinburgh landlord]", he wrote, typically, in 1840 (Eaton/1936, p.390). The Cumberland "knavery" represents a particularly revealing incident. De Quincey and various members of his family seem often to have lodged with or near Margaret De Quincey's married sister, in the Penrith area. The settlement of Lingstubbs (variously spelt), one mile west of Penrith, is frequently mentioned in De Quincey's letters (Eaton/1936, pp.313 and 335 [1830], p.371 [1837]; Japp/1891, Memls., vol.II, p.177 - this last letter, now in a private collection, is addressed to "Lingstubs, near Penrith" [1836]; and in the Berg Collection, 27 September, 1833, where De Quincey's landlord's name is given as Mr. Appleyard). It also provided De Quincey with a base while he was clearing out Dove Cottage in 1835: "From a House near Penrith [...] I accomplished my task [...] in six days and seven nights" (Bodleian Library, MS Eng. Lett. c.461, ff90-91). At the end of June, 1838 he hurriedly left Edinburgh for Penrith, where a "farmer, to whose care I had confided my library, had advertised about 2 thousand volumes for public sale [...] It cost me above a week to settle the matter" (letter to Adam Black, 14 July, 1838: Yale MS). De Quincey elaborates on the matter in another letter written around the same period (an undated and unaddressed fragment, but probably to Adam Black again - Berg Collection; Japp/1890, pp.434-35, gives part of
After quoting the advertisement - which declared that the books belonged to a "deep-learn'd gentleman" and were "filled with the most valuable notes and comments" - he disclosed that the sale had included "The jewels of my library - books of inestimable value from their rarity [...] from the D. of Roxburghe's thrice famous sale in 1812. [And] all my papers - letters even to my wife" and probably the 1803 diary (Eaton/1927) which still survives. Somehow he managed to persuade the purchasers to part with their treasures.

He also somehow managed to hang on to these books, and a good number more, until his death. The hitherto overlooked sale catalogue of "The Library of the Late Thomas De Quincey Esq." details the collection (NLS/Printed Books, T. Nisbet and Co., KR. 16. f5 [1-13]). (Since the sale took place after the Inventory of De Quincey's personal estate was recorded on 6 January, 1860, which documents a total of £262.13.9 [only around £30 in books], it presumably added a large amount to the estate - see Eaton/1936, p.509 for details of the Inventory.) It is difficult to say exactly how many of the books in the sale, which lasted several days in January and March, 1860, were De Quincey's. Only one day, 26 January, is specifically designated as the sale day for De Quincey's library, with 14 March and 3 following days being given up to the remainder of his books, along with other collections. All of the books sold on 26 January are obviously his, as are most of the books sold on 16 and 17 March; with many of the books offered between 23 and 25 January also possibly being his. A number of the volumes are marked in the catalogue "from the Roxburgh Library", more are stated to contain a "long note in the handwriting of De Quincey" and others are said to be presentation copies. The collection is a miscellaneous one. Greek and Latin classics rub shoulders with long runs of nineteenth-century periodicals, sets of eighteenth and nineteenth century German philosophical texts and works by Coleridge and Wordsworth and numerous other writers. "Jewels" there certainly are: including a number of extremely rare
sixteenth-century works, not least, four by Giordano Bruno. It was undoubtedly a valuable collection.

The 1812 Roxburghe purchases alone would have liberated De Quincey and his family, at least temporarily, from some of the financial stresses that dogged them into the 1840's. We know that he sold books piecemeal to raise money: "but for a presentation copy of a new book in 5 volumes which unwillingly (but from dire necessity) I authorised my children to sell, I could not have carried them over the last 4 days" (7 October, 1841: NLS/MS 4055, f176). It seems, however, that he could have raised a lot more money this way had he chosen to do so.

Books were a permanent feature of his scriptory furniture, in terms of both content and context. Sitting down to write an article (unpublished) for the Westmorland Gazette in 1818 or 1819, for example, he begins, "A few evenings since whilst overhauling a large collection of old books, amongst them I found a small [sixteenth-century] volume in the black letter", and goes on to summarize and comment on the contents (Harvard MS/fMS Eng 974). There is an element of mystery surrounding the matter: loving descriptions of valuable personally-owned volumes one minute are followed by laments about poverty the next. De Quincey probably tried as hard as he could, not always successfully, to suppress knowledge of his book collection, when the matter of debt was being aired (it escaped notice in the 1832/33 cessio bonorum action - see Forward/1939). Statements such as "he was in no sense a collector of rare and fine books", or "he cared not to add volume upon volume" (Hogg/1895, pp.59, and 258), are, anyway, highly questionable.

5. De Quincey is probably referring to something along the lines of the "omission noticed by the Medical Intelligencer, (No.24) [vol.2, October, 1821, pp.613-15 - "The London Magazine"] viz. - The omission to record the particular effects of the Opium between 1804-12" ("Lion's Head" letter by De Quincey in the London, vol.IV, December, 1821, p.585).
6. He was to say something similar himself about the revised *Confessions* of 1856: "It is almost rewritten; and there cannot be much doubt that here and there it is enlivened, and so far improved. And yet, reviewing the volume as a whole, now that I can look back from nearly the end to the beginning, greatly I doubt whether many readers will not prefer it in its original fragmentary state to its present full-blown development" (Japp/1890, p.387).

7. This novel, or a novel, anyway - beyond the planned but never-written fictions mentioned in the 1803 diary (Eaton/1927, p.181, e.g.), and the completed *Walladmor* (1825) and *Klosterheim* (1832) - is frequently mentioned in De Quincey's letters for the 1820's and beyond. For the former period, which refers to the novel mentioned in this letter, see also 24 October, 1822 (postscript) and late January, 1823. The earliest mention we have of this projected novel comes in a letter of 15 December, 1821, to Taylor or Hessey: "if I understood you rightly you were so kind as to say in your last conversation with me upon the subject, that you would allow me 150 guineas for the novel, of this I have already received, I believe, about twenty-six pounds" (Maggs, Cat.210, 1905, no.5). The latest reference I have found to a projected novel dates from 1852, when De Quincey let it be known that he "had in contemplation" a novel "about two prisoners in Austria, in the time of Maria Theresa" (Hogg/1895, p.233). Neither earlier nor later projects materialised in their promised form. Although he later came to view the novel as a vulgar form of writing, in 1830 he could still say "[on] the grandeur which belongs to the passion of Sexual Love in the economy of life, as it is and as it may be, Novels have an all-sufficient justification" (Hogg/1890, vol.I, p.356). Perhaps this would have been the focus of his earlier-planned novel - it certainly wasn't the dominant theme in *Klosterheim* - if it was ever more than a money-raising figment. (See 14 January, 1830, note 1 for a reference in the *Noctes Ambrosianae* of
Blackwood's [October, 1825] to De Quincey's "promised 'Romance!'".

De Quincey had certainly received 150 guineas for his projected novel by January, 1823 (it is the £157. 10s. mentioned in late January, 1823 below). We know, moreover, that Taylor didn't get any return for his investment. When the Blackwoods were trying to negotiate a copyright deal over the Confessions in 1845, the London publisher threw in a remark about De Quincey's large advance on the novel: "Taylor mentioned that he had long ago given him 150£ for a proposed novel & had never heard anything more of the money or the novel - this is not improbable" (John to Robert Blackwood, 3 March, 1845: NLS/MS 4073, ff224-25).

Critical opinion this century has produced a detailed case for a novel published by Longman in 1823, The Stranger's Grave, being the work De Quincey was originally contracted to produce for Taylor and Hessey. Letters recently uncovered in the Longman archive have shown this not to be so. The Stranger's Grave is actually the work of George Robert Gleig (1796-1888), a member of the original Blackwood's team, and writer of numerous miscellaneous works (see my own article on the subject - Symonds/1993 - Appendix to this thesis).

8. J. G. Buhle (1763-1821). De Quincey is referring to Buhle's Lehrbuch der Geschichte der Philosophie und einer Kritischen Litteratur derselben, 8 vols. (Göttingen, 1796-1804), and Geschichte der neueren Philosophie seit der Epoche der Wiederherstellung, 6 vols. (Göttingen, 1800-1805). It is to Buhle's 1804 essay on the Rosicrucians and Freemasons that De Quincey adverts (or rather, which he translates and summarises) in his own 1824 London Magazine article on the subject (vol.IX, January-March and June; M/XIII, p.385ff; and see Goldman/1965, pp.76-77).


11. See 20 April, 1822, note 6. None of the works is referred to in the "Letters" of 1823.

12. All of these writers do in fact respond to Kant in their works: Buhle and Tennemann as disciples, and Tiedemann as an opponent. De Quincey probably managed to hang on to the works of Buhle and Tennemann mentioned here. Their books appeared anyway in the sale of his library in 1860.

13. Isaac Sheldon was a London bookseller. He is mentioned again, in a financial context, in an undated letter held at Harvard (Harvard MS/bMS Eng. 1009 [63]).

49. TO J.A. HESSEY Sale Cat. Extract

[Fox Ghyll]

Tuesday night, [mid-]September, 1822

Here is my case. I am now in my 12th week of a conclusive experiment on the possib. of leaving off opium. 12th, I say, for so I think. At any rate I began on June 24th. Since then my hist. is briefly this. About the 34th day I think I had actually accomplished the end; for 90 hours (i.e. more than 1 a week) I had done without a drop; suffered much; having demonstrated the possib. [profit. Eaton], I allowed myself a little, then again abstained; again indulged; and so on; letting [Settling, Eaton] down (from 50 [150, Eaton]-200 drops my ordinary dose), to about 40 as a maximum for comfort, tho' without losing my station I sometimes ran up the ladder far higher for a day. So far well; nothing worse than pain. About the 42nd day came on a sudden distention of the stomach; violent biliousness; rheumatic pains; then pains resembling internal rheumatism - and many other evils; but all trifles compared with the unspeakable, overwhelming, unutterable misery of mind which came on in one couple of days, and has continued almost unabatingly ever since. Tho' suff. pain I was
in higher spirits on the 40th day than for many years back; some sudden revolution in my bodily condit., at which I can hardly guess, has brought me into a state in which I feel at times the wretchedness of a lunatic.

[T. De Q.]

Publ: Hogg/1895, pp.213/14. (Letter quoted by Hogg – as above – from sale cat. of S.J.Davey, London.) Eaton/1936, p.289, n.25, quotes a few lines from it (amending it as noted), and gives as "its present owner, Dr. J. Morris Slemons, of Los Angeles".

1. The detailed report on drug withdrawal symptoms contained in this letter, is very similar to that offered by De Quincey in his "Appendix" to the Confessions (see 20 April, 1822, note 7). In the "Appendix", however, De Quincey draws a curtain over the nature of his sufferings after the "42nd day".

50. TO J. A. HESSEY

[Fox Ghyll. 24 October, 1822]

(Read, if you please, the N.B. a little lower down. Nov.1.) [See end of letter.]

My dear Friend,

Since I last wrote to you, I have improved a good deal in health – 1. perhaps from a moderate use of mercury (according to Abernathy's suggestion to me some years back);¹ which, by the bye, seems to confirm a conjecture of my own – that in part my ineffable prostration of spirits might be caused by biliousness exasperated by the summer heat; 2. in a still greater degree, I think, from the return of cold weather. The result is – that I begin to wake as from a torpor Stygius; and to contemplate my own position in this world. My conclusions on this point I now hastily communicate to you.

The articles which I have in a very forward state, – such a state i.e. as that I could feed the Press from the moment of my arrival in London without any delay whatsoever, – are
1. The Pandects
2. The Letters to a y. man of talents
3. The Acct. of Kant's Philos.
4. The Prolegomena to all fut. systems of Pol. Econ.

This last, and this only, I have a wish to see printed as a separate pamphlet: pamphlet indeed it need not be - but a book as big as Mill's at least. The general plan of this work is as follows:- It begins with the question What is Polit. Economy? and shows that not only have innumerable errors and misdirections of research arisen from the unaccountable neglect to limit (definire) the idea of the science, but also that from the first construction of such an idea there arises immediately an index or guide to the whole course of the following investigation. - Pursuing the light thus given, the 2nd chapter is occupied upon what now appears to be the foundation of the whole science; and taking up the subject from a higher point than Ricardo has done - contends that one capital blunder of Adam Smith's, hitherto wholly unnoticed, has vitiated every work written since his day; and rendered it impossible that a system of P. Econ. should ever be constructed, until it be removed (a single word, by the bye, in the 3rd edit. of Ricardo shews that he is aware of something rotten in that quarter; and, if I am not before him, I shall lose the appropriation of 4 years' occasional close meditation: he has found the scent, and is at this moment I doubt not hunting on the right track; so that, if I do not forestall him, he will leave me next to a pauper on the main Principle of the science and there will be nothing left for me but the credit of unfolding these Principles in a clearer manner - and with more extensive illustrations drawn from the Economics of the Romans &c. This I could bear well enough: but not to think that it was one of the many evils inflicted on me by Opium). Well - having laid this foundation, then I say - but of this one principle I will now shew that every other principle may upon the common and known laws of logic be readily and most luminously evolved. This is my Archimedean
Δος περί τότε κατά; and this established, Τὸν Κοσμὸν Κτινήσω, all
difficulties giving way as before the touch of a talisman. It
is not further experience, I assert, that is wanting to render
the science perfect and orbicular, but simply to rectify the
position of the spectator, who by one unfortunate oversight of
A. Sm.'s is placed for-ever in a false centre. I do not
profess to overthrow anything in Ricardo (except on the single
subject of money), but merely to underbuild him; aedifico
cateria omnia sapientissime condito—fundamentum altius et
latius substernere (as I express it in a Latin translation
of my system for the use of the Germans—which has gone on
pari passu with my English essay).

Well: so much for bagatelles—as all this would seem to
many. — Now 5°. One night in high summer, when I lay tossing
and sleepless for want of opium,—I amused myself with
composing the imaginary Confessions of a Murderer; which, I
think, might be made a true German bit of horror; the subject
being exquisitely diabolical; and, if I do not flatter myself,
some few dozens of useless old women I could frighten out of
their wits and this wicked world. — Yet do not mention this,
if you please, to anybody: for, if I begin to write imaginary
Confessions, I shall seem to many as no better than a pseudo-
confessor in my own too real Confessions. I thought of this
form for the narrative simply because nobody but the agent
himself could be supposed acquainted with all the circumstances
of acts—which, to be possible, must be secret. — But
this will require a longer space than I have left. 7°. I am in
hope that in a little time I may be well enough to compose a
3rd part of the Op.Confessions; having, of late, thrown off
several fragments which satisfy my own judgement.

To be brief—for the bearer of this to Ambleside waits—
I think of leaving this place for Liverpool on Friday next
(Oct. 25): there I am engaged to pass a day with one family
and to dine with 2 others: but, if I stay so long, I shall
certainly stay no longer: by Thursday morning Oct. 31—
therefore—I hope to be in London: would you therefore, in
order to save me the expense of any stay at an Inn, do me the favor to cause a lodging (any kind that is not too aerial—'too near a thunder cloud'—in Chatterton's language) to be taken for me:— you know what suited me in York St.: such a place would do admirably; and if [it is] as cheap (12s. a week) so much the better. As to York St. itself, — supposing it vacant, — here stands the case:— on his return from Germany Bohte wrote me a letter remonstrating with me upon my letter to Woodhouse in terms which 1. were not altogether accurate as respected the statement of that letter: 2. which seemed to question my accuracy even in that statement which I acknowledge to have made. — Now unquestionably I am sorry that Bohte's feelings should have been wounded by having my letter to W. read to him: in doing this W. mistook my intention—which was to reserve that as an extreme measure in the event of his refusing to lend his assistance in helping me out of a difficulty to which he had reduced me by exacting from me what he admitted that he was not in the habit of exacting from others. — For this I say I am sorry as for an unlucky accident: but then not one iota of my statement can I on that account retract. This, when I see Bohte, I must of necessity say to him:— suaviter in modo, but yet fortiter in re. And possibly this may not please him. Hence it is that I do not speak of his rooms, which on many accounts would have been more agreeable to me than any others. By the way, in respect to this affair you also treated me unfairly; i.e. by repeating Bohte's counterstatement — in such a way as if, being the latest version of the story, it must therefore be the most accurate. If I did not then reply in justification of my own account, it was partly because I was too wretched to write or to care about anything almost; partly because at this distance I could not communicate the vouchers for my own accuracy—viz. B.s's own letter to me which pursued me into this country at the very heels. Now, having occasion to recur to the affair, I recur also to your letter about it — and assure you that you did me great injustice: now, i.e., I assure you I
need cite no other evidence on my part than what I can in a few days put into your hands.

I was greatly concerned to hear of your domestic distress: but I trust from the turn of your expressions that Mrs. Hessey and your children are now thoroughly restored to health. - Mr. Taylor, I fear, sacrifices his health (and I presume you also, as you have had occasion for Dr. Darling's advice) on the altar of Hospitality; as heretofore. I judge this from his frequent secessions and rustications.¹⁵ - My kindest regards to all friends - especially Woodhouse, Hilton, and the Dewints.¹⁶

Your affectionate friend,


I now remember that you mentioned to me a bill of £15 as unpaid. I know not how I had misunderstood you about this, but the truth is I had rested in the notion (until your letter alluded to it) that you had paid it - and were to be repaid from the sale of books at Kendal. - From this sale I never drew any money myself: tho' £30 is due to me, if I could get it. All the books fit for sale, or saleable however at Kendal, that I could get ready in my then state of suffering - produced £170 only: from this was paid instantly for 2 rooms (4 days' use) - for auctioneer - auction duty - Catalogues - and Advertisements - about 32 pounds, I believe: the rest, excepting what still remains unpaid and cannot be obtained I am told without allowing time, was all paid to purchasers of books who happened to have bills against me.¹⁷ Hence at this time I hardly know how to get up to London. - About the Novel I have said nothing: if I now rise above the billows that I have so long buffeted with - a few weeks will suffice to complete what is so fully traced out in outline.¹⁸

N.B. This letter was written but not sent about Oct. 24. Meantime this affair has arisen: The Middle Temple, of which I am a member, make me debtor to them for Absent Commons &c. the sum of £5. 10s. 7: and if not paid before Nov. 6, threaten to
put the bond in suit against Coleridge, my surety. If I am not in London by the Mail of Nov. 5., wd. you do me the kindness to pay the sum for me at the Treasurer's Office, close to the M. Temple Hall?

Nov. 1st. - If you are disposed to gratify me in printing the Proleg. as a tract with a few colored illustrations that will make the whole anschaulich to speak Germanic, - then put absolute faith in my bearing you out to the Public in the 2 following advertisements - which I should be happy to meet in a Morning paper at breakfast on my arrival in London. (By the bye I shall come and take my chance of finding you in Fleet Street on my arrival in Led Lane.)

In a few days will be published
also, by the same author,
Meditations on the Philosophy of Literature: containing the Outlines of a Theory for reducing to a common Principle the characteristic features of Ancient Literature as contradistinguished from the Literature of Christendom. (About 200 pp. I calculate).

Nov. 1. I shall be in by that Mail of Nov. 5 or 6. for certain:- Having been obliged to stay so much beyond my first intention: - I shall not go through Liverpool.

Addr: J. A. Hessey Esqr./Fleet Street/London.
PM: Kendal Penny Post.
MS: Berg Collection. De Quincey MS (H).

1. Abernathy is John Abernethy (1764-1831), renowned if eccentric surgeon and opium-addict, who treated both Coleridge and De Quincey. While Coleridge praised him, De Quincey was much more critical about his belief in the power of opium as an intoxicant. See Conf./1821, p.42 and M/III, pp.385-6 - where Abernethy is the "one person [...] a surgeon" - and also Leask/1991 (passim) for a discussion of the relationship between the three men. Mild compounds of mercury were used to treat many complaints, especially venereal diseases.
2. See 20 April, 1822, note 6.
3. See 20 April, 1822, note 4.

4. De Quincey published four pieces relating to Kant in the London: a résumé of British attitudes to him, in 1823 (vol.VIII, July, pp.87-95), and three translations from him, in 1824 (April, May and October - vol.IX, pp.381-88, and pp.489-92, and vol.X, pp.385-93). The subject had been touched on a number of times during his Westmorland Gazette days. He had even promised there something that sounds much like the July, 1823 article: "the first number [of a planned series] will contain [...] 1. Immanuel Kant of England, or a letter to a friend on the study of Transcendental Philosophy; with some account of the English Expounders" (W.G./1819, 29 May, p.2 - see also, e.g., the Gazette for 28 August, 1819, p.3, and 4 September, 1819, p.3, for further articles on Kant). The 1823 London piece was also to have an epistolary context as one of the "Letters to a Young Man whose Education has been Neglected/On the English Notices of Kant". Although he focused on Kant in a number of later essays, De Quincey never presented a systematic explication of his ideas. Despite this, the fact remains that he was very much on his own as a writer offering papers on Kant in a magazine context at this period. Morgan/1949 (p.345) shows six articles on Kant in the major British magazines between 1820 and 1830, five of them by De Quincey. Even allowing for errors in Morgan's statistics, the percentage is remarkable.

5. This was another work that De Quincey was often to mention but never to publish. The first reference to it, or the third if one is to believe him, appears in the 1821 Confessions. He was, he records, inspired by reading David Ricardo's Principles of Political Economy and Taxation (1817) in 1819, to draw up the Prolegomena. By his own account De Quincey made arrangements from Grasmere for its publication at a "provincial press" (Kendal) and subsequently "twice advertised" it and twice "countermanded" it (Conf./1821, pp.65-66).
Although the advertisements, if they ever existed, have never come to light, we do know that this projected work did at least reach some sort of draft stage. Texas University hold a sixteen-page manuscript, the first eight pages of which are headed "Vulgar Errors in Political Economy" and the final eight are bracketed under the general title "Proleg. Polit. Econ." (Texas/MS-De Quincey, T.-Works). The exact relationship between the two parts is unclear. Pages one to eight form a cohesive unit, being an examination of errors "arising out of a defect of all investigation" in political economy (p.1). The "Proleg." itself is a series of extended points gathered under such general headings as "Wages", "Value", etc., and seems to be unrelated to the first section. (Section one is watermarked 1817 and section two 1816; the ink type also varies between the sections. The handwriting suggests that the manuscripts might date from not long after these years.) See 21 September, 1823 for a further reference to "Vulgar Errors". Rough approximations exist between topics in the "Proleg." and sections of the three 1842 Blackwood's articles titled "Ricardo Made Easy" (absorbed into book form in 1844 and called The Logic of Political Economy) - but they were the common stuff of political economy anyway. In view of these later writings, it is interesting that De Quincey should start to mention his "Prolegomena" again in 1841. Between April and July, 1841 he says he is labouring at a paper with this title for Blackwood's, "not upon any disputable part of Polit. Econ. but a rectification of an ancient hereditary fundamental blunder" (NLS/MS 4055, f167, and see also f153 and f168).

6. James Mill's Elements of Political Economy (1821), a Ricardo-based work, was an octavo volume of 240pp.

7. De Quincey's writings on political economy show an obsession with the distinctions and defects of received theory. His most extended early work on the subject, for example, the "Dialogues of Three Templars on Political Economy" (London Magazine, vol.IX, March-May, 1824 - I have included the introductory "The Services of Mr. Ricardo to the
Science of Political Economy" of March in the series here), explores the terminological "distinctions" brought to light by "scholastic logic", and attempts to place Ricardo's findings "upon a firmer basis" (ibid., March, p. 310; M/IX, p. 41). In the "Dialogues" De Quincey examines, for one thing, "the distinction between real and nominal value" - his pet topic (ibid., May, p. 550; M/IX, p. 79). Such a distinction seems to be part of the focus of what he writes about in his letter (and indeed does, as he shows in his "Dialogues", open up an area not fully dealt with by Adam Smith). His fullest exposition of the implications of Adam Smith's "blunder" - or blunders, since De Quincey seems frequently to have shifted his ground on the topic - had to wait until "Ricardo Made Easy" and The Logic (see note 5).

The "Prolegomena" fragment held at Texas University suggests what his earliest thoughts on the subject were. "Adam Smith's absurd doctrine of Foreign Trade as comp. with Home [where] he talks of Capital which exchanges 2 - instead of 1 - as being therefore better [...] the less Capital [...] require[d] to exchange then the better", but Smith, De Quincey argues, has overlooked the fact that "Capital spent in overcoming natural obstacles [is as much true] of home production as well as Foreign" (Texas/p. 16). This, De Quincey contends earlier in the manuscript - and in the "Dialogues" and the 1840's writings - needs to be set in the larger metaphysical context of intrinsic exchange value as contrasted with "value of consumption" (p. 13). "The capital and influential error of Adam Smith, in his famous distinction between value in use and value in exchange," De Quincey maintains in the 1844 Logic, "lies in his co-ordinating these ideas. [But] value in use is often not co-ordinate but subordinate to value in exchange. Value in use sometimes excludes all value in exchange [but also] sometimes so entirely includes exchange value as to form in fact but one subdivision of that idea [...] Value [...] must be Binomial. It is scandalous that Adam Smith [should have confounded the two,
and] still more scandalous that Ricardo [...] should equally 
have confounded the law of market value with the direct 
contradiction to that law" (M/IX, pp.186 and 207). In the 
Logic, De Quincey is accordingly much more interested in 
establishing a metaphysical teleology of value than in looking 
at its empirical causality, hover, as he might, around the 
latter. He was, consequently, ceaselessly to expound on the 
distinction between the measure of value and its ground.

The major 1840's writings on political economy provide an 
example of how desperate De Quincey was to maintain his 
supposed primacy in claiming a major discovery here. See the 
Logic (M/IX, p.152) where he denies that, until 1843, he had 
ever seen any edition of James Mill's Elements of Political 
Economy [the previous note shows that he had], the second 
edition of which contained just this distinction. He antedated 
the composition and publication of the "Dialogues of Three 
Templars" by one year - 1821 and 1822 respectively - to 
obviate even the possibility that he could have seen the 
second edition of Mill's work, which he supposes to have been 
published in 1822. In the event he needn't have bothered: the 
second edition of the Elements wasn't published until 1824.

John Stuart Mill, reviewing the Logic of 1844, praised 
the clarity of De Quincey's exposition of the problem, but 
doubted its originality in any system of political economy. 
The source of confusion lighted on by De Quincey, Mill wrote, 
and its consequent necessary distinctions, have been affirmed 
by "all political economists [...] from Ricardo downwards" 
(Mill/1845, p.324). In the third edition of his Principles 
(1821), Ricardo points out, directly and indirectly, many 
errors in Adam Smith's economics. It is impossible to judge 
which particular "single word" De Quincey means here. Perhaps 
it is to be seen in Ricardo's belief that "many of the errors 
in political economy have risen [...] from unfounded notions 
as to what constituted a standard measure of value" 
(Ricardo/1929, p.259 - my italics).
What De Quincey does in most of his economic writings, is explicate the very different hermeneutic bases of Adam Smith's and Ricardo's epistemologies, to the favour of the latter, politically different as the laissez faire thrust of Ricardo's ideas might be from his own. It is the "Fontal errors" (M/IX, p.115) of systems that interest De Quincey, and it is to the area of their inception, as an intellectually revivifying source, that he recurs constantly. It would thus have been a perverse irony if the "evils inflicted" by opium, temporarily dispelled by a reading of Ricardo's famous work, were to prevent him, in turn, developing his thoughts on the book, or - more likely - were themselves simply to be brought on by the very idea of writing out the thoughts in the first place. (See Maniquis/1976, Part V, for a full discussion of this aspect.) There is further irony here in the fact that a supposed subversion by De Quincey of an Adam-Smith-induced stasis in political economy, was itself hedged in by an apocalyptic strand in Ricardian theory. The move from a static to a dynamic polico-economic epistemology effectively meant, if Ricardian theory were to be pushed to the limit, that the needs of an infinitely expanding population would create not just scarcity of goods but an inexorable - and to De Quincey, self-destructive - price spiral. "In economics De Quincey finds a generalised version of an individual death-wish, for Ricardian theory implies that the human race will eventually be consumed in an inevitable movement towards inertia" (Baxter/1990, p.154). More subversions of received theory were obviously going to become necessary. (See late January, 1823, for an absurdly parodic enactment of the thanatos principle.)

8. and 9. The full sense of De Quincey's (flawed, abbreviated, but literally-transcribed) Greek is, "Give me somewhere to stand and I will move the earth". (For 8 see foot of this page)

10. "the building being most wisely built in all other respects, to lay a deeper and wider foundation".

11. The subject of murder was of course an abiding one with De Quincey. From selecting and summarizing the most sensational (Add. 8, Δοκιμάζετε το λόγο, De Quincey has used the old-fashioned ligatures ς to represent στ and ου to represent ου. They were the last to survive in Greek type from an original huge number of special letter combinations.)
crimes of the moment for the Gazette, to writing his 1854 "Postscript" to the series "On Murder, Considered as One of the Fine Arts", he returned to the subject on numerous occasions. Black/1991 (pp.46-48) discusses the possible implications of De Quincey's "exquisitely diabolical" idea, suggesting a morbid, not to say decadent, "high-art" context to the device of interiorization. He also draws attention to the 1936 novel Beichte eines Mörders (Confessions of a Murderer) by the Austrian writer Joseph Roth (published in English by Chatto, London, 1985); a work which includes the theme of the murder of one's double (an ever-popular subject with De Quincey). One might speculate here on the proximity of this proposed exercise in morbid self-observation, to statements about the possible self-murder (by opium) of De Quincey's own critical abilities in the field of political economy.

12. De Quincey didn't arrive in London until 12 December, 1822. The Liverpool families he mentions here are those he became acquainted with in the early 1800's, when his mother rented a cottage at nearby Everton (see Eaton/1927 -the 1803 diary - passim, for details). In his 1837 Tait's article, "Autobiography of an English Opium-Eater/Literary Connexions or Acquaintances", De Quincey gives a critical impression of the prominent Liverpool cultural figures whom he met in the 1800's (vol.IV, February, pp.68-73; M/II, pp.122-37). He would often pass through the city on his journeys between the north and south of the country, either to socialize or to borrow money (see 21 May and 13 June, 1824).

Although he says in a P.S. to this letter that he had decided not to go through Liverpool, another letter, dated 6 January, 1823, confirms that he did: "I went to Liverpool [...] for the purpose of urging the payment of a sum due to me in that town [but] failed in accomplishing this purpose [and] came on from Liverpool to London - where I have been since December 12" (to John White: Berg Collection).
13. The Rowley poems of Thomas Chatterton (1752-70) contain numerous references to thunder and clouds, but not this particular phrase. One might conclude that De Quincey is, therefore, using a typically Chattertonian image but not a specific quotation.

14. "agreeable in manner, but in a forcible way".

The exact nature of this breach with Bohte isn't known, though doubtlessly money lay at the root of it. De Quincey was in the habit of making his bills payable at Bohte's, and elsewhere, and then neglecting to ensure that the necessary money was available when they fell due for payment.

15. John Taylor was heading for a nervous breakdown, and was at this time "very seriously unwell" and thinking of retiring (Chilcott/1972, p.181 and Matlock/Box 3592, no.4). It wasn't until 1824 that he finally "relinquished all responsibility as editor", though even in 1822 he was lessening his direct grip on the London (Chilcott/1972, p.153).

16. Richard Woodhouse, see 8 January, 1821, note 3; William Hilton (1786-1839), painter, member of the Royal Academy, and close friend of Keats; Henry De Wint (1784-1849), painter and close friend of Keats and Hilton, whose sister Harriet he married in 1810. (Details of Hilton and the De Wints are taken from Rollins/1948, vol.I, pp.lxxv-lxxix.)

17. For details of the book sale see 29 April, 1822 (no.48), note 4.

18. See 29 April, 1822 (no.48), note 7.

19. De Quincey entered the Middle Temple in 1812, viewing the law purely as a means of making money. Lindop/1981 is no doubt right when he says of De Quincey that "there is no evidence that he ever opened a law-book" whilst keeping terms (p.195). This letter extends De Quincey's connection with the Middle Temple much beyond the date originally thought to hold. The "Treasurer of the Middle Temple" was listed as a creditor in De Quincey's Omnium Bonorum of 1833 (Forward/1939, p.523).

See 2 August, 1821, note 1 for details of De Quincey's "loan" to Coleridge. He had obviously used the £300 as his
financial guarantee with the Middle Temple. Coleridge wasn't pressed further on this occasion but in 1833 he was listed as a debtor in De Quincey's legal condescendence. The gift (given in the latter as £315) was now categorised as "Cash lent in November 1807", with the interest accrued at 5 per cent added to make it £708.15s (Forward/1939, p.518).


21. Hessey was by now much too alert to the ephemeral nature of De Quincey's plans to believe in them, and didn't place the advertisements. The book publication of the Confessions had in fact already been held up by the slow completion of De Quincey's "Preface" - or rather the "Appendix", as it emerged: "De Quincey's Preface was not complete - I have had another Letter from him promising the end by next post, but it is not come yet. - He is very ill he says - his letter is quite affecting" (Letter from Hessey to Taylor, dated 7 October, 1822: Rollins/1948, vol.II, p.424 - see also 20 April, 1822, note 7 above). In another letter dated 5 November, 1822, Hessey remarked to his partner, "De Quincey [...] has an abundance of Projects, and even begs me to advertise the 'Prolegomena to all future Systems of Political Economy' on the faith of his supplying the Press with Manuscript as fast as it may be required. He talks of a Third Part of the Confessions again and as for Pandects [...] they are to flow as fast as my pen now moves [...] when we see him we shall believe." Hessey's optimism, though, was raised by the present letter, which he thought was "written in so completely altered a Tone that I could scarcely have believed it to be by the same man" (Rollins/1948, vol.II, pp.425-26).

51. TO J. A. HESSEY Sale Cat. Extract

[Fox Ghyll]

5 November, 1822

About Sir W. S.'s talents and the quality of his works, there are different opinions amongst which I have no anxiety
to intrude mine.\(^1\) Satisfied as I am that whatever is spurious and adulterate will finally finish and do no injury to the interests of what is genuine. But of Sir W. S.'s character for elevation of mind or any other moral quality which should accompany great talents, I think there is secretly not much difference of opinion, all are aware of these feelings of a base underlying Spanish character in Sir W., but this is not the worst, mean men are not therefore ungenerous men, nor Sir W. S.'s insult to the late Queen in her extreme misery, humiliation and abandonment are never to be forgiven.\(^2\)

[T. De Q.]

Sale cat: Sotheby's, 8 & 9 June, 1903. Lot 602 (a 4pp. letter). The rather tortuous final sentence is probably a mistranscription by the compiler of the sale catalogue.

1. The London's own stance on Scott's work drifted gradually from John Scott's inordinate enthusiasm in 1820, to a severe questioning of the seriousness of his novels from a utilitarian viewpoint in the early mid-1820's (Bauer/1953, pp.206-8 and 237-41). This latter position De Quincey was to attack in his 1831 articles on "Dr. Parr and his Contemporaries", or "modern Utilitarian republicans" as he called Parr and his utilitarian associates in their literary guise (Blackwood's, vol.XXIX, p.389; M/V, p.71). De Quincey blew hot and cold about Scott's work by turns. He thought that Scott's poetry took its place with "other works of interesting feebleness and feminine imbecility" (Harvard MS/fMS Eng 974). About the novels he was usually more enthusiastic, enjoying especially Scott's use of vernacular. (See Groves/1989 - Scott, for a brief survey of De Quincey on Scott.)

2. On the subject of Walter Scott's character, De Quincey was generally neutral. In a footnote to his Parr articles, however, he castigated Scott for speaking of the disgraced Queen Caroline - in the process of being repulsed from the coronation of George IV - "as the great Lady, with her bodyguard of blackguards" (Blackwood's, vol.XXIX, p.388; M/V,
p.139). (Scott's comments were made in a letter to the *Edinburgh Weekly Journal*, dated 20 July, 1821.)

The immediate cause of De Quincey's remarks here was possibly a highly critical passage on Scott in the November, 1822 number of the *London*, which he would probably have heard about even if he hadn't seen it at this time. One of the observations made by the writer, James Smith, held that Scott's fame had "been excited by arts, which are not strictly essential to the true dignity of the literary character" (vol.VI, "Bracebridge-Hall", p.437).

52. TO J. A. HESSEY

[Fox Ghyll. 8 December, 1822]

My dear Friend,

I now write to assure you finally - that I shall be in London on Thursday morning at the latest - on Wednesday at the earliest: my baggage is packed: I leave Fox Ghyll in the course of to-morrow: and therefore nothing but the accident of full coaches (not a probable accident at this season of the year) can defer my arrival beyond the last of the two days mentioned.¹ - By the way, - I shall not come in very early upon you: or, if I do, you will understand that I have breakfasted, [for] it is an explanation which I owe to Mrs. Hessey - to say that, when I talked of making my appearance so unceremoniously at your breakfast table, I was not aware of your being a resident in Fleet Street otherwise than as you used to be - i.e. as a bachelor co-bachelorizing with Mr. Taylor.² I first learned the new arrangement by a letter of yours which met at Manchester that letter of mine in which I announced so abrupt an intrusion.

¹. Six copies of the Confess.³ which, together with the Nov. No. of the Mag., you were so good as to send me (as I learn from your letter dated October 30.), have not reached me: repeated enquiries have been made of Mr. Richardson (the last after the receipt of his December parcel): but he has not
yet heard of them. Neither has the Dec. No. of the Mag. arrived; if you were so good as to send it.

2. I have however seen that No.; and again admire R. A. - and the excellent art. on the Cockney in France. The author is clearly the same who wrote the Vienna Col.'s narrative. Both are irresistibly humorous: yet I do not, for my own part, accompany a writer in his close tracking and dissection of human infirmity under that sort of trial without something of a painful feeling. There are many meannesses which I willingly turn my eyes away from: for I am gladly blind, where to see too clearly exhibits human beings in humiliating attitudes - without any very profitable result. - However such articles must clearly serve the Mag.

3. You do not know how much you depress me - by the tone you take in regard to my lit. plans: if you had said of any one - Do this: and let us have by such a day - it would have been done. But a postponement of all particular consideration to some future time - has to me, in ref. to all plans except such as are plans for life, a most numbing and torpedo-like effect. - As it is, I have been chiefly occupied with digesting and writing the Letters to a Y. Man &c.

4. Meantime, why have I not come to London? You express great surprise at this in your last letter - greater than, I think, the case will seem to demand - when you you consider my particular situation in this life. - The truth is I have been oppressed by trouble and anxiety of mind most grievously and in various shapes since I last wrote to you; with some that I did not then anticipate. But, setting that aside, the single consideration that I am not a youngster who has merely to pay for his lodgings - jump into a coach - and be off - but have 1. a wife 2. children 3. a house with which I am saddled on an old lease at 63 pounds per annum - and which intails much addit. expence for out-of-doors labor - will sufficiently explain how a man so poor as myself might not have the means to travel. This was the fact: consistently with these instant demands on me from persons who would else have worried my wife
in my absence for payment. - I could not command the money necessary for my journey. This was the original bar to my journey: and one bar having arisen, others soon followed. - During all this interval my spirits have sunk a good deal below the point at which I last wrote: and having thus been almost compelled to increase my Laudanum dose, I found that my unconfirmed health might have also given way: but on the contrary I feel as well as I did a month ago. 9

5. I see that you have reprinted my Appendix in the Mag. 10 - By the way, it is strange - but somehow or other we are always at cross-purposes in regards to this matter: in your last letter you desired me to let you have the addit. parts: which desire I interpreted as referring to some future edit. in hypothesi: for, though you said 'we mean to notice it in the next No.', yet this notice I understood in the sense of an advertisement to the readers of the Mag. that such a work had been reprinted and published.

6. Without meaning any offence to Mr. Bohte, and with many thanks to yourself for the trouble you took in sending to him, surely his terms are not so moderate as that I need for such an object consent to any conditions: a treaty implies two contracting parties: and I also might in such a case have my conditions. 11 It has occurred to me that Mrs. B. wishes to stipulate now, as she complained then, of my "late hours": how far they were late Mr. Woodhouse can pronounce who, for the sake of a little exercise, accompanied me home every night - almost without exception. - I have since suspected that, as regarded Mr. Taylor's convenience, they were late hours: and that I, whilst supposing myself staying for others, did in fact (as the greatest stranger) pretty often stand in the way of an earlier separation. This oversight, wherever such an other occasion ofers>, I mean to correct: but, as a matter of right, I should be slow to surrender the point to Mr. Bohte: unless however he has some equivalent to offer: else I stand on the basis of the Uti possidetis; 12 and I should be a jest to all the Diplomatic world if I did not. - Without an
equivalent I could not renounce the right I had established (by prescription) to his coffee-pot - and occasionally (say 3 times a month) to his toasting-fork: with an adequate consideration, much might be added. - Seriously however these rooms were offered to me at half a guinea in 1821: in 1822 when all things have seemed to fall (i.e. when in fact money has risen) in value - how can they be worth 15s.?

7. You disturb me greatly by saying that you hope I may be able to finish some of my many plans on this visit to London. Good God! my dear friend! for what else do I come? I wish I could be as well assured that you would take all I produce, as I am determined to let no sort of avocations interfere with my sole vocation during my residence in London.13

Farewell, and believe me
Most affectionately yours,
Thos. De Quincey

Addr: J. A. Hessey Esqr./93 Fleet Street/London.
PM: Kendal Penny Post. 11 Dec., 1822.
MS: Berg Collection. De Quincey MS (H).

1. De Quincey's letter of late January, 1823 (below) establishes the fact that he left Westmorland on "Monday December 9". He arrived in London on Thursday, 12 December, having stopped off en route at Liverpool (see 24 October, 1822, note 12 for details).

2. Taylor and Hessey often boarded together in their business premises at 93 Fleet Street, while Mrs Hessey and her children lodged in the suburbs (Taylor was unmarried). When, towards the end of 1822, Hessey's wife and children returned to Fleet Street, Taylor moved to Waterloo Place (Taylor/1925, pp.260 and 264).

3. The Confessions was published in book form at the end of October, 1822 (not August, as generally supposed by commentators who have followed Eaton/1936, p.287). Hessey remarked in a letter to his partner on 5 November, 1822 that, "The Confessions of an Opium Eater are selling very well -
they were only delivered last week, and on Saturday 2 Twentyfives & two or three Sixes were sent for in addition" (Rollins/1948, vol.II, p.426). This edition, of 1,000 (according to Chilcott/1972, p.163), rapidly sold out, and a second edition (of 1,000) was already being subscribed in December, with a third following in June 1823 (ibid.).

4. See 29 April, 1822 (no.48), note 4. As well as being a bookseller and printer, Thomas Richardson acted as a forwarding agent for parcels and letters.

5. "R. A." was the signature of Richard Ayton (1786-1823), a dramatist and essayist often praised by De Quincey. His article in the December 1822 number of the London was "Of Cruelty to Animals and 'Mr. Martin's Act'" (vol.VI, pp.530-36). It was one of a series of "moral" essays by him (see Bauer/1953, p.159).

The other article mentioned here is "A Cockney's Rural Sports" by the dramatist John Poole (1786-1872) (London, ibid., pp.498-508). As Bauer/1953 points out, "all kinds of sports furnished material" for the London, "all written, in keeping with the character of the magazine, from a Londoner's point of view" (pp.158-59).

6. The "Vienna Col.'s narrative" is "The Siege of Vienna"; it appeared in the London in October, 1822 (vol.VI, pp.367-73). It was in fact written by the dramatist and novelist George Soane (1790-1860).

7. Both of the articles deal with aggressively male behaviour. The protagonists reveal themselves, through their first-person narratives, to be only half-conscious of the grossness of their behaviour. De Quincey, showing his double standards here, obviously didn't like to see moral blemishes remain unaddressed, or rather he didn't like to see them at all in others.

8. See 24 October, 1822 and 20 April, 1822, note 6.

9. There had been general consensus amongst De Quincey's associates, underscored by his own private comments in 1822, that he was fast becoming a lost cause. The Wordsworths for
one had almost given up on him: "Mr. de Q. is here shut up as usual - the house [Fox Ghyll] always blinded - or left with but one eye to peep out of - he probably in bed - we hear nothing of him" (Dorothy Wordsworth to Edward Quillinan, 19 November, 1822: WL/1978, p.168).

10. See 20 April, 1822, note 7, and 24 October, 1822, note 21.
12. "as (far as) you possess", a phrase from international law, meaning that after the cessation of hostilities, combatants can keep the territory they already occupy.

De Quincey had a reputation — indeed almost legendary status — for being difficult to coax to a social event, but once there for being even more difficult to coax back home. As a drug-addict he would hardly anyway have been an easy lodger to live with, and by his own admission in the 1821 letters, we know that he probably arrived back at Bohte's drunk on more than one occasion. Opium, as well as generating a narrative of the self for the Confessions, would also have created narratives of the sort of alien self one could see emerging in De Quincey's pathological ambivalence towards Wilson (2 November, 1821, note 1). Charles Knight, the publisher (1791-1873), who got to know him well in the 1820's, noticed in De Quincey a tendency to sink into "idle fears and vain imaginings" (Knight/1864, vol.I, p.329). De Quincey's daughter Florence, categorised this as an evasive strategy for pre-empting responsibility (Japp/1890, pp.467-68). For those not so intimate with him, it must have seemed more the stuff of insanity. John Taylor certainly saw it as such in the early part of his friendship with De Quincey (see 22 August, 1821, note 1).

13. 1823/24 turned out to be one of the more productive periods of De Quincey's life. As well as preparing his rifacimento Walladmor and other translations for the press, he had articles, uneven in quality and size though they might be, in periodicals every month during this two-year period. The agonies of drug-withdrawal that he had suffered during the
summer and autumn, even though not pushed to a final conclusion, seemed to have an immediate positive effect when he arrived in London. On 18 December, 1822, John Taylor was able to write to his father that De Quincey was "busily employed" in polishing up his "Letters to a Young Man whose Education has been Neglected" (Bakewell MS). These ran monthly in the London from January to July (missing out April and June). (See also 20 April, 1822, note 6, and following letters.) The mood was generally buoyant amongst the London staff at this juncture. Taylor wrote to his father that "the accession of literary Talent is great beyond my warmest Expectations" and noted "the extraordinary Inclination just now manifested by a number of the best writers to gain a Place in our Pages [...] to be engaged in it [he judged] confers Honour on the Individual Contributors" (Bakewell MS, as above). His hope that "this Impression will [...] be the Forerunner of an Increase in the number of its Readers", was not, however, to be realised. Taylor's comments here are anyway a little odd: the list of contributors was to remain much the same as in previous years. Encouraged by De Quincey's apparently revived enthusiasm, though, the editor placed an optimistic notice about him in the January, 1823 "Lion's Head": "The Letters to a Young Man whose Education has been Neglected, are, as our readers will perceive, from the pen of one of their favourite writers. We are led to expect much valuable assistance in the course of the ensuing year from that Gentleman - and, like all communicative personages, we like to babble of our expectancies" (London, vol.VII, p.4).

52 (II). TO GEORGE GEE1

[Westmorland. ?1822]

My dear Sir,

I understand that a former No. of the London Mag. which I now send, was not seen by Mr. Quillinan.2 Perhaps two may be more than you will find it convenient to carry: if not, it
will not argue any vanity in me to point out an article of my own as likely to give a few minutes' amusement to Mr Quillinan; since, though introduced by a letter of my own, the part which I mean is the "House of Weeping" &c. in which my share is no more than this - that I translated it from a German author hitherto almost unknown in England (J. Paul Richter).³

I have read Mr. Quillinan's jeu d'espirit [sic] - which strikes me as very witty and fully adequate to explain Wilson's wrath.⁴

I hope sincerely that you may find Mr. Quillinan better: and in great haste.

I remain, my dear Sir,  
Most truly yours,  
Thomas De Quincey

---

 Addr: George Gee Esqre. from the Opium-Eater [endorsed after address].  
MS: Dove Cottage. WLL/De Quincey, Thomas/55.

1. See 5 December, 1820, note 3, and 3 March, 1821. 
2. Edward Quillinan (1791-1851), half-pay dragoon's officer and Wordsworth's future son-in-law. His move to the Grasmere area in 1821 was followed by tragedy in 1822, when his first wife died after a fire at the family's house. (See WL/1978, pp.76-77, 124-25, and letters 66 and 70; Moorman/1968, pp. 427-28.) 
4. In its February, 1819 number, Blackwood's carried a satirical review of Edward Quillinan's Dunluce Castle, a Poem (1814) (Blackwood's, vol.IV, pp.574-79: "Poems by a Heavy Dragoon", by Thomas Hamilton). Quillinan bided his time, and in 1821 produced his rejoinder, a pamphlet called "The Retort Courteous". The writer, assuming John Wilson and J. G. Lockhart to be the authors of the initial attack, had duly satirised them in his own response (see Robinson/1938, vol.I, p.272 - Robinson found the work "not very excellent"). It is presumably to this that De Quincey refers in his letter. He returned to the episode much later in his life in a discussion
about Wilson's "thin-skinnedness": "Quillinan [one of the party reported] in retaliation parodied in verse Lockhart's description of Wilson in 'Peter's Letters' [...] Wilson's resentment was intense. Mrs. Wordsworth asked Wilson some time afterwards, when he happened to be in the Lake district, if he would dine with Quillinan. He fired up and exclaimed, 'Oh, no, I'll dine with the Devil if he be asked to the same party'" (Hogg/1895, p.151).

53. TO J. A. HESSEY

[London. 20 January, 1823]

My dear Friend,

If you do not receive my paper this evening, it shall at any rate be in your hands to-morrow morning; and in the course of the day you shall see me. - Do not place it at the beginning: and for this reason: because the next paper, which contains the Logic Letter, will much better deserve the distinction.²

Yours most faithfully,

Monday Jan 20

Thos. De Quincey.

MS: Dept. of Rare Books & Special Collections, University of Rochester Library. MSS. Coll.

1. De Quincey was lodging with the Newbon family at 5 Racquet Court, Fleet Street, "nearly opposite us", as John Taylor observed (the firm's business premises were at 93 Fleet Street) (letter to father, 18 December, 1822: Bakewell MS). He wasn't really having an easy time of it. On Saturday "the whole house was then up all night, and a continual tumult prevailed on the stairs and directly above my head", as his landlady went into childbirth (De Quincey to Hessey, 19 January, 1823: Pforzheimer MS/Misc.1884). "I feel very unwell", he concluded ominously.

2. It might be said of all De Quincey's "Letters to a Young Man", each signed X.Y.Z., that they were buried deep within
the Magazine. An attempt had been made, whether at the publishers' or De Quincey's behest isn't known, to give them a little zest by adding "By the Author of the Confessions of an English Opium-Eater". A "Logic Letter" was not included in the series, though De Quincey did promise at the beginning of the third letter that, "In my three following letters I am to consider, 1st, Languages, 2d Logic, Arts of Memory" [sic] (vol.VII, March, 1823, p.325; M/X, p.33). After Languages, which covered two issues, the series ended with "On the English Notices of Kant" (July, 1823). The current "Letter" was running late for inclusion in the February number. Hessey commented hopefully on it on 15 January in a letter to John Taylor: "The No. is going on very well & will be a very good one. De Quincey has not finished his Article yet, but he promises it and a Review also." (Rollins/1948, vol.II, pp.427-28 - the review appeared in the March, 1823 number as "Anecdotage": see also letters for mid-late February [no.55] and late February/early March [no.56], note 6 below for "Anecdotage".)

Charles Lamb wrote a parody of De Quincey's "Letters", "Letter to an Old Gentleman whose education has been neglected", in the spring of 1823. De Quincey liked it but Taylor and Hessey didn't - the "innocent burlesque", as Lamb referred to it in his introduction, came close in parody to what De Quincey's "Letters" often read like in sincerity (Lamb Letters/1935, vol.II, pp. 375, 399 and 452). The piece was eventually published in the London for January, 1825.

54. TO [J. A. HESSEY] MS Extract
[London. Late January, 1823]¹

My dear Friend,

I have delayed a particular explanation which I ought to have made the first hour I saw you - until I greatly fear that it is almost too late to make it. - The inclosed letter, written at odd intervals during the last 10 days, contains it.
I have suspected for some time that for want of this explanation we are in the profoundest misunderstanding; I, that is to say, making a sacrifice almost the greatest I can make - which you, for some reason incomprehensible to me, regard as none at all. - On mere principles of good sense and wounded pride (that pride, I mean, which forbids any man to offer what is most valuable to himself where he suspects that it is regarded as of no value at all) I should have sought an explanation like the present: - but now the pressure of my affairs allows me no longer to delay it: instead of at all abating this pressure, I am greatly increasing it every hour I continue to make the sacrifice in question: the mere pressure of the demand from the house I lodge in - I have no means of meeting: - and pure anxiety will again do the same work it did before in London - viz. put an end to all power of composition, and reduce me to my old condition as an Opium-eater. 2

One thing let me say before you read my letter: it is this: - I address you not as a friend, but simply as a man of business. Do not forget this: - I wish to have my interest considered - only so far as it is reconcilable with yours. A great part of the difficulty I find in talking to you on such subjects - is, that you blend the two characters of a friend and a man of business. This distracts me, perplexes me, and takes away all unity of purpose.

This last passage implies that I myself write as a man of business. I do. But not the less, on that account, shall I finish everything begun for this month; and enable you regularly to fulfil all engagements made to the public: though you will see that the mere possibility of my continuing to write upon the spot must depend on your answer.

Yours very faithfully,
Thomas De Quincey.

[Then follows the "inclosed letter":]
I stand upon the brink of a precipice; and, what is grievous to think of, I owe my danger in part to the very measure I adopted to avert it. All might have been prevented by timely explanations; and these I ought to have made before I left Westmorland. Not having done so, I resolved to do the next best thing - viz. to make them the very first day I saw you in London. Why did I not? From mere dejection of spirits caused by the illness I caught upon the journey. 'Better late' however 'than never': not having done the best thing, nor the second best, - let me do the third best. This I now do: and I do it in writing, in order that both of us may have the benefit of a clearer explanation - fuller - more definite - and more susceptible of accurate reference hereafter - than a verbal one could be, of which the precise expressions would perish as fast as I uttered them. On the same principle, I should be much indebted to you if you also could reply in writing: it will cost less time than a conversation: and, if anything should remain to be explained, we can afterwards talk it over. However this depends on your own view of convenience.

The points to be explained are two: here is the first.

I.

On what ground do you consider me as standing in regard to the Novel? Do you think it, I mean to say, unreasonable in me - producing whatsoever I may - to look to you for any payment so long as that remains uncompleted? If this is in your view the right of the case, then as a corollary from this right on your part it follows on my part that nothing should be expected from me capable of retarding for a moment the accomplishment of that work: what is admitted against me as a bar to all other profit - should be admitted for me as a bar to all other labor. My own view of the case is - that undoubtedly you have a right (and honorably) to call for the completion of the novel immediately, on the supposition that you refuse everything else; i.e. that you should not, by accepting anything else from me, allow me to be accessory
(what will prove) to my own ruin: you should not allow me to be myself creating the sole bar to my resumption of that ground on which I should find myself upon the same level with regard to emolument as my fellow-laborers in the Magazine. - On what ground therefore do you now consider me as standing?

How urgent the necessity is that I should remain no longer in the dark upon this question, you will best collect from the following statement of my present situation. Since the time of my misfortunes, I was never in less debt; never nearer to its extinction: but never was the pressure on me for that little so heavy or so simultaneous. My history in this particular since the close of 1821 is as follows: - - [De Quincey outlines his ineffectual attempts to throw off debt in 1821 and 1822, noting in passing how most of the "£157. 10. 0. which I then {the close of 1821} received for the novel" was swallowed up by creditors. He records how his 7-month stay in London in 1821 was forced on him because he "had no means of getting away." For the 5th time he was, he says, "baffled in my prospect of delivering myself from the intolerable bondage of debt."4] Such was the complete misery of my condition: and this was in reality the cause that I could not then make an effort to resign Opium. Opium again indirectly aggravated the misery which for the moment it relieved. Hence in the end a two-fold misery: and one consequence of it was that I was thus doubly incapacitated from composing the Novel. Suffering of mind on this account became a third in the series of co-agents; the inability to compose - itself a product of misery, and a reactor to produce it. [He goes on to recount further lapses into debt, the failure of his library sale and a 6th defeat "in my effort for once more setting myself strait in this world." In midsummer, 1822, however, "the whole of my own income...fell due,"5 and by the end of 1822 he had come to within £100 of clearing himself totally from debt. According to De Quincey, £560 - the amount owed on Fox Ghyll, along with a loan "from my wife's relation" and "the arrears of an old debt...had been extinguished, cancelled, blotted out for
ever". I left Westmorland therefore (Monday December 9) with the unusual happiness of being near to deliverance; but at the same time with a balance of unhappiness in this consideration that, as soon as ever the new year came in, I should be more furiously persecuted for this sum of £100 than ever I had been when my debts were heaviest.  

What was my plan for meeting this persecution? - At the moment when I was most earnestly resolving that question, came your letter urging me to come up to London. This coincided with my own plan which was simply what follows: - to go up to London for the sake of a more circumstantial and explicit communication with you than I could have by letter: on the very day of my arrival to state my case; to ask your consent to my producing 6 sheets of the Mag. as fast as I could write, and to my receiving the money for them as fast as they were delivered; this, I mean, or something equivalent to this: I knew that they might be produced in the most finished style at the rate of one a week: and thus by the 21st of this month, or thereabouts, I calculated that I should have overtaken my creditors. - To this particular plan I was encouraged at that time

1. by your own offer, in a previous letter, of £100 for this series of letters to a y. man made in October last.
2. by Mr. Taylor's having said to me in December 1821 that, under any emergency, a 12mo. vol. (such as he instanced at the time) would always produce £100.
3. by recollecting that the late Mr. Scott, whose command of language or subjects was not extensive, had been even solicited (not merely allowed) to write 3 sheets every month throughout the years.

Since coming to London I have been further encouraged to it
4. by Mr. Taylor's having expressly said that he wished I would write so much.

Such was my plan, so far as it was necessary that I should have one at all: but the truth is, I rather looked to you for
the particulars of a plan; confiding in myself generally - in my power of writing with unusual rapidity, and upon a great variety of subjects - for executing anything which you might suggest within the time I have mentioned. Most profoundly do I now lament that I did not come to a full explanation with you on this subject the first day I saw you: this, as I have said, was my original purpose; and, in case of an unfavourable issue to our conference, of necessity to return that same evening to Westmorland. Unhappily I was ill in the most depressing mode of illness: spite of the encouragements I have mentioned, I was thus discouraged from the first: secondly I was chilled by your manner on occasion of a particular accident which occurred during that very interview: finally, the case was in some measure irrevocable; for I had not money enough to carry me back into Westmorland. - Hence I allowed myself to delay the explanation: which if it had led to an issue - as encouraging as the one I deduced from the terms of your letter, I might by this time nearly have completed my labors. The more time I have lost however, the more incumbent it is upon me to lose no more. And hence it is that I now trouble you with so circumstantial a letter. This is my first point: here follows my second.

II.

Why am I now in London? For what purpose (not as easily accomplished at home); - on what justification; - for whose interest real or imagined? Are you aware - 1. of the enormous sacrifice which I am making in personal happiness by staying at a distance of 300 miles from my own family in London? 2. Are you aware of the price in money at which I am doing this? 3. Have you ever asked - whose interests this residence in London was meant to serve? - Most ruefully I fear upon some indications, that you have not. - True it is that as to the first question, it might naturally be supposed impossible for any man who had taken the trouble to think of it at all not to be aware of the enormity of the sacrifice: but the hurry of a London life has prevented you, I believe, from thinking of it
at all: let me then call your attention to it. Simply to renounce all domestic comforts – to exchange a roomy house for a single chamber – a Westmorland valley for a London alley – attendance of servants for the necessity of doing all things for myself – a regular table for no table at all – literary leisure for the labor of writing all day long – &c. &c. Simply these sacrifices in the estimate of the world, would rank as very heavy, and implying some powerful motive. All this part of the sacrifice however is as nothing, considering what remains: I do not only give up the society of my own family – but subject myself to the afflicting knowledge that in the event of any fatal illness in my family I am by distance and otherwise so imprisoned that all hope of coming in time is to me at an end. This thought preys like a worm upon my spirits: and I need not say that the profound solitude to which I am condemned gives it its whole force. But such a miserable subject I willingly quit: and I advert to it simply to draw the sharper attention to the irrationality of my staying unless for some known object well understood between us: I mean some service which I can render here – much better than in Westmorland. – I advert to it also on account of what follows. – 2. Are you aware of the price in money which I am paying for have [sic] to undergo this misery? In my present lodgings (and if there are cheaper I know not where to find them) I shall consider myself well off if I pay no more than £11* [f/n refers to expenditure and is summarised below] a month (30 days): the journey up and down is always to be estimated at £20: so that a 3 months' residence in London would have cost on replacing myself at home £53 – i.e. 10s. more than fifty guineas: during which same term I might have made, on the common proportion of space allotted to each contributor, perhaps 30 guineas [...]

[De Quincey's letter finishes with a lengthy breakdown of his domestic expenditure. Not forgetting to include his daily "bason of soup...laudanum (which in solitude and anxiety I am obliged to increase) – clothes' brushing," etc., etc., he...
concludes that he will, over a 3-month period, be "20 guineas poorer - than when I left Westmorland...I find it for my own part more easy to recommend than to practise. Such {the letter ends} is the result really and practically where apparently the expense is so trifling."]

[T. De Q.]

MS: British Library. Add. 37215, ff10-12.

1. Date: At one point in his letter De Quincey mentions that he has so far spent "£35 at the least" on his London visit. Since he has taken the return fare of £20 into account and calculated his total monthly London expenses at £11 per month, this means that he would now have been in London for 1\frac{1}{3} months or so. We know that he arrived in London on 12 Dec., 1822, so it would now be late January, 1823.

2. As well as paying rent for his London rooms, De Quincey was also paying it - or not paying it, as the case may be - on Dove Cottage and Fox Ghyll in Westmorland. A fourth child, Francis John, born around this time, added further pressure. The two Westmorland houses would have cost around £100 per year between them, had rent been paid on them in full. We know, however, that when De Quincey quit both houses - Fox Ghyll in 1825 and Dove Cottage in 1835 - he owed money on them, though not ultimately the years of unpaid rent that some commentators have assumed. See the runs of letters from De Quincey to John White, agent for Fox Ghyll, and Thomas Benson, owner of Dove Cottage, in the Berg Collection, for details (McC./1939 offers a brief discussion of De Quincey's dealings with Benson).

The passing reference to laudanum at the end of the letter, perhaps disguises what was actually a real drain on De Quincey's resources. John Wilson, pointing to the years before 1843, observed that De Quincey's "chief expense is opium, on which he spends £150 a year" (Cranbrook/1884, pp.157-58). How accurate this is we will never know. It is also difficult to gauge how much De Quincey was paying for individual doses of
his drug. Taking a very low figure of one penny for 25 drops of laudanum (Berridge/1987, Chapter 3), one can at least see very roughly how much the habit might have cost him in 1822. (That the figure is a low one may be judged from De Quincey's statement that in 1804 "happiness might now be bought for a penny, and carried in the waistcoat pocket" - Conf./1821, p.39.) In the "Appendix" to the Confessions (1822) he notes that his dosage has fallen from 8,000 to a temporary average of about 230 drops per day. If the higher dosage held for any time, which is very doubtful, it would absorb around £9 per week, if the lower, then the amount would be about 70 (old) pence. Even a low average of the two would mean a large expenditure for a man with De Quincey's commitments, no doubt compounded by his book-buying habit. If, as probable, De Quincey was spending more than the assumed price for his measures, then Wilson's figure might not be an unreasonable one even for an earlier period. It is perhaps significant that a disproportionate number of grocers figure as creditors in De Quincey's letters and in his Omnium Bonorum (Forward/1939, pp.522-23): the grocer's shop was a popular source of opium (Berridge/1987, p.31).

Only one known non-London piece of writing emerged in 1823, "The Fatal Marksman" (see M/XII, p.286ff, and note 10 below), the payment for which is unrecorded. For the London he produced about 135 printed pages, or about 8 sheets, in 1823: worth some 100-120 guineas to him.

3. See 29 April, 1822 (no.48), note 7.

4. The whole letter is a typically De Quinceyan example of self-destructive inertia. A lonely and depressing hand-to-mouth existence in London, difficulties in liberating himself from debt, and opium-induced alienation and lethargy, all become organically linked in De Quincey's argument, to produce a seamless, debilitating circle. In a later piece of writing, unable even to concede that he possessed an innate spirit of procrastination qua procrastination, De Quincey gave himself two competing alter-egos. One would "take out the sting" from
his "trifle of procrastination" the other would "put it back again" and ensure that even "if seldom actually in danger of being too late, he shall always be in fear of it" (Japp/1890, p.419). Critics have found the theme a peculiarly fertile one: it is the subject of Baxter/1990, which provides both a definitive post-structural view of the matter and offers a critique of previous associated writings. "De Quincey", Baxter writes, "replaces the demands of 'art' with the demands of 'necessity'" (ibid., p.43). The literalness of De Quincey's focus in the letter conforms to the amorphous trope for coming-on defeat which pervades his other writings. It is hardly surprising, then, that the related image of resurrection - or "palingenesis (or restorative resurrection)" as he calls it (Jordan/1973, p.405) - is such a pervasive one in his work. From a post-Ricardian rebirth in economics (see 24 October, 1822, note 7), to the none-scriptible "encaustic records" resurrected in dreams (M/III, p.413), the paradigm was consistent in shape if self-contradictory in content.

5. See 2 August, 1821, note 5.
6. The language here is similar to that applied by De Quincey to his attempts to renounce opium; namely, the smaller the remaining gap the harder the struggle. "I became sensible", he wrote of his feelings after having greatly lowered his opium intake, "that the effort which remained would cost me far more energy than I had anticipated" ("Appendix" to the Confessions, 1822 - London, vol.VI, pp.513; Hayter/1978, p.122). The economic metaphor used in the Confessions passage, as in this letter, neatly blurs the distinction between financial and physical concerns.
7. Six sheets would be ninety-six printed pages, nearly an entire single issue of the London.
8. The "Letters to a Young Man whose Education has been Neglected".
9. John Scott, the London's former editor. De Quincey's statement was correct: Scott had written over half of the magazine in some cases. Riga/1975 lists a total of 335
articles for the magazine from all of the London's contributors between January, 1820 and February, 1821 (inclusive); with Scott producing 119 of them (the figure includes 2 or 3 conjectures). De Quincey was less than accurate on the subject of Scott's range, which was, in fact, extensive.

10. In a letter to John White, agent to the owners of Fox Ghyll, De Quincey contended that he had come to London partly to collect money owed by Taylor and Hessey, "the publishers of a little work of mine", and partly "to superintend the publication of 2 other works now in the press" (6 January, 1823: Berg Collection). It is unclear if the reference is to non-London writings. Perhaps De Quincey is alluding, in one instance, to what David Masson called "one of [his] little commercial asides in 1823" (M/XII, p.3). His translation, "The Fatal Marksman", of Johann August Apel's Der Freischütz, appeared in July, 1823, in the three-volume "Popular Tales and Romances of the Northern Nations" (London, Simpkin and Marshall - De Quincey's work can be found in volume III).

55. TO [TAYLOR/HESSEY]
[London. Mid-late February, 1823.]¹

My dear Friend,

1. The books having been returned by your servant this morning, - I have no means of finding the p. of the word 'cumbent':- but, tho' I put it down from memory, I am right: therefore surely a blank will do no harm.²

2. The Greek will be right if they print it as it now is with the few corrections in the margin: but they have a sad trick of tinkering - i.e. making 3 holes for one that they mend. - Since the last tinkering they have altered ετοι - to ζτοι - besides omitting the aspirative ('') over ουδεν; and besides omitting the aspiration over the first ṁ in έμφάν. - But these last had better not be noticed: for they can only look like omissions (negative blunders) - which are better
than the errors (posit. blunders) which they will introduce in any too extensive alteration.³

3. A thing more important than these is — that on the first page some critic (name unknown) has corrupted my text by substituting for 'if he can' 'were it possible' — which is the true reading of the MS.⁴ — Seriously this spoils the whole fun: for it breaks at once the thread of the extravagance by making one conscious of the absurdity: whereas by saying 'if he can' — I simply say in answer to my learned friend's question 'How can he' — Well: there is something in that, which shall have its fair weight hereafter: meantime, for the present, waiving this question of if he can. — I have therefore restored the old reading; without which all the absurdity and extravagance are broken and turned into heaviness. — Besides, what objection to 'if he can'? It is elliptical: yet, if he can have visited — .⁵

Yours very truly
T. de Q.

MS: Manuscripts Division, Bryn Mawr College. Adelman Collection.

1. Date: De Quincey refers throughout the letter to proofs of his article "Anecdotage", which appeared in the March, 1823 number of the London (vol.VII, pp.261-69; M/V, pp.146-64 — Masson's text varies from the original). The publishers would be making final adjustments to the issue in the period stated.

2. The work under review in "Anecdotage" is Letitia Matilda Hawkins's Anecdotes, Biographical Sketches, and Memoirs (vol.I, London, 1823). The article is sub-headed "No. I", a hopeful but barren note given that it was the only such piece to appear. The word "cumbent" is followed by "(p. )" in the magazine (London, ibid., p.268). In the 1859 revision of the article the page reference is omitted completely.

3. The first error was corrected but the last two stood in the published article (ibid., p.269). "εμοί" — to me; "οὐδείν" — nothing; "ἐξελθεῖν" — flows away (3rd person sg. imperfect of ἐλθω, 'to flow'. The smooth and rough breathings over ρ would not be used today, but they were normal in De Quincey's time.)
Despite his complaints against printers, De Quincey dealt with the stages from the sending in of copy, to final printing, with varying degrees of attention and interest. In 1850 he made a comment on the subject which applies to much of his writing life: "I suffer from a most afflicting derangement of the nervous system, which at times makes it difficult for me to write at all, and always makes me impatient, in a degree not easily understood, of recasting what may seem insufficiently or even incoherently expressed" (Japp/1890, p.322). This tyranny of the word was perhaps the same antipathy to the revision of text— which had been set down in the first place against the grain of the writer's inclinations (or, rather, against the grain of the demands of drug-addiction)—that one sees in Coleridge (Hayter/1971, Chapter IX, passim). Statements about Robert Blackwood's "friends" helping with the "compression and revisal" of De Quincey's papers were to become common in the 1830's and 1840's (see 4 April, 1831, note 2, para. 2 for further details). On the other hand De Quincey could run off in the other direction and revise an article "with great vigilence thrice" (letter to Blackwood: NLS/MS 4060, f255—1842). The 1844 book publication of The Logic of Political Economy produced so many revisions by De Quincey, that much of it had to be reset at a late stage (a late proof of the Logic, held at Texas University, full of notes between Robert Blackwood, De Quincey, and the compositor, offers a very different text from that eventually published; Sothebys, 6 July, 1971/Lot 771 gives a brief sketch of this). Given that, under the publishing norms of the age, the book might have gone through as many as eleven stages of proofing and revising, this was quite an achievement. The 1821 Confessions, as we have seen, produced a minor rash of additions, deletions and notes to the compositor. (See Dooley/1992, Chapters II and III, for details of the various stages in the production of printed text from manuscript onwards. Although Dooley deals predominantly with book production in Victorian Britain, he also makes a number
of useful points about the printing of text in early nineteenth-century magazines. In Chapter III he shows how an author's control over text "began to diminish" with the sending in of final proofs. House style and — particularly relevant with the London — the interests and prejudices of the publisher, played a major part here — see also next note and following letter, note 9.)

4. "if he can" appeared in the published article (London, vol.VII, p.261). De Quincey's anonymous critic might well have been an editorial one in this and a number of like cases. Charles Lamb complained about unauthorised excisions in 1823, charging them to "some meddling Editor or other — or phantom of one — for neither he nor Janus [B. W. Proctor and T. G. Wainewright] know their busy friend. But they always find the best part cut out" (Lamb Letters/1935, vol., II, p.385).

5. De Quincey fussed excessively over this article. A "Lion's Head" note was introduced in the same issue, "To forestal [sic] any ungentlemanly construction of this word [anecdoteage]". "The Author", it continued, "uses the word to designate the habit of trifling research involved in the chase after anecdotes [...] he had imagined himself to be the author of this term [...] But he afterwards found that the word had been already invented by John Wilkes. He begs to add that, in questioning the truth of certain anecdotes, he is far from meaning to impeach the veracity of Miss Hawkins" (London, vol.VII, March, 1823, p.244 — That the note wasn't an editorial invention is shown by an exact MS copy, in De Quincey's hand, which is held at Montana University). The note is symptomatic of what was to become a familiar process in the rapid production of articles by De Quincey, fuss notwithstanding. Hurried composition was followed by second thoughts and, in some cases, pre- and post-publication criticism from outside.

The formidable, young German scholar Julius Hare (1795–1855) sounded an early note of protest against De Quincey's methods. He wrote to John Taylor in March, 1823, complaining
that while De Quincey wrote "with great power [he should] be a little more cautious. In many points touched upon in his last letters I fear that he is very much mistaken; but he is altogether so in what he says about [Friedrich]. Schlegel. If he had been better acquainted with the German literature of the last twenty years, he would have known that Kant, Spinoza and Leibnitz had through the whole of that period been familiar objects of Schlegel's studies" (Rylands/English MS 1238, no.2). Hare's irritation centres on De Quincey's facile attack on the German polymath, philosopher and linguist, in his third "Letter to a Young Man" (London, vol.VII, March, 1823, p.325ff; M/X, p.33ff). Schlegel, De Quincey held, was a charlatan, who claimed "familiar acquaintance [...] with subjects of which he is necessarily ignorant [including the work of] Spinoza, Leibnitz, and Kant" (ibid., p.330; M/X, p.44). The ironic element in this particular matter was that while Hare was attacking De Quincey's judgement before Taylor, Taylor was praising De Quincey's judgement before Hare. It was De Quincey's high praise of Walter Savage Landor's work that persuaded Taylor to agree to see the manuscript of Landor's Imaginary Conversations, which Hare was then trying to get the publisher to read (Chilcott/1972, p.170 - see McFarland/1963-65, for further details of the link between Hare and De Quincey).

Perhaps the tone of humility seen in the introductory note to "Anecdotage" was the reflex of pressure from Taylor and Hessey. "We have had a narrow escape from libel. In Hazlitt's Review of Peveril [in the February number] he spoke in such Terms of Walter Scott as seemed without doubt actionable" (Taylor to his brother, February, 1823: Keats House MS). On this occasion the publishers had to roll up their sleeves and tear out the offending leaf. One of the complete copies, however, found its way to Edinburgh, and opened up the old dispute between Blackwood's and the London (Bauer/1953, p.239). Taylor and Hessey fared only a little better with "Anecdotage". De Quincey recalled later that after
the "tissue of merriment and fun" had been published; he "did hear that the fair authoress was offended at one jest" involving an absurd misprint (Tait's, vol.VIII, February, 1841, p.102; M/III, p.175).

56. TO [TAYLOR/HESSEY]

[London. Late February/early March, 1823]

My dear Friend,

The current No. seems to me very good. I above all things I admire R.A.'s paper 'On Hunting,' which deservedly has the place of honor this month — being in my opinion by far the best article of the whole garland. 'Old Martin' is finely and affectingly sketched; but the 'Cockney Sportsman' is exquisite. 'Let the gentleman halloo!' 'Let the gentleman put her up!' 'Let the gentleman ride: ride, Sir, ride!' Oh it is inimitable! And above all, compared with the vulgar and hard-featured — ill-natured daubs we so often meet with on this theme. R. A.'s diction is always elegant and masterly, I think. Being on so many subjects the best cock upon our dunghill, surely he ought to be urged to do more. Lamb's article I take to be a failure. The subject is very pretty: and he has touched it on the right string — the ludicrous masquerade of physical nature in the hands of Chinese artists. If this had been more fully brought out, and shown under more angles (so to speak), — it would have been as good as his articles always ought to be. But he has quite strayed away from this subject: and the return, as the musicians say, at the end is purely verbal.

A Devil of a Printer, or a Printer's Devil, has made me say "in this terraqueous globe" — besides other errors that could not, I think, have been in the proof as I saw it.

Yours most truly,

Thos. De Quincey.

On such a subject as Windsor Castle surely Hazlitt is
very tame and unlike himself. The Ital. Sonnets are incorrectly printed and pointed. I'm the man for punctuation.

Will you let me have my MS copy (that I mean used in the current No.) back again?

N.B. My chief reason for sending over to you at this moment - is to request that you will allow the inclosed letter (which, being for Westmorland, is important) to be paid by one of your servants. The postage is 13d. which I send.

I have just finished an article from the German - the sole result of more than 21 or 22 volumes I have read within the last fortnight - viz. Mr. Schnackenberger; very clever, I think, and irresistibly ludicrous. Perhaps it may be too long: I think not: but it can be cut down.

I have no seal: will you put yours to my letter - which, being to my wife, I should be loath to have pried into by such good but curious people as sometimes volunteer to carry over letters from Ambleside.

MS: Pierpont Morgan Library. MA 4632.

1. The March number (vol.VII), available towards the end of February or the beginning of March.
2. "On Hunting", by Richard Ayton, was the first article in the magazine (see 8 December, 1822, note 5).
3. Old Martin, master of hounds; the Cockney, a colourful London horseman.
4. The article is in fact a curious compound of gentle parody and lyrical description, rather as if Dickens were rewriting one of Turgenev's Sportsman's Sketches.
6. In "Anecdotage" - the error is on page 265 of the magazine. "In" was altered to "on" in the 1859 revision.
8. "The Pictures at Windsor Castle", by William Hazlitt, was one of a series of articles on art collections, and does in fact take its place appropriately in the sequence. Hazlitt and De Quincey did not, it hardly needs adding, get on well
together. Hazlitt "had read nothing. [He] could not have been a comprehensive thinker [and he] was not eloquent because he was discontinuous", De Quincey was later to say of his fellow-Londoner (M/V, p. 231). The comment in the current letter is doubtlessly a sardonic dig at a supposedly cowed Hazlitt (see previous letter, note 5).

8. "Sonetti", a reprint of three sonnets (1822) by B. Sestini, with a preface taken from Milton. De Quincey prided himself on his punctuational skills, even if his sentiments were not always shared; as the extended arguments over his punctuation in Wordsworth's Cinta pamphlet showed (Lindop/1981, pp.166-174). Perhaps his idea that punctuation should represent "a gamut of the proportions and symmetry of the different members - of each sentence" (Jordan/1962, p.123), better fitted a sonnet than a pamphlet.

9. Another De Quinceyan obsession. He generalised the request in a letter he wrote to Hessey later the same month: "Any MS. of mine, done with, I would thank you for - if with you" (Vann/1971, p.683). Dooley/1992 notes that given the number of hands manuscripts passed through, "we should be more surprised when they survive than when they do not" (p.18). In De Quincey's case the survival rate has been uneven; we have scraps of many works but complete manuscripts of very few. Manuscripts could have ended up either with the printer's reader, the writer (if copy was sent out with proofs), or, if the writer didn't read his own proofs, with the publisher (Dooley/1992, p.18). From what is known of John Taylor's predilection for "interfering with manuscripts" (Chilcott/1972, p.155), one suspects that the firm would have had a vested interest in making the manuscripts of printed articles as scarce as possible. (See also previous letter, note 3.)

10. "Mr. Schnackenberger; or Two Masters with One Dog. From the German", appeared in the May and June numbers of the London. A source has not emerged for this translation, which is one of four German fictions translated by De Quincey in 1823. (Add. By Friedrich Lem.)
57. TO [ALLAN CUNNINGHAM]¹

[London. 20 March, 1823]

My dear Sir,

I did not understand your invitation as an invitation to dinner: yet, as you have invited a gentleman to meet me, it seems to me that I ought to consider myself as no longer entitled to decline it: though the fact is...that I have declined all dinner invitations without one exception since I came to London. I will take care to be punctual to the hour: at ¼ after 5 I will be at your door. Yet, as to the day, will you allow me to ask whether Saturday or Sunday would suit the convenience of Mrs. Cunningham, yourself, and your friend - equally well. I would not take the liberty of proposing such an alteration but under very particular circumstances - which yet, supposing that I do not hear from you, I will of course not allow to weigh against an invitation of yours. The truth is - I have been very unwell since I saw you, and am oppressed by business not merely literary but also such as is usually understood by that word.²

Do not suppose me such a coxcomb as to have coolly appropriated as my right the praise which your kindness led you to give to my little volume.³ You might easily think so from my never having suitably acknowledged your goodness: but the truth is, - I have been miserably depressed in spirits since I came to London by circumstances connected with the business which drew me hither; and have been so unhappy that I have been almost ashamed to face the human countenance, and have from the same feelings shrunk from all intercourse even by letter.

Your messenger waits: or I would have taken this opportunity of writing to you more at length.

Believe me, my dear Sir,

Your faithful friend and servant,

Thursday evening, March 20.

Thomas De Quincey.
1. Allan Cunningham (1784-1842), poet, dramatist, stonemason, was a prolific contributor to the London. Like De Quincey he had defected from Blackwood's, and had become, by 1820, "a distinguished poet and miscellaneous writer" (Chambers/1971, vol.I, p.416). He was also renowned for his work for the sculptor Francis Chantrey. It is difficult to find a mention of him by his fellow-Londoners, De Quincey and Thomas Carlyle included, which doesn't testify to his warmth and sanguine temperament. When De Quincey came to write about him in Tait's in 1840 he remembered him as "kind, liberal, hospitable, friendly" (M/III, p.150). Turning to cultural matters, he chose to find as "the most exquisite gem" in a volume of Cunningham's poetry, a ballad about a lost "child lying in a forest amongst the snow, just at the point of death" (M/III, p.146). The subject was very close to home, and perhaps suggests the nature of one form of affinity between the two men. In his 1803 diary, De Quincey had written that he had "seriously intended to execute [...] A poetic and pathetic ballad reciting the wanderings of two young children [and] their falling asleep on a frosty - moonlight night [...] and so perishing" (Eaton/1927, p.181). The context fits well the sort of interest in poeticised child psychology De Quincey located in Wordsworth's poetry (see, e.g., Jordan/1973, pp.404-5). As Groves/9 (p.230) observes, though, "It was mainly Cunningham's personality [...] and his life-long struggle against poverty, rather than his writing, which appealed to De Quincey, whose final judgement of Cunningham contains a very definite undertone of condescension". Cunningham, De Quincey pointed out in his 1840 article, should be judged in the light of his having "raised [himself] from the lowest rank (the rank in his case of a working mason)" (M/III, p.158). (See also 7 September, 1821, note 9.)

2. By De Quincey's own account he met Cunningham for the first time late in 1821, "at a dinner given by my publishers [...] at which dinner, to say the truth, I soon after suspected
[that I] played the part of lion" (M/III, p.149). The Cunningham's seem to have served a similar function to Charles and Mary Lamb with De Quincey: their "kind and hospitable receptions" gave him a more personal social context than he might otherwise have found in London (M/III, p.150). And judging by this letter the lionising continued for some time.

3. The _Confessions_ of 1822, that is. Cunningham's admiration might have extended itself to something more practical in 1828 and 1829, when he edited the literary annual _The Anniversary_. We know that Cunningham solicited pieces from Wordsworth, Wilson, Lockhart and others (WL/1978, letters from Wordsworth to Cunningham; and Cunningham/1875, Chapter XVII). Of De Quincey, though, we hear nothing, and the _The Anniversary_ doesn't seem to bear traces of his work. Faxon/1973 lists one issue only of Cunningham's annual - 1829 (published October, 1828) - noting that "an edition was partly prepared [in 1829] for 1830 [...] but not published" (p.83).

58. TO J. A. HESSEY

[London. Late March, 1823]

My dear Friend,

Would not - "Herder" - be a better running title?\(^1\) As to the punctuation I differ in so many places, and it would be so impossible to communicate to the Compositors the reasons on which I proceed, that I think it better not to disturb what is done - except in one or two cases, where even on their practice it is wrong.

The Shipwreck\(^2\) is a most admirable article:- by the way, 16 lines from the bottom of I. hand col. p.383 - it should be printed - "your fine front bowsprit = under"\(^3\) - else the reader says naturally "under what? Under water, or how?" - connecting, that is, the word front - with bowsprit - as tho' front were an adjective that qualifies the substantive bowsprit: but the construction clearly is - "plunging your fine front so deep into the sea as to go bowsprit - deep -
bowsprit - under." Ergo: bowsprit - under should be exhibited with a hyphen, and thrown into the adverb form.

Yours most truly,
Thos. De Quincey.

Addr: J.A. Hessey Esqr./[London].
MS: Dove Cottage. 160.5.

1. "Herder" was adopted as the running title to De Quincey's article "Death of a German Great Man" (i.e., J. G. Herder, poet and critic, 1744-1803), which appeared in the April, 1823 number of the London (vol.VII, pp.373-80; M/IV, p.380ff). It was essentially a digest of an edited memoir by Herder's widow, and showed even more signs than usual of hasty composition. De Quincey wanted, he maintains, to quote from John Paul's Flegel-jahre and Der Comet but, "not having those works at hand [...] shall translate that which is cited by the editor of Mrs Herder's Memoirs" (ibid., p.378; M/IV, p.390). It wasn't very convincing. Both Taylor and Hessey had been puzzled by parts of the manuscript. "I think you have [misunderstood] that Passage of De Q's - I conceive he means to describe Herder as wrestling like a Maniac with this soul consuming evil - 'as a maniac' for 'as a maniac does with his peculiar delusions' - But I will send the sheet over to De Q." (Hessey to Taylor, 14 March, 1823: Rollins/1948, vol.II, p.433 - the troublesome passage can be found on p.375 of the London; M/IV, p.384). (For earlier comments by De Quincey on Herder, see "Immanuel Kant, and John Gottfried Herder": W.G./1819, 28 August, p.3.)

Predictably, things were not going well for De Quincey in London. On 21 March he wrote to Hessey about his debts, and tried to get the publisher to advance him money against a promissory bill of his own. His "4th letter [to a Young Man]", he assured Hessey, he was "now working upon" (British Library MS/Add.37215, f13 - Hessey commented to his partner the same day, "I don't much expect De Quincey will finish his fourth Letter this month", and on 25 March, "I have scarcely any hope
of getting the whole letter done in time [...] but if we can say it is really in our hands [...] it will not be of so much importance": Rollins/1948, vol.II, pp.438-39 and 440-41.) Rather than a "Letter" the April London carried an apologetic letter (signed X.Y.Z. and dated 27 March) in its "Lion's Head" section: "I send you as much of my fourth letter as I have been able to write: [this] you must impute to no neglect of mine, but to an inflammatory complaint attended with pain [...] For your readers in general, I suspect that they will rejoice to find that you [the editor] have 'lightened ships' for one month" (vol.VII, p.371). The editor, in turn, hoped that the readers "will regret the cause which has robbed our pages" of De Quincey's "Letter" (ibid.). The chore of writing the "Lion's Head" piece was forced on De Quincey: "I shall get him to write a Note for the Lion's Head stating the cause of the Non Appearance of the Letter IV [but] we shall have a capital number without it" (Hessey to Taylor, 26 March, 1823: Rollins/1948, vol.II, p.441). His very brief articles "Anglo-German Dictionaries" and "Prefiguration of Remote Events" - the first unsigned and the second signed "Z" - also appeared in the April issue.

3. It looks as if De Quincey was doing a little ad hoc proofreading: this was how the phrase was printed.

59. TO [J. A. HESSEY]

[London]
Saturday morning, March 29. [1823]

My dear Friend,

I am much worse to-day, and was so all yesterday - especially after Dr. Darling\(^1\) had gone away: by the way, he left me with this remark - 'That I had the game in my own hands;' I fear he is mistaken. I now expect, more than ever, to have a severe struggle for life - to say the best. Accordingly it is folly for me to stay in London, where I am
spending needlessly every hour on my expensive lodgings. What I write therefore, is to request that you would, if you possibly can, procure me a sight of that book (by Wilson Phillip?) on Disorders of Digestion and the Organic Affections in which they sometimes terminate. I give the title from memory: but I think you know it.² If you cannot borrow it, could you procure it for me at the Trade price? which I ask because, with my debts here, I shall hardly have enough to take me home. − Do not attribute to me any weak-minded fancies on reading medical books: I have read many; and never fancied myself the nearer to anything I read of. Such fancies are incident only to weak minds − to those who have false preconceptions on Physiology − and to those who fear death. I shall grieve to die, but not fear it.³ I have something really important to tell the world on some very important subjects; and, if I had been happier in my pecuniary affairs, I should have told at least part of it before this: but grief of mind for so long a period on account of my fatal embarrassments − and latterly the overwhelming suffering of separation from my wife's society, has made it impossible for me to write genially or at all except on transient topics or upon a fugitive impulse.⁴ It is a pity therefore, to my own private knowledge, that I should die: and a pity, as any body may suppose, on other accounts more peculiar to myself. To stay in London however can hardly benefit me so much by the superior medical advice which it affords, as it would injure me by the misery I suffer in being separated from my family. I should have gone to-day; but what delays me − is weakness which deprives me of power to do much at a time: and you know by this time that I am never quick. − If I should go to-morrow (for I must not delay much, or I shall perhaps be unable to go at all), could you have the balance on £44 bill ready for me? £20 you paid for me: a Sovereign you lent me; and there are the expenses on the bill: I think this is the account, is it not?⁵
I shall perhaps come out this evening: for, as long as I can, I mean to try the effect of exercise. In that case I shall call on you.

Yours most truly,
Thos. De Quincey.

Publ: Substantial quote in Eaton/1936, pp.293-4.

1. Dr. Darling, see 27 December, 1821, note 4.
2. Alexander Philip Wilson Philip (1770-1851), physician and surgeon, prolific writer of popular medical texts. De Quincey refers here to Philip's Treatise on Indigestion and its Consequences (London, 1821 - It was in its sixth edition by 1828). He alludes to it again in his 1845 Tait's article "On the Temperance Movement of Modern Times". "Twenty years ago", he wrote in his paper, "Dr. Wilson Philip published a most valuable book of this class [i.e., a guide to diet for ex-inebriates] which united a wide range of practical directions as to the choice of diet" (M/XIV, pp.270-71). Diet, De Quincey maintained, was the "sheet-anchor for the storm-beaten sufferer who is labouring to recover a haven of rest from the agonies of intemperance" (ibid., p.270). Although he was always fastidious - not to say neurotic - in matters of diet, he never really followed Philips's advice on the subject, which was that a stomach weakened by drugs or alcohol would benefit from a steady intake of lightly-cooked meats. In 1837, for instance, he was dining on "a slop basin [...] of rice broth" and coffee (Eaton/1936, p.370), things he wrote off in the 1845 article as highly injurious "to enfeebled stomachs" (M/XIV, p.271). De Quincey may also have had Philip's Experimental Essay on the way in which Opium acts on the Living Animal Body (Edinburgh, 1795) in mind when writing about the physician. See also Tave/1966, pp.330-32, 338-39, and M/VIII, p.354 for further references by De Quincey to Philip.
3. As his letters to Taylor show, Hessey provided a fascinated and generally sympathetic audience for De Quincey's laments. Henry Crabb Robinson recorded Lamb's reaction to Hessey's "account of De Quincey's description of his own bodily sufferings. 'He should have employed as his publishers,' said Lamb, 'Payne and Foss (fuss)'" (Robinson/1938, vol.I, p.311 - 6 July, 1824).

4. The "transient" nature of newspaper and periodical writing was a topic De Quincey was often to return to (see, e.g., Japp/1890, pp.239-40 and Sel./vol.I, "Preface"). With the supposed inability to write came the multifarious plans for articles: "De Quincey will write a paper on Landor's Poetry [...] It is one of a long-projected Series to be called the Neglected Writers, or some such title" (Hessey to Taylor, 14 March, 1823: Rollins/1948, vol.II, pp.434-35). Given the intention of the firm to publish Landor's work, such a "paper" would have been very useful to Taylor and Hessey. Despite De Quincey's genuine enthusiasm for Landor, though, a paper on him did not emerge until the 1847 "Notes on Walter Savage Landor" (Tait's, vol.XIV, pp.18-23 and 96-104).

5. See previous letter, note 1 (Hessey had obviously advanced the money requested). A sense of De Quincey's anxiety to return to Westmorland is given a number of times in Hessey's letters to Taylor during March: "he has not recd the letters which were to set him free from London"; "De Q. was here again last night - he does not go on Wednesday" (Rollins/1948, vol.II, pp. 433 and 437).

6. Exercise - walking in De Quincey's case - was a good way of offsetting the pain of drug-withdrawal, and he was to pursue it for the rest of his life, whenever practicable. It seemed to have a rapid effect on this occasion: "Having derived great benefit from a 3 hours' walk [...] I shall finish my task in less time than I had supposed - in fact at the rate of 3 Mag. pp. a day" (to Hessey, 28 April, 1823: British Library MS/Add.37215, f17). Interestingly enough he was to expound on the benefits of regular walking, in the same article that he
praised the "Wilson Philip" diet (note 2 above - M/XIV, pp.273-75).

60. TO J. A. HESSEY

[London. 10 April, 1823]

My dear Friend,

Yesterday evening I received my bill (£14. 6.) from the landlady: and adding servant, washerwoman, medicines, and a few other &c. I shall not be able to leave this place (even allowing for any presumable deductions on account of coals) under £16. 10; nor to perform the journey under 8 guineas at the least; i.e. I shall want £24. 18.¹ - Now towards this sum I have about £12. 9. in your hands. Consequently, by hook or by crook, I must find 'ways and means' - for exactly one other £12. 9.; the 'supplies' as you see, being just deficient by one half. Well: now this deficiency I propose to meet by the 4th letter, which cannot well be brought into less compass than 12pp.; and the question, which arises, is - whether I may have the benefit of a vote of credit to that amount, pledging my word of honor to have the article in your hands within 8 days from my quitting London - or whether you are disposed to negative that proposition.² - - I was aware of this dilemma last night: but did not like to trouble you with business in your own drawing-room; and besides, as saying NO is often the most disagreeable part of a man's business, many people prefer saying it by the proxy of a letter; and therefore I rather write to you than speak.

The difference which the case makes to me is simply this: I am wretchedly anxious to be in Westmorland; and it so happens that at this moment I have some business to transact about Fox Ghyll - the 15th of April making the close of a term at which I may quit it if I please, or exact new and better conditions.³ On these accounts I can write much better in Westmorland than here, and also on several other accounts -
particularly the 'account' of my landlord, which (I last night bargained) should not charge me for more than the exact fraction of the week if I go to-morrow, but which - if I stay until I have written up to the level of the supply called for - will load me with another week's debt - i.e. £2. i.e. with a sinking fund of 16½ per cent. on the whole 'supply' wanted.

After all, you know, I shall still be in your debt by that whole detestable sum of 10 sovereigns which my 'Juno' of a landlady swallowed at one mouthful. But then on this I argue thus: though it is true that on the general audit I must have been found wanting by much more than I aim on but for your present on the Confessions, - yet on the particular account then running on, detached from the whole, I should have been + (plus) by the entire last 8pp. of Mr. Schnackenberger: the 10 sovereigns last received having been on account of 2/3rds (not previously paid for) of the first sheet of Mr. Schn. 4 - It was on this plus of 8 guineas that in fact I had depended for returning home, until the appearance of the general audit: and then the general blessing of finding a mountain of past guilt removed was yet attended by the particular and momentary misfortune of finding a balance on the subordinate account absorbed in the great abyss of the main account. - This is the case. And you must at any rate let this infernal 10 sovereigns of pure gold (which I cannot think of without disgust) sleep until I return to Westmorland; otherwise I shall never sleep again. - I propose to meet this debt by a paper entitled 'Sketch of the history of Polit. Economy before and after Mr. Ricardo: or a Plain Account of Mr. Ricardo's services in that science.' This paper, I assure you, is quite matured in my thoughts, and will pioneer the way to my work on Pol. Econ. It will be the Prolegomena to the Prolegomena. 5

But why should I disturb a sleeping lion? You are not troubling me for that 10 sov.? And therefore why need I provide for its payment until the 10th or 11th day after my arrival in Westmorland: by which time, at the latest, I engage that you shall have the Ricardo paper: the former paper, as I
have said before, on the 6th day after my reaching Westmorland - or 8th after leaving London.

Very faithfully yours,

April 10

Thomas De Quincey.

Mr. Schnackenberger's arrears I will send in an hour: I flatter myself that it will be dramatised for an after-piece by some play-wright of one house or other. For undoubtedly it offers a very fair field for a good composer of farces.⁶

Addr: J. A. Hessey Esqr./93 Fleet Street/[London].
MS: British Library. Add. 37215, ff15/16.

1. The bill from the Newbons at Racquet Court was still unpaid at the end of the month: "Not having paid my landlady anything for the last 9 weeks about - I have been dunned during the last week [...] Could you let me have £7 or £8?" (to Hessey, 28 April, 1823: British Library MS/Add.37215, f17.)

2. The "Letter" on "Languages (continued)" appeared in the May number of the London. De Quincey remained in London until August. It seems that he didn't neglect to ensure a continued supply of German books: "De Quincey set off last evening to go to your House, but he stopped at Bohte's and could not get any further" (Hessey to Taylor, 3 April, 1823: Matlock/D504 - see note 2 to 2 August, 1821 for Bohte).

3. Domestic events were soon to become threatening in Westmorland. Whether because of De Quincey's unpredictable rent-paying, or on account of her husband's recent death, Mrs Blakeney, Fox Ghyll's owner, was soon to put the house up for sale (see 26 August, 1823).

4. "Mr. Schnackenberger", see late February/early March, note 10. By this calculation, where a sovereign is equal to £1, it appears that De Quincey was getting £15 per sheet of 16 printed pages for his translation: a good rate for periodical writing. The reference to his landlady as "Juno" is a clumsy allusion to "Mr. Schnackenberger", the eponymous hero of which owned "an English bitch - infamous for her voracious appetite" which he called by that name (Chapter V; M/XII, p.321).
The "present" on the Confessions was £30 (see 21 September, 1823, note 1). De Quincey didn't own the copyright of the Confessions, a fact that was to cause some trouble when he came to revise it for his Selections Grave and Gay in the 1850's (see Lindop/1981, pp.376-77). Neither, though, did he share in any profits from the work in its post-periodical book form (ibid., p.377). Chilcott/1972, quoting Hessey to another writer, gives the firm's policy on the matter: "'we object to giving up the whole of the Copyright, because we do not like the appearance, even, of losing an Author for whom we have published, or a Work which we have first brought out'" (p.151). See 21 September, 1823, note 10, for the larger ideological context to this (and see my own introduction for another local instance of the matter).

5. Not until March, 1824 did De Quincey's "The Services of Mr. Ricardo to the Science of Political Economy" appear in the London (vol. IX, pp.308-10). This very slim paper was effectively an introductory note to his "Dialogues of Three Templars on Political Economy, chiefly in Relation to the Principles of Mr. Ricardo" (London, April-May, 1824), and served as a paean to the political economist, who had died in September, 1823. For the "Prolegomena" see 24 October, 1822, notes 5 and 7.

6. See late February/early March, 1823, note 10. 21 October, 1823 shows that De Quincey's self-praise was necessary: his publishers had mixed feelings about the translation.

61. TO J. A. HESSEY

[London. Late May/mid-June, 1823]

My dear Friend,

I am worn out with sitting up and taking laud. for 3 days in succession: consequently I must be brief. - It was agreed that within a month from the day I spoke to you (this day week), I was to write up to £100. - Well - I believe you have about
12 -  
8pp. of 5th letter\(^1\)  
2pp. of The Dice\(^2\)  
2pp. of J. Taylor\(^3\)  

which I now inclose: the rest only wants correcting. This makes 12pp. - It would be a prodigious accommodation, if the 12pp. I owe you for the £12 advanced on May 21 could stand over till next week, when I shall be in Westmorland. - Yet, if you dislike that, - perhaps it can stand over till to-morrow; when with what I have finished of the Dice I could make it up. - I must in some way endeavour to raise enough to meet a bill due this day at Masterman's\(^4\) for £17. 11. 11. I have £6 here. Just let me know what you can do. - - If you can do it, and your servt. is going to the city, I will send over the £6. But just say - Aye, or No - by the messenger, if you can.

Yours very truly,
Thos. De Quincey

For the J. Taylor I can substitute another article if you dislike it.

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Addr: J. Hessey Esqr./[London]

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1. The fifth of the "Letters to a Young Man", subtitled "On the English Notices of Kant", appeared in the July, 1823 number of the London (vol.VIII, pp.87-95). An unpublished manuscript of another fifth "Letter", sent to Hessey in December, 1823 and headed "Letters to a young man [etc.\] Letter V", is held at Princeton University. This has presumably either been misnumbered by De Quincey, or was intended as a supplement to the published fifth "Letter". It starts by offering advice to the "young man" on the "art of acquiring languages" (f1), but soon turns into something resembling a digest of an epistemological guidebook covering geometry, political economy and other subjects. The "Letter", four pages on a single, large folded sheet, is an oddity. Part of the final page is used as the address cover (it is franked "Kendal Penny Post - 2 Dec., 1823" - with the endorsement
"single sheet"), and the whole thing sent, unsigned, from Westmorland, as a self-contained private/public communication to Hessey in London. De Quincey's favoured epistolary format has here served to turn what masquerades as a private letter into a public text - or perhaps it should be the other way round (see also 3 December, 1820, end of note 1). Like Jacques Derrida, De Quincey, signatory X.Y.Z. of the "Letters" but here an anonymous correspondent, might have asked, "Who is writing? To whom [...] I would not have had the slightest interest in this correspondence and this cross-section, I mean in their publication, if some certainty on this matter had satisfied me" (Derrida/1987, p.5).


3. Although De Quincey mentions Bishop Jeremy Taylor (1613-67) a number of times in his work (see, e.g., M/VIII, p.189ff, where he quotes at length from Taylor's Life of Christ), there is no sign of a London article by him on the subject. John Taylor noted in his Commonplace Book, against August, 1824, "Jeremy Taylor (unfinished)" (Taylor/C.B., vol.I - placed in section devoted to De Quincey's writings).

4. Probably the Lombard Street bankers (see WL/1978, p.309). One can only marvel at the spread of De Quincey's expanding empire of debt. On 9 May, 1823 he had written to Henry Crabb Robinson asking for a loan of £10. "Just as I became able to exert myself again" after a long illness, De Quincey explained, "I have received a letter from Westmorland making it necessary for me to be at home by Old May Day (May 12) [...] to prevent some measures in relation to the house I occupy (Fox Ghyll) which would affect my interests very injuriously. [I could] write 10 Magazine pages [at £1 per printed page] for Taylor and Hessey [but] have neither the time to spare - nor could I command tranquility of mind enough to write in my present situation, though I should find it easy to do so in Westmorland" (Dr. Williams's Lib./H.C.R. Letters,
vol.5, f94). Robinson has endorsed his letter "De Quincey sent £10 immediately by Brittain" (Robinson's clerk).

62. TO J. A. HESSEY

[London. 24 July, 1823]

My dear Sir, - Will you have the goodness to let me have by the bearer what you conceive to be due on the King of Hayti.¹ It consisted of 26pp. in my hand, - some in open, some in close order, - and should in the usual course have been = 13pp. of the Mag. - I received £10. - If you should be in my neighbourhood today, and should think of calling, - perhaps after 7 o'clock mt. suit you as well as another time. I am now making an effort to labor: which, if unsuccessful (as it has been for 5 days), I must take some other course: for I am eating out anything I produce by my expenses. - - If I do not see you in the evening, - then I shall call about 9 o'clock on you.

Yours very truly,
Thos. De Quincey.

Thursday, July 24.

'Mr. M. - in the Swan' - or simply 'The Gent. in the Swan' is enough by way of direction.²

Addr: J. A. Hessey Esqr./93 Fleet Street/[London].
MS: British Library. Add. 37215, f18.

1. "The King of Hayti/From the German", was published in the November, 1822 number of the London (vol.VIII, pp.517-29). No source has been located for the original story. It may be that the originals for all of the unsourced 1823 translations came from the same German work. (Professor Frederick Burwick, of the University of California, Los Angeles, who is editing these translations for the forthcoming collected edition of De Quincey's works, has been unable to trace an origin for them.) The "King" did run to thirteen pages of the magazine.
2. There were a variety of Swan Inns, Taverns and Hotels in London during this period. De Quincey's is probably the Swan Inn at Holborn Bridge. He had left Racquet Court and was no doubt hiding from creditors, his former landlord and landlady included. In an undated letter to Hessey, probably written the Sunday after this one, De Quincey shows the extremity of his situation: "I will return the various proofs [...] If you ask the man at what coffee-house I am, - I must request you, not as an act of friendship but as an act of mere honor under some circumstances which I shall mention to you when I see you, not to communicate my address to any body: acts of friendship I ask not and such not of any man" (British Library MS/Add.37215, f32). Thanks probably to an ingrained habit of secrecy, De Quincey was able to slip away from London unnoticed by his creditors on 4 August.

63. TO J. A. HESSEY

[Fox Ghyll]
Tuesday Night Augt. 26, - 1823.

My dear Sir,

In the very greatest haste I inclose to you 2 sheets (= at the least to 4pp. of the Mag. inasmuch as even the last page contains 24 lines,¹ the requisite quantity, and all the other 7 more considerably) to meet a bill <which I> gave on Sunday last of the following form:

Two days after sight please to pay the sum of <four> pounds to Mr. Edward Backhouse² or his order. - If this bill were sent off by the next post (Mond. morning) it would be presented on Wed. and due on Friday - on which morning you will receive this letter.

On Monday you will receive a quantity of matter for Mr. Newbon.³

I reached home about 10 min. before 8 o'clock on Wednesday morning Augt. 6 - having left London at ½ after 8 on Mond. night Augt. 4.: was in Manchester by 20 min. after 5 on
Tuesday morning: staid there 2 hours. On the box of the Mail the whole way to Preston - 36 miles (by the mail road) north of Manchester. Hence much fatigued: since greatly harassed: Fox-Ghyll sold by auction next Friday night: which exposes me to much trouble. 4

You have disturbed me much by not sending (as you proposed to do) proofs of the 'Memoranda from the pocket book of a late Opium-Eater.' 5 For God's sake in future send me proofs of all things. I forsee most important errata in what you will already have printed. 6 - Besides, I had since thought of most important additions - which are now lost for the want of an opportunity to connect them with their appropriate passages. - I fear, I fear [sic] - that this omission, as well as so many other defects of due energy in conducting the Mag. which I could point out, arise from dyspepsy. Dyspepsy is the ruin of most things; empires, expeditions, and every thing else. -

I am preparing an Abstract of all the minor and miscellaneous Essays of Kant: beware how you think cheaply of these. 7 -

I beg my best regards to Mrs. Hessey:
and am, my dear Sir,
Yours very truly,
Thos. De Quincey.

Addr: J. A. Hessey/93 Fleet Street/London.
P.M: Kendal Penny Post.
MS: The Huntington Library. HM 7273.

1. This was probably "Malthus", one of the Notes from the Pocket-Book of a late Opium-Eater, a series which appeared irregularly in the London between September, 1823 and December, 1824. "Malthus" was printed in the October, 1823 number (vol. VIII, pp.349-53). Hessey informed Taylor on 3 September, 1823 that he had "given [De Quincey's] paper on Malthus to Parker to be printed" - an early date in the month
for De Quincey's copy to be ready (Rollins/1948, vol.II, p.446). It did in fact run to the length predicted.

2. The Backhouses were a Rydal farming family.


4. The sale of Fox Ghyll was advertised in the Westmorland and Cumberland papers on 9 August: "That beautiful residence near the Lakes, Fox Ghyll, Loughrigg, Grasmere, is announced for sale" (LC/1865, p.55 - See also 10 April, 1823, note 3, and WL/1978, pp. 209-10). The house didn't sell on this occasion; a fact which was probably connected with De Quincey's reluctance to let prospective buyers look round it. A letter from De Quincey to the house agent John White, anyway, offers a farcical glimpse of his "disagreeable" encounter with a "passionate and violent" would-be owner (Berg Collection: 25 August, 1823).

5. See note 1 above (De Quincey had planned, but not executed, a series for the Westmorland Gazette called "Memorabilia from the pocket-book of a scholar" - see 20 April, 1822, note 4). The word "late" in the title is significant. Dorothy Wordsworth observed to a correspondent that, "the opium eater must have left off his opium: he is returned quite well, and looks younger than he did seven years ago. He drank tea with us lately" (WL/1978, pp.218-19). In fact, it is unlikely that De Quincey had given up opium. He sometimes managed to force a truce with the drug, where balanced doses led to a sort of equilibrium, with neither positive nor negative mental and physical consequencess. The sort of uneasy truce to which he refers at the very end of the 1821 Confessions, is probably an example of this. But such was rare and never lasted.

6. Hessey was suitably admonished: in his 3 September letter (see note 1 above) he reported that he was "going to send off his [De Quincey's] Proofs to day to Westmoreland to be corrected by him".

7. See 24 October, 1822 for De Quincey's London essays on Kant. In 1830 he published the similar-sounding paper "Kant in his Miscellaneous Essays", addressed as a letter to "The
Editor of Blackwood's Magazine" (Blackwood's, vol.XXVIII, August, Part I, pp.244-268; see also next letter, note 13). In the article De Quincey writes that he will "cautiously abstain from every part of [Kant's] works which belongs to him in his quality of founder of a new philosophy [...] Metaphysics are pretty generally out of reach of a nation made up of practical men of business" (ibid., p.247; M/VIII, p.90). It was the sort of statement that would leave later critics room to charge that De Quincey's knowledge of Kant "remained only skin-deep" (Wellek/1931, p.180). It was also, however, just the sort of thing that would have soothed the utilitarian ear of Taylor and Hessey. Technical articles, Taylor wrote about a prospective contribution, "should be written as popularly as possible; for the Readers of Magazine's are not much disposed to philosophize" (4 June, 1822: NLS/MS 7209, ff115/16). Bauer/1953 charts the general drift of the London towards what she rather blankly calls its "dull later days [of] drab utilitarianism" (p.336). As later letters illustrate, De Quincey's own fruitful association with the philosophical radicals, liberal educators and radical publishers of his age, shows that his own view of "the useful" was far from negative.

64. TO J. A. HESSEY

Fox-Ghyll

Sunday morning September 21, 6 o'clock a.m., [1823]

My dear Sir,

On my return last night from a short visit of a few hours to a house on Windermere, I found the proof from you.¹ This I now return, after cutting out your letter which I have scarcely time to read, for last night, I was asleep on my return; and this morning I have to save for the post, which leaves Ambleside (i.e. 2 miles hence) at 7 o'clock a.m.

I wrote, before I left home, directions for a quantity of MS. amounting in all, I believe, to nearly 11 sheets: which were to be folded up and sealed in 2 parcels: they were to be
taken last night by somebody or other: and will, I conclude, reach you by the same post as this letter. - Now about this MS. the case is this:- lying here but uncorrected, I have about an equal quantity - viz. the conclusion of the Freemasons (about 2pp. of the Mag.)\(^2\) an article upon Kant generally (7pp.)\(^3\) - - and a considerable quantity of the Memoranda\(^4\) - J. Taylor\(^5\) and the continuation of the Letters to a Young Man:—\(^6\) these I will correct and send off by to-morrow morning's post - and Wednesday's (Tuesday we have none). This latter parcel will pay Mr Newbon the remainder of his debt. What I have sent last night - I will thank you to consider as sent for the payment of a bill in favor of Mrs Benson for the sum of £21. 10. 0. and due on Tuesday Sept. 23.\(^7\) - This bill, I have to apologize to you for making payable at your house: but the fact is - without a place of reference - it is impossible to draw bills at all. At present, as I shall so soon be in London,\(^8\) it is not of much importance: but hereafter perhaps some plan can be pointed out for putting it in my power to draw for such quantities of MS. as I am sure of producing in the time and have received your permission to produce. For 4 weeks, if I have not misunderstood you, I was to have liberty to produce at the rate of £28 per week.\(^9\) That I have not done that, and cleared off Mr Newbon's bill before this, is owing to the following unfortunate accident: for 9 entire days since I last wrote I have been (tho' otherwise in better health internally) seized by a tremendous attack of rheumatism in the back of the neck - shoulders - and both arms, - so as for most of that time to be incapable of holding a pen. For the last six or 7 days I have been much better.

I could never understand on what principle you thought the Opium-Eater's Conf. a temporary work - or more belonging to one year than another; - or why according to its value it should not as much belong to the literature as Elia or any other work whatsoever, accordg. to its value, I say: meaning, that simply in the subject I see nothing transitory or less suited to the next year or century than to this. - Now that I
am right in this, appears from the fact of my having had scarcely one day's interval since my return without callers from amongst the lakers, bringing letters of Introd. to me as the Op. Eater. Hence I have been more hampered, and my time more cut up, than ever before; - more by 50 to 1 than last year.

Amongst the disting. visitors to Windermere (Mr. Bolton's) of late were Canning, Huskisson, Lord C. Bentinck &c. All the wits &c. of the lakes were of course asked: most went. - A good deal of talk about the Lond. Mag. - the last No. was thought a good one: which rather surprizes me. Canning was after this at Elleray (Prof. Wilson's): he expressed great interest in some articles in the Lond. Mag. - and I must tell you that Lord Grenville, who was at Elleray some time before Canning, expressed himself greatly interested in the promised articles upon Kant, having himself studied Kant in the original with great zeal, but without any success. - Wilberforce I mentioned to you before as interested in Kant. This may convince you that the interest must be widely spread when men of the world and of business like these can partake in it.

Very faithfully, with my kind regards to Mrs Hessey,

Yours,

Thos. De Quincey

[Crossed through: Articles sent for the payment of Mrs Bensons bill = £21. 10.

Kant's Essay on a Univ. Hist. 4 sheets but 1p. vacant.
This may either stand alone or follow the essay on Kant.
False Distinctions: &c. 2 sheets
Vulg. Errors in Polit. Econ 4 sheets
Seige of Curwen Island - 1½ sheets]

N.B. Kants essays, i.e. a selection of a few out of the whole, would do admirably for a little volume and, I am sure, would have a considerable sale. Wilson appears sure that Blackwood is most anxious to obtain a good acct. of Kant for his Mag. - By the bye, in a passage which I heard from a
letter of Stewart Wortley's - (the Yorkshire Wortley) - Blackwood's Mag is highly praised for its politics, and pronounced far superior to John Bull (as it easily may be). - A Polit. Character is certainly of some importance: and, without any reference to myself or any person whatever, I am sure that whosoever gives to any journal this thing - original and above all fundamental views in Polit. Economy will do more for that journal in the higher classes than by any other contribution whatever. Blackwood; sale, W. says, is now 4500. Quan?

I have just found that the MS. was not sent last night for want of opportunity. I now send it myself - This MS. I hope will be enough to meet Mrs B.'s bill: a point I have hardly had time to examine. If any thing however is wanting, you will have it by the next post. I am agitated to death about it: for it is ruinous to me if it returns. On this account only I remind you that there is a small excess on the Malthus above the 4pp. which may perhaps meet the 10s. the bill being £21. 10. - For Mr Newbon I shall send the whole in a post or two:- and I shall be at his house in a few days.

Addr: J. A. Hessey Esq./93 Fleet Street/London.
MS: NLS. MS 15973, ff15-16.

1. There is insufficient detail to locate the "house": it is possibly Elleray, John Wilson's house close to Windermere. Wilson and Blackwood's, anyway, are constant points of reference in this letter. As a letter that Wilson wrote to William Blackwood on 27 September, 1823 shows, De Quincey was probably being less than honest to Hessey throughout his own letter. Wilson opens by drawing Blackwood's attention to De Quincey's "The Fatal Marksman" (see late January, 1823, note 10). De Quincey, he continues, "is disgusted with all the Cockneys, and intends to get rid of them in half a year [...] Two thousand of the Opium Eater are sold - & a third Edition of 1000 just printed. De Q. was paid £50 for it in the magazine and £30 since. - Taylor & Hessey pay well; but will
not advance to any contributor one farthing not due. The rule is absolute; owing to Hazlitt having cheated them out of £3.10. This is a secret. De Quincey is very friendly to Maga & us all" (NLS/MS 4011, ff255/56). Assured that Blackwood's now had a friend - double-agent, if he is telling the truth - in the enemy camp, Wilson was soon urging William Blackwood to launch "an infernal attack on the Cockneys" (ibid., ff253/54). It goes without saying that Wilson was anxious to restore De Quincey to Blackwood's favour: for one thing he still needed his knowledgeable friend to help with his lectures in moral philosophy at Edinburgh University. If Wilson is to be believed, De Quincey wasn't exactly playing difficult, even if it was to be another three years before he wrote again for Blackwood's.

See note 21 for the "proof" mentioned here.

2. De Quincey's "Historico-Critical Inquiry into the Origins of the Rosicrucians and the Free-Masons" was published in the London in January, February, March, and June, 1824 (vol.IX). Hessey liked it from the beginning: "So far it looks very interesting and if extend [sic] very far had better be made into a Book I should think - or perhaps it might take in that form after it has been in the Magazine" (letter to John Taylor, 3 September, 1823: Rollins/1948, vol.II, p.446). He wasn't aware that what De Quincey claimed to be a complete reworking of his source material (a work by J. G. Buhle), was actually a literal partial translation and summary of it (see Goldman/1965, pp.76-77; and 29 April, 1822/no.48, note 8).


4. That is, the "Notes from the Pocket-Book...".

5. Jeremy Taylor; see late May/mid-June, note 3.

6. The "Letters" were not continued; see late May/mid-June, 1823, note 1. John Taylor noted in his Commonplace Book against August, 1824, "Letters to a Young Man (unfinished)" (Taylor/C.B., vol.1).
7. De Quincey is trying to settle his debts with his former London landlord (Newbon), and the owner of Dove Cottage (Benson).

8. He didn't return to London until the summer of 1824.

9. This would have involved producing an absurdly large amount of copy: two sheets per week (at £14 each sheet) or 32 printed pages. By De Quincey's own calculations in other letters, such would mean about 64 of his own pages (and would effectively represent, over a whole month, the entire magazine and a bit more).

10. These are odd comments, perhaps, in view of De Quincey's unpropertied relationship with the Confessions (see 10 April, 1823, note 4); though he was to echo them - emphatically - when copyright problems over ownership of the work were sorted out in his favour (Sel./vol.I, pp.xvii-xix; see Lindop/1981, pp.376-77, for details of the copyright dispute). His relationship with the text which was to be the text so far as his public commodification was concerned, was to be a highly problematical one. A number of subsequent letters give a strong sense of his antipathy to the textual designation "Opium-Eater". In 1838, for example, he observed to the publisher William Tait, "others have called me - but I never called myself - by the bye-name (as with propriety they term it in Westmorland) of the English Opium Eater. That was no designation of my inventing" (unpublished open letter, dated 16 May 1838: Cornell MS 2805). Conversely, he could write to John Wilson on 14 January, 1830 and propose that Blackwood publish his "Novel [...] 'New Canterbury Tales' [...] by the author of the Confessions of an Eng. Op. Eater" (see letter in sequence below). Earlier still, he could address a letter to "George Gee Esqre. from the Opium-Eater" (see above ?1822/letter 52, no.II). See also 19 November, 1823, note 7, for details of how the "magic prefix of 'by the Opium Eater'" was being used to market De Quincey's work.

He doesn't seem to have appeared unambiguously "as himself" in the titles of articles - rather than as an opium-
mediated self, or as X.Y.Z., or whatever — until Tait's, in the light of the May letter perhaps, published his "Brief Appraisal of the Greek Literature in its Foremost Pretensions/By Thomas De Quincey", in December, 1838 (vol.V, pp.763-775 — running title "Mr De Quincey on Greek Literature"). The autobiographical "Sketches" and "Lake Reminiscences" of the 1830's and early 1840's were narrated by an authorial personna which derived from the seminal text of 1821, the Confessions. There had, though, been extra-textual interpolations in the course of publication of the autobiographical material in Tait's. In 1837, for example, William Tait ran an editorial, to try to placate individuals offended by De Quincey's piece on his former Liverpool friends, under the heading "Mr. De Quincey and the Literary Society of Liverpool in 1801" (Tait's, vol.IV, May, 1837, pp.337-40). Elsewhere, it was to be a similar story: anonymous or ambiguous authorship in his own Blackwood's articles, and the direct juxtapositioning of "Mr. De Quincey" or "De Quinshy", as it often was, and the "English Opium-Eater" in the Blackwood's Noctes sketches.

The mediated authorial personna then, as Paul de Man suggests, could not be defined through a "specular moment [...] located in a history, but [only as a] manifestation, on the level of the referent, of a linguistic structure" (de Man/1984, p.70). One simply stepped out of one structure into a similar one. The problem for De Quincey was that in trying to tamper with what he wanted to call an "alien" self (a scriptible other/opium-eater), he was tampering with the very device that established him as originator of, and participator in, public "commodity texts [...] produced in the new capitalist mode of production [...] in struggle by the new 'professional' author within the new structures of control over the publishing process" (Feltes/1989, p.8). There is of course a well-established hermeneutic context to this "anxiety": "High cultural production invites the language of 'reception', the symbolic giving and receiving of texts
between great writers and singular, sensitive readers [the ironically-distanced 'courteous reader', for example, addressed at the opening of the Confessions]. Mass-cultural production yields up the harsher vocabulary of 'consumption', supply and demand among innumerable writers and vast, faceless audiences" (Klancher/1987, p.13). Self-representation here is, as Klancher shows throughout his book, a matter of semiotic display, a struggle over the way that signs demarcate cultural classification. Charles Rzepka (of Boston University, U.S.A.) offers a stimulating view of these arguments in his forthcoming book on De Quincey, Sacramental Commodities (no further publication details available). De Quincey, he argues, attempts to subvert capitalist commodification, by placing the publication of the Confessions in a classical gift-economy context. Value here is more a matter of metaphysics than publishing economics.

De Quincey's popularity with the reading public is evident from the success of the various editions of the Confessions in the 1820's. As Lindop/1981 (pp.260-61) points out, it was fanned by "reports of accidental death by opium" and by the appearance of De Quincey, as "The English Opium-Eater", in the Noctes of Blackwood's from October, 1823 onwards. Julius Hare placed De Quincey in illustrious company when he praised John Taylor in 1823 as "the publisher of Endymion, of Keate's [sic] last volume, of Carey's Dante, the Opium Eater" (Rylands/English MS 1238, No.1). Fame took bizarre turns sometimes. On one occasion Edward Quillinan, Wordsworth's future son-in-law, was mistaken for "the Opium Eater" in London, with "absurd" consequences (WL/1978, p.388 – 1825; and see ?1822/52,II). On another, Quillinan's former father-in-law, Sir Egerton Brydges, reported that a "person here [Geneva] calling himself De Quincey Mee introduced himself as the Author of the Opium-Eater [...] He has said the same to everyone and talks in all respects as if he was the genuine opium-eater" (Quillinan to Dora Wordsworth, Nov., 1829: Dove Cottage MS, Quillinan Papers). Perhaps the most
sinister part of this fragmented self, though, was De Quincey's old London dinner companion, T. G. Wainewright (see 20 December, 1821, note 1), who claimed, "The Opium Eater - who was he but I?" (1825: Curling/1938, p.170). Some of De Quincey's fugitive 1823 visitors were evidently passed on to Wordsworth: "I beg to introduce to you Mr. Carne, a gentleman who has lately returned from Palestine" (De Quincey to Wordsworth, 14 September: Jordan/1926, p.329).

11. John Bolton, a wealthy Liverpool industrialist, lived at Storrs Hall on Windermere. It was the location of many famous gatherings of politicians and writers (see, e.g., WL/1978, p.381, note 1).

George Canning (Foreign Secretary); William Huskisson (about to be appointed President of the Board of Trade); Lord George Bentinck (Canning's private secretary) - all powerful Tory politicians in Lord Liverpool's ministry - were then attending a series of dinners in the north of England. Local newspapers reported on 6 September that during the previous week "Storrs Hall has been the scene of some splendid festivities in honour of Mr. Canning's visit to the Lakes" (LC/1865, p.55). De Quincey didn't attend. As he makes clear in a deleted passage to the 1839 "Lake Reminiscences", his informant was John Wilson (Pierpont Morgan/MA 4500). (See also Tave/1966, pp.393 and 397, for later references to related gatherings at Storrs.)

De Quincey was being devious here: he knew well that Canning was much more a Blackwood's than a London man. Indeed on his visits to London the ultra-Tory William Blackwood sometimes visited Canning, and a number of amicable letters passed between the two men (NLS/Blackwood Collection, index). It is difficult to believe that Taylor and Hessey would have seen De Quincey's remarks as anything other than special pleading. Perhaps the writer, who had seen the manuscript of Walter Savage Landor's Imaginary Conversations, and who thus knew that it contained potentially libellous matter in the dialogue between Pitt and Canning, sought to exploit a

12. William Wyndham Grenville, 1st Baron Grenville (1759-1834), former Prime Minister; William Wilberforce (1759-1833), parliamentarian and philanthropist: both were active slave-trade abolitionists. De Quincey was to say of them in 1836: "in or about the year 1818-19, Lord Grenville, when visiting the lakes of England, observed to Professor Wilson that, after five years' study of this philosophy [of Kant], he had not gathered from it one clear idea. Wilberforce, about the same time, made the same confession to another friend of my own" (M/II, p.106 - the other "friend" was probably Wordsworth, whom Wilberforce had visited in September, 1818). De Quincey was to press the two Kantian politicians into service again in 1832, when he was trying to interest another publisher in accepting articles on Kant (see 25 July, 1832). Wellek/1931 (p.179) rejects De Quincey's published anecdote as "surely untrustworthy": the two letters make it look a little more dependable.

13. See previous letter, note 7. The 1830 article "Kant in his Miscellaneous Essays" included a translation of part of Kant's "Essay Towards Realising the Idea of Perpetual Peace". The "Idea of a Universal History on a Cosmo-Political Plan, by Immanuel Kant" appeared in the London in October, 1824. 14. "False Distinctions" was one of the "Notes from the Pocket-Book..."; it was published in the June, 1824 number of the London. Since it ran to only four pages or so in the magazine, one must assume that De Quincey is referring to his own sheets rather than magazine sheets (of sixteen pages).

15. See 24 October, 1822, note 5.

16. Curwen Island, or Belle Island, on Windermere was blockaded by Roundheads for ten days during the Civil War. No such article was ever published.

18 John Bull, an arch-Tory weekly, considered something of a scandal-sheet at this time, with a large circulation (see Gray/1982, pp.318-21). (Not to be confused with the monthly John Bull referred to in 16 June, 1824, note 2)

19. The quintessentially political nature of the periodicals of the age is too well chronicled elsewhere for me to have to elaborate on the subject here. The professed political neutrality of the London was itself of course something of a deception: the tone of many of its articles (reviews included), not to mention the editorial "Lion's Head", bears a combative or defensive imprint traceable to an ideological nexus - anti-Blackwood's and anti-Quarterly, etc. The magazine's positive political nature, liberal, of a type, certainly, was never obtrusive, however, except when the like of Hazlitt was writing for it. Independent comment on the London shows that De Quincey may have had a point in his letter. "I have myself always considered the London Magazine as inferior to Blackwood's", writes one correspondent to the New European Magazine in October, 1823, "There is a manly strength and vigour in Blackwood, which, with one or two exceptions, is never displayed in the London, whose forte is lightness and ease" (quoted from Chilcott/1972, p.157). In the semiotic battleground of 1820's periodical writing, feminised liberality was more neuter than neutral in the face of an apparently prevalent virile masculinity.

De Quincey took particular pride in his abilities as an expounder of political economy, though how much this helped sell copies of the London is a matter of debate (see 18 March, 1824, and 29 April, 1824, note 6). He came to regard himself as the economics correspondent for whichever periodical he was writing. See Tave/1966 for a useful examination of what he calls the "anomalous" position of De Quincey's political economy - an ultra-Tory writing as a Utilitarian - and his "failure of imagination" in politics (p.21-22, and passim). Baxter/1990 (Chapters 5 and 6) subjects the phenomenology of this to close scrutiny...and emerges with a writer struggling
to reify tropes of the self as much as trying to make sense of the politico-economic context of his age.

John Taylor, writing to his brother in February, 1822, was to note some advice he had been given by a London contributor: "to insert temporary political Essays in the Mag. will not be so well - It would recommend the sale he thinks but not improve the respectability of the Work - He advises all such Articles as belong to Political Economy on principle to be admitted [...] perhaps he is right" (Matlock/Box 3592; no.4). Taylor was to embrace such advice with increasing enthusiasm as the 1820's wore on.

20. There is no accurate figure for Blackwood's circulation available for this period. We know, however, that in 1828 it was around 6,000/7,000 rising to 8,000 in 1831, so De Quincey's estimate might be a conservative one.

21. Rent for Newbon and Mrs. Benson notwithstanding, Hessey was able to report, with some relief, to John Taylor, that he had "recd a large packet of matter from De Quincey & a long letter which I will not trouble you with at present - He has corrected the two Articles, Malthus and Macbeth" (23 September, 1823: Rollins/1948, vol.1, p.448). "Malthus" and "On the Knocking at the Gate in Macbeth" were published together as "No.II" of the "Notes from the Pocket-Book..." in the London for October, 1823. The Macbeth essay quickly served to reinforce De Quincey's celebrity. At a dinner party attended by De Quincey, his friend Charles Lamb remarked to Julius Hare, '"Do you see that little man?' (pointing to De Q.), 'Well, though he is so little, he has written a thing about Macbeth better than anything I could write'" (Lucas/1905, vol.II, p.69).

65. TO J. A. HESSEY

[Fox Ghyll]

Sunday night, October 12, - 1823.

My dear Sir, - I have not yet made my appearance in London;
the fact is, I cannot yet command the money to travel with; the pressure upon me, though now nearly at its close, becoming far keener as the few arrears I still have become of longer standing. - On coming to London, I shall stay about 6 weeks or 2 months; shall then accompany a party of friends to Dresden, and perhaps to Vienna: and of course shall be in London again on my return.\(^1\) - At Dresden I shall hope to be a more energetic correspondent of the Mag. than I have ever been able to be during this year of torment and distraction. Not but I have matter enough here and everywhere, if I could ever have obtained a few month's respite from the infernal arrears of past years that have hitherto pressed upon me so formidably. However the library at Dresden will afford me advantages that I much want at this time.

My case at present is this as respects our transactions. - So far as I could calculate, Mr. Newbon will have received about £20:\(^2\) if so, I still owe him £26.13. - This sum I am laboring to borrow: if I succeed (God knows whether I shall), in a few days I will remit it. Meantime I have afloat - 3 bills for £30 - for £10 - and for £25: The two first of these I am laboring to provide for by works for the Mag.* [f/n. *On parting with you, I believe it was agreed that I might write £28 per week; but no number of weeks was specified. - However at present I have hardly written so much a month, I believe.\(^3\)] - The third and last I expect to meet out of private funds which will fall due about that time. Now the 1st of these (i.e. the £30) fell due on Thursday last: it was a Prom. Note in favor of Mr. White of Whitehaven for £30 - at 6 weeks after Date.\(^4\) Finding myself however utterly unable to meet it in time, - I wrote to him requesting that it might not be presented until the same day in the following week. In part of provision for this I send you now 3 letters containing the final close of the Free-masonry Art. - it is the Appendix: and is the depositary of all the Episodes - or Excursuses - which in the original are improperly thrust into the body of the work.\(^5\) It is prodigiously abridged: but contains every iota of
the facts and arguments in the orig. - The remainder of my articles ought to be sent off by Tuesday morning's post: but unfortunately on that day we have no post. I must therefore wait till Wednesday morning's post. But, accordg. to the usual course, a bill due on Thursday will not have left London until Friday night: - ergo, in the event of your finding the articles of due quant. and of that quality suited to your purpose, perhaps you will (on the receipt on Friday) do me the favor to send up the money to the Bank. - Let me re-<?

I have missed a sheet, if not two, of Memoranda on Polit. Econ. - At your leisure I wish you would see if they have got into the MSS. sent last. Being sent off in a great hurry it is just possible. Yet, not having had leisure to examine very accurately, possibly I may be mistaken.

[T. De Q.]

[Endorsed by De Q. on cover: No.3) Private.]

Addr: J.A.Hessey Esqr./93 Fleet Street/London.
MS: Beinecke Library, Yale University. Osborn Collection, MS Vault File.

1. Beyond his own unreliable statements on the subject of foreign travel, there is no evidence to suggest that De Quincey ever travelled on the continent. We know that he planned trips abroad on a number of occasions (see Jordan/1962, pp.207 and 273, for Spain and Germany). We also know that he visited his daughter Margaret in Ireland in 1858 (not 1857, as previously assumed - see letter in Japp/1890, pp.414-15, which can only be dated 1858). Other than this, however, there is an element of mystery, or, more accurately perhaps, mystification, about his references to journeys abroad. He mentions being "called over to Germany" and a subsequent "return from Dresden" in the early 1830's (5 April, 1833: Boston Public Library/Mss. Acc.28). Again, he refers, to his return from a "business" trip to Boulogne in 26 October,
1824 below (which as Lindop/1981 notes, was "a common refuge for English debtors" - p.275).

Perhaps strangest of all was the story he told his American publisher, J. T. Fields in 1852. "De Quincey", Fields recounted, "described to me a visit he once made with the Professor [John Wilson] to Paris [...] 'We were sitting in the theatre together', said De Quincey, 'when to my surprise a quarrel arose between my companion and a stranger [...] who became so obnoxious that [...] the Professor closed both the little Frenchman's eyes'" (Mrs. Fields/1889, p.462). The detailed nature of the story makes one reluctant to dismiss it as a fabrication, though such it must have been. Wilson told a parallel story, with variations, in 1848. Here he was "ignominiously mauled" in a "theatre fracas" in Wales, immediately after which he and De Quincey "made their acquaintance" (Emerson/1973, p.220). De Quincey evidently elaborated on the story by adding that until that occasion, "though they were at Oxford together, they had never met [but] travelling in Wales [he] had arrived at an inn, where he learned that a gentleman lay sick & sore with his wounds" (ibid., p.536). It was Wilson, who had "paid attentions to a country girl, at a theatre" and had been subsequently "mauled" by her "lover & his friends" (ibid., p.536 - Emerson may be confusing his narrators here [he set down the two versions on separate occasions] - De Quincey, or Wilson, might have told the story in both instances). This is of course a very different story about how the two men met from the much more idealised one given in De Quincey's 1829 "Sketch" of Wilson (M/V, pp.262-63). Here the setting is the genteel study at Wordsworth's Allan Bank, and the moment one of "earnest conversation". (The year was 1808 according to De Quincey, seven years before what is generally taken to be his second tour of Wales, and six years after the first. He attended Oxford - irregularly - from 1803 to 1808. Swann/1934 notes that during his Oxford vacations, Wilson, whose career at the university coincided with De Quincey's, "engaged in long tours
of the British Isles" - p.25. De Quincey's exact movements during this period are sometimes vague enough to make it possible that he revisited Wales.

If there had been any talk in 1823 of continental tours, it probably involved John Wilson again, or perhaps even Edward Quillinan (see previous letter, note 10, para. 4), a recent member of the Wordsworth circle and frequent traveller abroad (his former father-in-law, Sir Egerton Brydges, spent much of his time in Geneva). From references in ?1822 (52/II) we know that De Quincey and Quillinan were on friendly terms. It may be, though, that De Quincey was simply indulging in wish fulfilment: Vienna and Dresden would offer large libraries and good stocks of classical and German texts. Had he needed to know more on the subject, De Quincey could hardly have overlooked a recent article in the British Review, "Public Libraries of Paris and London", which also contained references to works on German libraries (vol.XX, December, 1822, pp.466-74 - It immediately preceded a review of the Confessions). He was still gnawing away at the prospect in the 1850's; this time "planning" a visit to Paris (Japp/1891, Memls., vol.II, p.235).

2. Newbon, De Quincey's former London landlord (see previous letter).


4. Mrs. Blakeney, whose agent White was, must have regretted bitterly the non-sale of Fox Ghyll (10 April, 1823, note 3). The £30 was still unpaid a month later: "I was not aware that the £30 bill had not been paid [...] I had never relied on [Taylor and Hessey] for the £30 [but looked to another] quarter" (De Quincey to John White, 13 November, 1823: Berg Collection). See also 19 November, 1823.

5. See previous letter, note 2. The final instalment of the article was given the title "Conclusion of the Historico-Critical Inquiry into the Origin of the Rosicrucians and the Free-Masons/Appendix" (London, vol.IX, June, 1824, pp.652-62; M/XIII, p.429ff). The bulk of the earlier parts had examined
the historical development of Rosicrucianism and Freemasonry; the "Appendix" included refutations of previous "hypotheses" on the subject.

6. Unknown portion of letter cut away; probably two or three lines.

7. De Quincey might mean his own notes rather than the "Notes", which, beyond that on Malthus (in the October number), didn't include such a piece; unless the reference is to the "Vulgar Errors" (see previous letter) or the "Measure of Value" (London, December, 1823).

66. TO [J. A. HESSEY]

[Fox Ghyll]

Tuesday night October 21, 1823.

My dear Sir,

Your letter dated on Friday the 17th - reached Ambleside of course on Sunday morning, but me† not until Monday [f/n.*You seem to me always to have taken for granted that letters reach me in the regular course: but, as I have only 2 servants - and those women - and up to this time nearly 3 days since I returned clear of floods and torrential rains - it is a serious expedition to get at the letters - even when I have reason for believing that any are at the post; it being 4 miles - in and out to Ambleside. My difficulties in this point are unspeakable.]; hence, Monday's post being past (for it leaves us always early in the morning) - and there being no post at all on Tuesday either to or from Kendal, this is my earliest opportunity of returning any part of the proofs. I have returned that which I suppose you most to want. I entirely disagree with you about its merits: upon those merits to which it makes any pretension there can be but one opinion, I am persuaded, in all those who look at it from the right station: it is because you are looking for something wholly different from that which it designs to give - that you represent yourself as disliking this, and that (after liking)
you came to dislike Schnackenberger.² About 6 weeks ago I asked at a party in Windermere - the opinion of a whole company on Sch. - and all, who happened to have read it, thought it excellent. Wilson, who was one, said that he had never heard 2 opinions about it. - In this tale,³ he who is offended by the sudden and inartificial (or rather unelaborate denouement) totally misconceives the purpose: the story is simply that of a farce: and what sort of a critic should we think him who seriously set himself to criticise the plot of a farce? The fable is merely a handle for the situations - (the chief of which, the Death's Head Masquerade is certainly very happily managed) - and for the fun. The whole story is purposely slight; and its very merits arise out of that circumstance.⁴ - Having said this, I dismiss it...and leave every man to his own devil: satisfied that with the public, who are a little hasty in such matters, this and others of this kind are of 50 times more useful [sic] than graver articles - unless of very rare excellence.

I do not at all complain of your rejecting the Bul. article: in fact the name is against it, and perhaps it wd. not have been a prudent speculation.⁵ In substance however it is very different fm. the majority of such essays - I mean putting its quantum meruit⁶ as Polit. Econ. out of that question. For it is readable as to style; and is historically amusing. - To-morrow I will write again: for I am shockingly hurried.

Very faithfully yours,
Thos. De Q.

Books there wd. not be much use in sending, but the Opium [?Hints],⁷ if you have an opportunity, it wd. be well to send.


1. Proofs of "The King of Hayti" for the November issue of the London (see 24 July, 1823, note, 1).
2. See 10 April, 1823, note 6.
3. "this tale" is the "King of Hayti".
4. The events of the "King" revolve around the efforts of Mr. Temple to court the daughter of a wealthy but miserly merchant, Mr. Goodchild. Its brief episodes, one for every perfunctory chapter of translation, lead eventually to the "Unexpected Denouement" (M/XII, p.416), in which Temple is finally - but hardly unexpectedly - allowed to propose to the daughter. The "Death's Head Masquerade" concerns a masked ball, which Temple attends uninvited by dressing in a skull-topped domino. The scene is perhaps notable in that it resembles the first masque scene in De Quincey's 1832 novel Klosterheim, or the Masque, which also involves the counting of guests to detect an intruder. It was very special pleading to offer the "King", plot or situations, as eminent in any way.

Compare De Quincey's idea here that the fable is a "handle for the situations" with his statement in the Suspiria De Profundis of 1845 that the "narrative resembles [...] a caduceus wreathed about with meandering ornaments [...] parasitical thoughts, feelings, digressions [without which the incidents] would be - less than nothing" (Susp./1985, p.93). Such is almost a satire on Derrida's idea of the "supplement" (in Of Grammatology), with digressive writing itself compensating for and closing a supposed lack of organic completeness in linear narrative.

5. "Bull[ion] article". Probably yet another article, to add to the plethora of De Quincey's writings on the subject in the Westmorland Gazette, about the resumption of cash payments by the Bank of England in 1819. These had been suspended by the Bank in 1797: the result of a drain of gold through the government's war demands. A Bullion Committee, headed by Peel, recommended resumption in 1819 (see Smart/1910, p.670ff). De Quincey's position in this complex matter is most directly shown by his comments in the Westmorland Gazette on the "folly of anti-restrictionists [whose] destruction of credit threatens the economic stability of the nation. [Bank-paper must never yield to] the evils of metallic currency" (W.G./3
April, 1819, p.3, col.3). As his letters show (relentlessly), De Quincey was much fonder of credit than of cash. The former could signify wealth - it was a regenerative index of one's money-raising status, as a writer or whatever - whereas the latter was a mere form of instrumentality. Of course it was assumed, a priori, by De Quincey, that credit was a floating signifier of collateral security (the "landed interest" was his favoured referent), something he only had - but was reluctant to press - as a professional writer (or perhaps through his [hidden] library). See Baxter/1990, Chapter 6; and Heinzelman/1980, p.87ff for an extensive discussion of this subject; for the covert book collection, see 29 April, 1822, no.48, note 4. The ramifications of the bullion question were dealt with at great length by De Quincey in the Westmorland Gazette. His article on the "Resumption of Cash Payments by the Bank of England" (W.G./1819, 6 February, p.3) was followed by five very long pieces on "Paper of the Bank of England" (ibid., 27 February, p.2, 20 March, p.2, 27 March, p.2 , 3 April, p.3, and 10 April, p.2), all interspersed with additional articles on financial matters. Wordsworth anyway was highly impressed. He wrote to Lord Lonsdale on 24 May, 1819, praising De Quincey's "reasonings" on the "errors of the Bullionists" (WL/1970, pp.543-44).

6. "as much as it has deserved".
7. Possibly "prints". Either way the meaning is unclear.

67. TO J. A. HESSEY

[Fox Ghyll. 19 November, 1823]

My dear Friend,

- I now send you matter equal (as you will see) to 24pp: - 4 sheets having each 3½pp: 1 having 4: 2 having 3. - They contain 1. an abstract of Prof. Horn's Sketches of Germ. Literat. fm. the French Revolution to our time: this is the crack book of mod. Germ. on this subject.¹ - I have reduced his 8vo. vol. into a few pp: the conclusion I will send in 2
days:  2. Further explans. on the subj. of Malt., which I have thrown into the shape of an answr. to Mr. Hazlitt and to the 2 private letters you sent me in the parcel.  3. A Review of the book on Educ.  - If you think this too long, there are several passages which (when it is printed) I can take out as matter for another paper (Hints on Education).

The balance of £14, after paying yourself the minus £10, will you be so good as to remit to J. White Esqr., 8 Lowther Street, Whitehaven. By this means I shall gain time, which is of unspeakable importance to me: for, his demand of £30 being for rent, he can (you know) distress, or distrain, or what is it? - A letter sent on Sat. night will of course be in Whitehaven by Monday morning.

The Papers following are 1. The Ricardo Statement.  2. A short 2nd. part of Malthus on value (1st being agt. the question he has put, the 2nd agt. his answer.)  3. 2 letters to Young Man.  4. Pocket Book &c.

I am greatly obliged to you for your expenditure in regards to Dr. D. to whom pray give my best acknowledgements of his kindness.

The Murder is a good one, as you observe, and truly gratifying to every man of correct taste: yet it might have been better; if he would have thrown in a few improvements that I could have suggested. - I speak aesthetically, as the Germ. say, of course: morally, it is a damnable concern. You must allow me to look at these things in 2 lights. Perhaps it is yet too recent to be looked at by the aesthetic critic.

Perhaps you would have the goodness to make the £14 - 15: as in 2 posts you will receive a good deal more.

I have not had occasion to use Dr. D.'s 3rd prescription as yet: but have suffered a good deal since I last wrote, tho' less than before.
In the greatest haste - (I catch a person going to Ambleside).

Most truly yours,
Thos. De Quincey.

Wed. afternoon November 19.

[Endorsed by De Q. on cover: Private, _Double_ only.]

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Addr: J. A. Hessey Esqr./93 Fleet Street/London.
MS: British Library. Add. 37215, f19.

1. See 15 October, 1821, note 3. De Quincey is referring to Horn's _Umrisse_. The "abstract" was never published. That De Quincey was well-integrated into _London_ editorial policy, can be seen from the fact that in November and December, 1823, over one-third of the magazine's articles had a non-British focus. With _Blackwood's_ the figure was less than one-tenth. (On German literature specifically, Bauer/1953, p.294, notes that between 1820-25 the _London_ published 10 more articles, amounting to over one-hundred pages, than _Blackwood's_.)

2. Amongst the usual business news Hessey was passing on to Taylor in a letter dated 20 October, 1823, were some details about a letter received from William Hazlitt. "He writes to the Editor to claim the credit", they ran, "of having ten or more years ago made the very same replies to Malthus as De Quincey has in his _Notes_ last month [in "Malthus", _London_, October, 1823; see 26 August, 1823, note 1]. He speaks very respectfully of De Q. but says, as he has been a good deal abused for his differing from Malthus, he may as well claim the credit of priority in publishing his Opinions - they exactly coincide with the Opium Eater's" (Rollins/1948, vol.II, p.450). Hessey noted with some pleasure that Hazlitt had done him "a great Service by sending" the letter, which he could use to "fill up the Lions Head" (ibid.). The letter duly appeared in the November "Lion's Head".

Hazlitt's charge was of course that De Quincey had plagiarised him, even if he opened his letter by explicitly
denying that he wanted to raise any such accusation. First knowledge of it reached De Quincey early in November, when he received the latest issue of the London. Another open letter to the magazine was soon penned: "I observe a letter from Mr. Hazlitt - alleging two passages from the 403d and 421st pages of his 'Political Essays' [an 1822 reprint of earlier articles] as substantially anticipating all that I had said" ("Lion's Head", December, 1823: dated "Westmorland, November 4, 1823" - both Hazlitt's and De Quincey's letters are in M/IX, p.20ff). De Quincey admitted one part of the charge - that Hazlitt had "anticipated" him on the subject of "geometric and arithmetic values" (M/IX, p.23). The other overlap, concerning Malthus's views on perfectibility, he chose to find "not equally clear" (ibid.). Semantics apart, and with one or two slight differences in logic, the second anticipation also stands. It was, as Lindop/1981 suggests, probably more a matter of Hazlitt's views being an indivisible "part of De Quincey's mental furniture" than deliberate plagiarism (p.267). Hazlitt's pugnacity was too well known for De Quincey wilfully to toy with it. In his later references to his antagonist, De Quincey tried to offer a balanced judgement on the subject. Ultimately, though, he found Hazlitt to be a man whose thoughts "were of the same fractured and discontinuous order as his illustrative images - seldom or never self-diffusive; and that is a sufficient argument that he had never cultivated philosophic thinking" (M/V, p.232 - 1848). It was of course not a fair assessment of the writer.

Julius Hare was to add an ironic afternote to the affair in the 1840's, when referring to De Quincey's "Malthus" rather than Hazlitt's "Essays", he noted that the basis of Malthus's hypothesis had been undermined "by the great logician of our times in one of the Notes from the Pocketbook of an English Opium-eater" (Hare/1848, p.55).

3. De Quincey's "Education. Plans for the Instruction of Boys in Large Numbers" appeared in the London in April and May, 1824. It was a review of Matthew Davenport Hill's Plans for
the Government and Liberal Instruction of Boys in Large Numbers: Drawn from Experience (London, 1822). The two men met not long after the publication of the articles, and although De Quincey was to call the legal reformer Hill (1792-1872) "a sad Jacobin" (see below, 24 February, 1825), they established a long-standing friendship. Hill's educational system, the "Hazlewood System", was in fact a radical one. That it appealed to De Quincey again reveals his somewhat surprising apparent utilitarian sympathies, as it dealt with "the whole man with a reference to his total means of usefulness and happiness in life." (M/XIV, p.12). Social control as much as political freedom was an obvious corollary of this, radical intentions or not.

Given the overt utilitarian nature of Hill's system, it isn't surprising to find that the educationist went on in 1826 to become one of the founding members of the Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge. (De Quincey published his "Milton" in the S.D.U.K.'s series The Gallery of Portraits, 1832-34 - probably 1832, not 1838 as given in Masson). See also Hill/1878, passim; Lindop/1981, p.271; Smith/1974; and M/XIV, pp.9-12).

4. See 12 October, 1823, note 4.

5. The idea for the "Ricardo Statement" was later to be transformed into "The Services of Mr. Ricardo to the Science of Political Economy" (London, vol.IX, March, 1824, pp.308-10 - see 10 April, 1823, note 5). It was probably conceived shortly after Ricardo's death in September, 1823, an event which "touched" De Quincey like "a private affliction" (March, 1824 paper, p.308; M/IX, p.37). He mentioned the latter to Hessey when he wrote to him on 9 November, 1823: "I have just learned a fact which absolutely overwhelmed me with grief, the death of Ricardo. On some accounts, which hereafter I will explain to you, this event is one which to my dying day I shall never think of without a pang of sorrow and some degree of self-reproach" (Sotheby's, 8-9 June, 1903/Lot 598). The "self-reproach" probably indicates De Quincey's sense of his
having failed an intellectual father-figure by not more actively underwriting his work. (See following note.) Ricardo's innovations stood very uneasily beside De Quincey's apparent plagiarisms. (See also 23 December, 1823, note 1.)

6. "Measure of Value" (London, vol.VIII, December, 1823, pp.586-88; M/IX, p.32ff). It had as its sub-heading, "To the Reader. - This article was written and printed before the author heard of the lamented death of Mr. Ricardo". The "1st" was "Malthus", in the October number, the article which had sparked off Hazlitt's letter (note 2).

7. See late May/mid-June, 1823, note 1. Taylor and Hessey had perhaps abandoned the "Letters" (in July) with some relief. In its October, 1823 issue the New European Magazine (vol.III, p.298) had commented, "the Opium Eater seems reviving, which is certainly not a little requisite, for his 'Letters to a Young Man whose Education had been neglected', were just as dull as any thing I should wish to see in a Magazine: the magic prefix of 'by the Opium Eater', served as a gilding to the pills, and so it was swallowed; but without such a recommendation, no sane Editor would have willingly taken them. His paper on 'Walking Stewart' ['Notes...', September, 1823] was very good".

8. The "Notes from the Pocket-Book..." were to run until December, 1824. The Blackwood's contributor William Maginn (1794-1842) may have had De Quincey's "Pocket-Book" in mind when devising a title for his own Edinburgh miscellany, "Note-Book of a Literary Idler" (Blackwood's, June, August and November, 1825). (See 16 June, 1824, note 2, for further details about the relationship between Maginn and De Quincey.)

9. Dr Darling (see 27 December, 1821, note 4).

10. The "Gill's Hill tragedy". On 24 October, 1823 John Thurtell (b.1794), a manufacturer from Hertford, shot, and cut the throat of, William Weare, a solicitor. He and two associates tried to hide the weighted body in a pond distant from the scene of the murder. Thurtell had previously lost a considerable amount of money to Weare during a gambling
session, and had deferred his revenge until the two men were together on a hunting trip. The crime, replete with its symbols of "respectability", treachery and violence, was one of the most written-about cases of the year. Thurtell's articulate defence and easy bearing made a strong, favourable public impression. He was subsequently found guilty of the murder after two colleagues turned King's evidence, and was hanged at Hertford on 9 January, 1824. (See M/XIII, pp.43-45; CL/vol.3, p.16.)

With his lifelong interest in crime, and his critical experience of reviewing the more sensational trials of his age for the Westmorland Gazette, De Quincey would have read the reports of this one with avid interest. (The Gazette would in fact have served him well with the case: it boasted in January, 1824 that "the conclusion of the trial [was] circulated in the Westmorland Gazette sooner than in many of the London papers" [LC/1865, p.57]). His immediate if cautious view of it as potential raw material for writing shows just how keen the interest was.

Black/1991 offers a good discussion on murder as artwork in the nineteenth century. He shows how the Kantian concept of aesthetic sublimation was taken to its logical conclusion by writers like De Quincey. In treating murder as an aesthetic subject, Black argues, De Quincey was offering a "sustained satiric critique of a philosophical tradition epitomized by Kant that consistently assumed a coherent, nonproblematical relation between ethics and aesthetics" (ibid., p.15).

The moral/aesthetic discord in De Quincey's letter shows that he hadn't entirely sorted out the problem of textual presentation. In his article "On Murder Considered As One of the Fine Arts" (Blackwood's, vol.XXI, February, 1827, pp.199-213), he nonetheless has his narrator adhere to his own original opinion about the Thurtell case. "At first I was myself carried away by the general enthusiasm [but] his style is as hard as Albert Durer, and as coarse as Fuseli [...]

There was something *falsetto* in the style of Thurtell" (ibid., pp.212-13; M/XIII, pp.44-46).

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68. TO WILLIAM WORDSWORTH

[Fox Ghyll, 21 December, 1823]¹

My dear Sir,

I feel so much pain at not having been able to express my sense of the favor you did me in calling - that I think it right to explain that the load of labor, under which I groan, has continued to make it impossible for me to get out for one half hour even (excluding one afternoon that I went over to Town End for a book).² - When I am not utterly exhausted, I am writing: and all is too little; so unproductive as to quantity is such uncongenial labor. - Mere correction of proofs indeed, and corresponding with London on business, is almost enough to fill up my time: for, if all that I have lately written - were published at once, it is a literal fact that I should *more* than fill the London Mag. myself. - Tuesday, - to my relief in one point though to my great embarrassment in another, there is no post: and I shall therefore have it in my power to pay my respects to you if you are at home.³

I understand that Mr. William Jackson was so good as to call with you about 3 days ago.⁴ If you see him, I wish that you would be so kind as to let him know in what way I am situated. To-morrow however, if he is in the neighbourhood, I shall endeavour to make my excuses to him personally.

I would not have troubled you with this account of my own private affairs, but for the consciousness of the strange appearance which my behaviour in this particular must otherwise wear.

I am, my dear Sir,

Most faithfully yours,

Thos. De Quincey.

Sunday evening.

I believe that in 2 or 3 days I may be under the
necessity of going to London: which I mention beforehand, in case <you> should have any letters or other commands for me. 5

MS: Dove Cottage. WLL/De Quincey, Thomas/53.

1. Jordan/1962 (p.329) conjecturally dates this letter 22 December, 1823. Given its evident connection with the next letter, which is dated 22 December, 1823 (Sotheby's, 8-9 June, 1903/Lot 599 - Jordan quotes from a later catalogue of Francis Edwards), his surmise seems valid. Since "Sunday evening" would have fallen on the 21 December in 1823, however, I have given it this date (assuming that De Quincey has been vague about the "3 days" and "3 nights" in each case). The comment about filling the London, and the mood of grim despair fit this period well.

2. Town End was the area of Grasmere in which Dove Cottage stood (the name of the house is a later invention). It had become little more than a book-depository to De Quincey by 1823.

3. There is no record of the visit having been returned. See Jordan/1962, pp.295-6 for details of De Quincey's reclusiveness at this period. During his first appearance in the Noctes of Blackwood's in October, 1823, "The Opium-Eater" when asked "how's Wudsworth?", replies "I have not seen him since half past two o'clock on the 17th of September" (vol.XIV, p.486); suggesting that the relationship had become a formal one.

4. William Jackson (1792-1878), the "old friend" in the next letter, son of Thomas Jackson, former rector of Grasmere. He officiated at De Quincey's wedding in 1817 and now had a living at Whitehaven (see Jordan/1962, p.301). He is frequently mentioned in the letters of William and Dorothy Wordsworth.

5. He didn't leave Fox Ghyll for London until June, 1824, but, as the next letter shows, may have thought he would be safer
in the south than in Westmorland, where there was relentless pressure for rent.

69. TO J.A. HESSEY Sale Cat. Extract

[Fox Ghyll, 22 December, 1823]

This is likely to turn out a prodigious evil to me—an evil beyond all calculation. For this bill's returning being an Ambleside one and from the circumstances attending it—will oblige me to leave the country without delay; whether—or in what direction—I hardly know; for I have not half a crown disposable for travelling; not to mention that, this opium, to which I have necessarily resorted to enable me to bear loss of sleep—exertion—thro' accumulation of care and wretchedness. I am scarcely able to crawl... I will never give another bill as long as I live. During the last 2½ months I have never set my foot out of doors—I have refused to see every soul who called (3 nights ago I was 'not at home' to Wordsworth and an old friend whom I had not seen for 5 or 6 years).

[T.De Q.]


1. See previous and following letters. The promissory "bill" mentioned in this letter probably relates, directly or indirectly, to rent for Fox Ghyll. No doubt John White, the owner's agent, was threatening to put a distraint warrant into force; a possibility mentioned by De Quincey in 19 November, 1823.

2. De Quincey might mean Westmorland rather than Britain. In the event, as Eaton/1936 puts it, "the necessity for flight was obviated. He became ill instead" (p.295).
70. TO J. A. HESSEY

[Fox Ghyll]

Tuesday evening. Decr. 23. [1823]

My dear friend, — I take advantage of a person passing by our house (a very rare occurrence) to forward this Introduction to the Ricardo art. which will be enough to awaken some attention to it, even if any accident should interfere with the art. itself reaching you by the same post.¹ I speak of this as possible, simply because on yesterday morning we found the utmost difficulty in catching the post which passes thro' Ambleside fm. Hawkshead — never very regularly, but now in a most capricious way — sometimes at ¾ p. 6 — sometimes 6 — sometimes 7. And over and above the enormous difficulties of the road — with no soul in the house but women and children, nor a man to be had — if we were perishing (our nearest neighbours being an old woman and her daughters) — my wife's watch being in London, we have no means whatever of measuring time except my guess.² That I have hitherto guessed accurately, is odd enough: but the difficulties are now much increased from the time for setting off being so far before day-light. — 3 or 4 sheets we shall carry over in the morning: — I am to learn to-morrow, and not before, abt. my chance of procuring the money. In the hope that you may have procured a delay of a few days, I will send what I get with the next morning's (i.e. Thursday's) parcel.³

This Introduction I have just written for the occasion: it is quite correct, tho' sent off under such a sudden summons. — I think that this much wd. be a proper advertisement of the article, which at this time will certainly command some interest.⁴

Yours most sincerely,
Thos. De Quincey.

Do not forget my request — that you would, if but by a single line, let me know the fate of the bill.

¹
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⁴
1. It is difficult to see exactly what De Quincey is referring to here. It may be that this is a piece of writing which relates to the "Ricardo Statement" mentioned in 19 November, 1823, which perhaps remained unsent. Or it may simply be, as suggested in the final paragraph, that it was literally to be some sort of "Lion's Head" "advertisement" (no such piece ever appeared in this section of the magazine). It seems unlikely to be the "Advertisement" prefixed to the April, 1824 article, "Dialogues of Three Templars on Political Economy, chiefly in Relation to the Principles of Mr. Ricardo", since, according to 20 February, 1824, the dialogue form was a post-Christmas invention. Whatever the case, nothing on Ricardo appeared in the London until "The Services of Mr. Ricardo" in the March, 1824 number.

2. In a letter of 7 March, 1824 to Hessey, De Quincey revealed that he had pawned the watch: "I have been obliged to sacrifice my wife's watch and other articles of jewellery (which cost just £40) for £10.: it being now too late to redeem them; a year and nearly 2 months having elapsed" (Boston Univ. MS).

3. See previous letter. The full letter (of two pages) must have contained details about how De Quincey expected Hessey to deal with the returned bill, which the postscript shows him to have forwarded to London. An appeal was as good as anything else to provide temporary cover for his insecurity.

4. In the light of Ricardo's recent death, that is. Grief or not, De Quincey was never short of post-mortem opportunism: "should you have occasion for any autoschediastic notice of Sir W. Scott's death, or any other extempore paper"..."Hannah More, I have seen, is dying. I can furnish a sketch of her daily habits and conversations" (1832 and 1833: NLS/MS 4032, f192 and 4035, f177).
My dear Sir, - By a rare piece of good luck I received this Proof to-day - Friday Feby. 20 - being the day of its arrival in Ambleside: and, in consequence of the letter which accompanies it, I send it back on the same day under circumstances of peculiar difficulty in a situation where no person can be hired to go [on] an errand to Ambleside - nearer than at Ambleside itself.2 - I am greatly concerned at the misconstruction which you have put on my long silence, and cannot but feel some surprize that you did not take it for granted that I must have been ill. Still more surprize, and then deepest concern, I feel at your supposing it possible that I could mean to "leave you in the lurch" - as you say under any circumstances, and even if I thought that I had anything to complain of: whereas, on the contrary, I felt your conduct to be in the highest degree kind and liberal.3 - The cause of my silence is simply this - that, from the morning on which I last wrote to you - (I think Xmas day) - I began to grow ill; and for one good 40 days was never right out of my bed - i.e. I think from Jan.2 - to the 11th of this current month. - In the early part of my illness I worked much at the Ricardo art. which I have flung into the shape of dialogues - under the title of The Templars' Dialogues on Polit. Econ. - The present Introd. is not affected by this change of form. - This art. is the best I have ever written, and is so shaped as to be capable of having many parts omitted in the Mag. - which omissions restored, it will make a large 8vo. or 2 12mo. vols.4 - I am just on the point of setting out for London: yet, for fear of accidents, I think of staying 2 days - and writing out correctly &c. the 3 1st dialogues: which it is of more importance to me than it can be to you - to have in the ensuing No. 7.<?...5>
1. The following letter (f22) makes it clear that the addressee of this one is Hessey.

2. De Quincey had three articles in the March number of the *London*: "Historico-Critical Inquiry into the Origin of the Rosicrucians and the Free-Masons" (part three); "Dream upon the Universe. By John Paul Richter" (probably a leftover from 1821 - see 17 October, 1821, note 1); and "The Services of Mr. Ricardo to the Science of Political Economy". The "proof" probably relates to one of these.

3. The reference is no doubt to the help De Quincey's publishers rendered in settling the pressing debts mentioned in the late December, 1823 letters. Rent on Fox Ghyll was still in arrears at the end of January, 1824, however, when De Quincey remarked, with some truth, to the agent, John White, "I have not ceased to exert myself for obtaining the money in any way which was open to me: but, from the great difficulties which have pressed upon me at this time, hitherto without avail" (Berg Collection). It was to be 16 February before he could "inclose the sum of Fifteen Pounds" to White, in part settlement of the debt (Berg Collection).

4. For the "Introd." - presumably "The Services of Mr. Ricardo..." - to the "Templars' Dialogues", see 19 November, 1823, note 5, and 23 December, 1823, note 1. De Quincey's textual navigation through the 1824 Ricardo pieces seems to have been serpentine in an extreme. Just how convoluted the manufacturing process was, is shown in a letter he wrote to Hessey on 12 April, 1824: "I could not return the proofs - even if they had all been thoroughly examined; for I have no copy; and the different dialogues required dove-tailing into each other. - To-morrow there is no post: but by Wednesday's post I will forward them and the MS. which intervenes and corrects" (Worcs. Coll./MS 205). The "Dialogues" never did form a separate publication.

5. Unknown portion of letter possibly cut away. It may be, as is occasionally the case, that De Quincey's signature only has been removed by an autograph collector. "No.7" is of obscure
meaning: it can't anyway refer to a particular issue of the *London*, which was numbering in the 50's at this stage. He remained at Fox Ghyll for a further three months.

72. TO J. A. HESSEY

The 3rd Dial. you will observe that I have marked to be printed *before* the 2nd if you have room for either.¹

[Fox Ghyll]

½ past 5 Thursd. morng. [18 March, 1824]

My dear Sir,

On Sunday I received notice of the irreparable calamity which had befallen me - not from your letter which did not reach me until afterwards - but in the first of those hourly evils which are now assailing me in consequence: the person to whom the bill was given being not only my very nearest neighbour - but also a poor farmer with no power to wait for his money, nor I any power to pay him or hold out any prospect ever of doing so.² In this state of things I need not say - that in taking for granted that, I am setting of for London, you are doing what (if I believed you capable of such conduct) I should call insulting my inability to do so: for too well you must be aware, from the statement which my last letter made (viz. that I had but 4 guineas - and *that*, from another part of my letter it must have appeared, pledged to other purposes) that I am chained to the stake with no power to escape.³

*This* case is now, as respect yourself, over and past (tho' as to me only beginning). It would therefore have been my wish to have uttered not one word of comment upon it. Meantime, on Saturday the 20th, a second call of the same kind will occur: a bill for £10, at 1 month, dated Feby. 18 in favor of Mr. John Simpson,⁴ will fall due on the 21st: and that being Sunday of course it will be presented on Saturday. - Now then allow me to say on what principle it is that I ask you to pay this bill. - When I sent about 13 pages to meet a
bill of £16. I had unquestionably no right to expect you to
advance the difference however small: nor would I have asked
this, if I could have obtained B. of Eng. notes for local ones
(an exchange which is here utterly impossible); or if I had
not supposed that you would have remembered (what however you
have forgotten as it appears from speaking of the difficulty
of writing up arrears) that in the last autumn a much larger
arrear, tho' I forget its exact amount, was written up as
chearfully as any other part of my labors, tho' it seemed that
another arrear was afterwards incurred, which however my
illness and other troubles had utterly obliterated fm. my
memory. This experience, I presumed, might have led you to
disregard the small balance in this case. - Waiving that,
however, as a matter which I have no right to ask except from
your courtesy, and to confine myself to the quantity actually
sent (be it what it may) - let me urge you to consider with
what fairness you call upon me - without a moment's previous
warning, or allowing me a moment for preparation - to pay up
an arrear of whose very existence I was not aware, and the
amount of which even yet has not been stated in any terms
approaching* to definite [f/n *of this you are manifestly not
aware: for at the end of your letter you say, "I have not been
able to obtain time for making out the statement, but I think
I am very nearly correct". Now you speak of an arrear on the
present acct. as being "about Twenty Pounds": and so far there
is something to guide me: but in what follows nothing at all.
For you speak of an old balance left due at the former
settlement without any hint of its amount: and you add "I
Include in this estimate the Papers which came to day": an
expression which no doubt you have adopted in haste, but which
leaves me in utter darkness as to your meaning. Is it - that
after allowing for those Papers, the balance on the present
acct. is £20?]. The harshest creditor I ever had never exacted
such a condition of me. And let me ask you what you would
yourself say to any man who, having advanced upon a series of
transactions without making any stipulation as to the time of
repayment, should step in at a moment of your utmost perplexity and insist on paying his whole demand out of a sum remitted on the faith that it was to be otherwise applied. - Good God! If you had let me know beforehand that you would detain anything I sent in order to repay yourself, - I would, on learning the amount, have instantly set about some steps for meeting your demand as soon as possible. - On transactions as extensive as mine with you, I never can acknowledge that any arrears which have accrued can be considered large: but waiving that, because (if you choose) you have undoubtedly a right to insist on the most minute accuracy, I am content never more to ask for anything beyond the most rigid justice, and I will immediately set about discharging all arrears as soon as I know their amount: but then the harshest construction of the case (and the one least favorable to myself) would not justify my being called on to produce in any other proportion than concurrently for myself and your demand of arrears; and, until I was informed of your demand, I do most energetically contend that my right was clear and indisputable to have the value of the papers sent, or else to have the papers themselves returned to me. This, I am sure, is the plain justice of the case under any circumstances: more especially as they do really stand. For these very papers sent to another quarter would have produced me all I wanted; and, if I forbore on a principle of honor to send them in that direction, it could not be fair that I was to suffer an immeasurable calamity for that forbearance. The fact is - that I have all along not only made no overtures to others in consideration of the connection I had with yourself and Mr Taylor, but have peremptorily rejected all which have been made to me: though in 1822 I had 3 offers made to me which promised to be very favorable, and since I came home in August have had one offer which was all but an offer of carte blanche to me: this has been rejected within the last 2 months; and tho' it is very possible that it might not have turned out so splendid as it appeared, yet at least it would have delivered
me instantly from all present difficulties — if, in my situation in relation to yourselves, I could have thought it honorable to accept it. All this I mention in no ostentation, as though I had made any unusual sacrifice: on the contrary, I thought it a matter of course, and should never have mentioned it — but in answer to a claim so astonishing, and so overwhelming to me as that which you have just acted on. In fact I cannot understand your letter in any point: for at the very time when you bring forward this claim you yet speak as if the mere accident of my letter being too late* [f/n *In this there must have been some great error of the post: for I have certain evidence that the letter, which had failed to go off on Sund. morng. and again on Sund. afternoon to Kendal was delivered on the Monday morning March 8 to the Ambleside P. Office at ½ past 4. It ought to have been in London on the 10th on this night at which day the bill shd. have left London.] had prevented your paying the bill, [and] refuse to send anything however far short of the bill: and in the midst of the anguish and extremities of suffering, which it was evident that this must lead to, you choose to suppose me at leisure and at ease for the task of deliberately correcting what amounts in quantity to a small volume if printed in the usual way.

This however, to give no cause of complaint against myself — and that I might not seem to act vexatiously: I have done, but how you could conceive it possible that I could do it, under the bitter calamity you were inflicting, I am at a loss to guess. — Let me say however that, from the unusual inaccuracy of the printing, the Education paper alone has cost me the whole of Tuesday after 2 o'clock P.M. (when I received it) to past midnight on that day: for the inaccuracy of the references to pages &c. obliged me to verify them all again by consulting the book; and thus upon the 2 articles I shall have lost more than an entire day — which will make the quantity sent (whatever it may turn out) less than it would have been by at least 5 pages. Now I am not willing to play
the casuist upon any trifles: but undoubtedly it is no trifle, when a man is in my state of calamity and writing as it were for his life, to be obliged by the inaccuracy of a printer to lose so serious a quantity as this: for I do in fact pay £5 at the least for the correction of these 2 papers. - Not that I can often produce so much as x 5pp. in a day; but in this case all was precomposed - either in my mind or on paper.¹⁰

I have made my statement, and have, and do again protest, most solemnly against the justice of applying either the quantity previously sent - or now sent - in the way you seem to insist upon. For all that may be sent in future I am willing to submit to such a compromise as your further and more leisurely review of the case may lead you to think reasonable. In answer to a letter of yours (on the margin of a Proof) about a fortnight or 3 weeks ago, (a letter by the way couched in terms of most unprovoked ill-temper and violence) I acknowledged your kind and liberal behaviour in the course of the period from August to Christmas.¹¹ This I said very sincerely: but surely it would have been far more truly kind to have refused the advances altogether, than to reclaim them - not in a deliberate way by informing me that on such a day you would wish to be repaid - but by coming in with a detainer upon articles sent in a moment of utter emergency and when I am too far off to attempt any remedy of the evil. - Do not interpret me as if I wrote unwillingly to meet arrears: this is your remark not mine; and I utterly deny the justice of it. For, as respects the fact, I have your own letter in proof that an arrear occurring in the autumn - which you then deliberately gave me notice you expected - was written up; and the dates will show - written up rapidly. And, as respects the reason of the thing, it is self-evident that any man would write under the very opposite feelings to those you allege; that he would write, I mean, most cheerfully to make up a £3 or £4 which had saved him from an overwhelming calamity - and most painfully to produce the same money when it must of necessity come too late to prevent or at all to heal that
calamity. - But I have done: and hereafter, on looking back at
the effect of the article concerned in this case, I will take
leave to say (without pretending to prophecy) that you will
feel some compunction at having refused the sum in question or
a much greater one for such an article - even if the justice
of the case were other than I have represented it.

I have thus asserted what I conceive to be my clear right
in this case - not with a view to the past which is
irreparable, but to the future. - Now to another subject.

I see from your having printed only one dialogue that you
are in a great mistake as to the compass and pretensions of my
work. I design it to establish a great æra in Polit. Economy:
and, if I am not myself overthrown (which I presume is not
likely to happen from such imbecile reasoners as any of the
Economists - French or English, the Malthuses and the Says)\textsuperscript{12}
it is clear that it must do so: that, which exposes the
rottenness of all other systems, must leave itself standing on
their ruins. And, with respect to my share, it is much greater
than I have chosen at present to allege: but this will appear
as the work advances. - Now, because you have not yourself
studied this science, I believe that you view it chiefly in
its relation to trade - finance - and other useful but vulgar
objects of speculation: forgetting its relations on the other
side to logic and the grander aspects of the human intellect.
Hence it happens that, whilst Mr. Colbourn has not hesitated
to insert a course of lectures from a Dentist on a subject as
vulgar as midwifery, or farriery,\textsuperscript{13} you have always been slow
to accept what must for ever establish the currency of any
periodical work - inasmuch as it treats that science - which
of all others is of most account in the higher and
Parliamentary circles - indeed generally in modern England and
France. - To this enormous misappreciation of the whole
science, I can alone ascribe it - that you are proceeding to
starve the subject by such scanty communications as you have
now printed. - 2 sheets of the Mag. monthly - will hardly get
over the ground fast enough. It will certainly extend to
100pp.; and less than 25pp. monthly will not close it in 4 months: beyond which time I suppose it would be injudicious to run. - However you are to judge of that. Meantime I think it right to mention betimes the scale of the work. - As low as 60pp. or the Mag. I might possibly reduce it: but below that - not without sacrificing essentials. - The Introductory Dial. which I now send is necessary to give it a popular air:- this and the first Dial. are purposely left a little more diffuse than the rest. But, as the reader advances and becomes acquainted with the subject, he will be more apt to complain of too much conciseness.14

I have no more to say on any subject but this:- Laying together the 2 circumstances of that intemperate and most unprovoked letter which you wrote to me about a fortnight ago - and the unfeeling and (I must call it) oppressive conduct which you have since thought proper to adopt, - I cannot fail to suppose that you have lately fallen under some misconception as to some part of my conduct towards you now or in past times: in which case it would be candid to state your complaint. Seeing no literary journals at all, I cannot know what may have been said or insinuated in relation to myself but generally I know that there is much ill-nature amongst literary men: and the very offer I mentioned above, having on one occasion been made to me in the presence of a 3rd person (who was so much a stranger to me that I had just been introduced to him 2 days before), may possibly have been the basis of some misrepresentation.15 Meantime, being conscious of nothing on that or any other occasion which at all deviated from the accustomed tenor of my conduct or conversation, I know not to what I should address my explanations; for, though it is possible that I may have been misrepresented, I cannot guess in what way that could at all interest you.

I remain, my dear Sir,

Fox Ghyll

Wednesday eveng. March 18, 1824

Very sincerely yours,

Thomas De Quincey.

N.B. If you print any more of the Templars' D. in this No., -
there is nothing in any of the dialogues now sent which can possibly require my corrections: for no serious errors are possible. - In some of the dial. which follow, where many figures occur, this is not the case: and these may undoubtedly require a good deal of correction. - Unless the Introd. Dialogue be published, it will not appear even why they are called The Templars' Dialogues: besides that this will certainly tend to popularise the subject and strip it of its severe and forbidding air to many readers.\(^{16}\) - By the way, the full title would perhaps be better expressed thus: "Dialogues of three Templars on Political Economy, chiefly in relation to the principles of Mr. Ricardo." But the running title better thus: "The Templars' Dialogues."\(^{17}\) For I devised the name for 2 uses: 1st to give all opponents &c. a quotable title, which I think should always be considered for the convenience of literature: 2nd to aid its immediate currency by giving it not only a short title (as in the former case) but also a striking and distinguishing title which would be impossible to forget: whereas "Principles of Polit. Econ." &c. is a title common to scores of books, and has nothing distinctive or rememberable in it.

P.S. I propose the following arrangement:- You will have by this post including the quant. sent on the 8th inst. about 20pp. more or less: and, but for the correction of the 2 proofs, you would have had 25 at least or 26: which quant. you will have by the next post. - By paying the £10 bill you would therefore have about £15 or £16 of the last arrears which you say are about £20:- the difference, and whatever is wanting to make up any other arrear, I engage to produce in the ensuing week. - Is it possible to object to this arrangement as not severe enough against myself? Am I not sufficiently overwhelmed already, - having no resource left under such an intolerable calamity? Or can you persuade yourself seriously that composition is so mechanic a labor as that any man could attempt to go on producing at all under circumstances so desperate, even if he were left at liberty to do so?
Addr: J.A.Hessey Esqr./93 Fleet Street/London.
MS: British Library. Add. 37215, ff22-23 - Although these two folios are catalogued separately, it is obvious that each is part of the same letter.

1. The first two "Dialogues" only appeared in the London for April, 1824, the opening one as the lead article. The second of them was very slim, less than two pages of the magazine, and opened with a piece of self-mockery, "X.[Y. Z., the instructor figure, De Quincey, of the articles], I see, is not yet come [and a few lines later] Well, X., you're just come in time", and continues with an inconclusive talk on wages (vol.IX, p.427; M/IX, pp.68-69). If De Quincey's copy was ordered the way the articles were actually printed (with "3rd Dial." following the "2nd"), then some of the "dove-tailing" mentioned in the previous letter (note 4) must have taken place. The third dialogue proper opens, "In our short conversation of yesterday" (vol.IX, May, 1824, p.547; M/IX, p.72).

2. A letter from De Quincey to Hessey of 7 March, 1824, establishes that the farmer, to whom De Quincey had given a £16 bill, was Robin Clark (Robert Clarke as he mistakenly calls him - Boston University MS). Clark tenanted the farm land at Fox Ghyll while De Quincey rented the house.

3. "I have 4 guineas here" (letter referred to in previous note). The general context to the present letter is also set by the 7 March letter: "I know not how I stand with you: but for Heaven's sake allow what I now send, which may be about - pages, to stand for this bill [...] if I find it impossible to scrape the money for my journey from any other quarter, I must write something for that purpose". Taylor and Hessey's apparent refusal to extend any more credit to De Quincey against promised copy, by now well in arrears, should be read in the light of the financial state of the publishers at this time. The London had in fact been a steady loser since the partners took it over, setting them back around £500 per year (Chilcott/1972, p.158).
4. De Quincey's father-in-law.

5. Paper notes could be obtained regionally from, amongst a number of sources, banks in Kendal, Carlisle and Whitehaven.

6. Apart from the end of the statement - De Quincey was not to be shy later of writing simultaneously for more than one publisher (whilst protesting his monogamy in each case) - there is probably an element of truth in this. Blackwood's and the Quarterly Review would no doubt have sunk past differences had he shown any real interest in them. It may well be that Knight's Quarterly Magazine, in which his translation "The Incognito" was to be published later in the year (vol.III, no.V, August, 1824), had also made overtures. Knight's was a London-based periodical, which ran from June, 1823. Consisting of reviews, translations and original writings as it did, it was just the vehicle for De Quincey's work, even if its liberal political flavour wouldn't have been immediately to his taste. Interestingly enough, the Noctes sketch that introduced The Opium Eater into the pages of Blackwood's, also contained a panegyric of Knight's, which it called "a gentlemanly miscellany" (Blackwood's, vol.XIV, October, 1823, p.487). See also 4 November, 1824.

7. In his letter of 7 March (see note 2 to current letter), De Quincey refers to the "prodigious difficulties we have in sendg. over to the post on wintry mornings [...] a great flood had arisen in the course of the night [of 6/7 March, holding up the letter for one day] which almost cut off our communication with Ambleside for some hours".

8. The April London contained the two "Templars'" dialogues, "Education" and "Kant on National Character", by De Quincey. They amounted to about 30 pages of a 110 page issue.

9. "Education. Plans for the Instruction of Boys in Large Numbers" (see 19 November, 1823, note 3). De Quincey had indeed closely keyed his review to specified sections of Hill's book.

10. See general note on printers, mid-late February, 1823, note 3. (V.R./1939-40, lists numerous errors - all none-
literals -- throughout De Quincey's writings, which probably remained uncorrected through haste or want of knowledge of source material.)

11. See previous letter. The letter of 7 March (see note 2 to current letter) opens: "A week or two ago I received a Proof from you -- containing a letter which shocked me a good deal".

12. De Quincey's unfavourable opinion of the economist Thomas Malthus (1766-1834) is shown throughout the articles he was writing at this time on political economy. Jean Baptiste Say (1767-1832), the French political economist, was damned by his nationality alone with De Quincey, who was a lifelong Francophobe. In his Principles of Political Economy, which was the text of the moment on political economy to De Quincey, David Ricardo was critical of Say on a number of points. How closely De Quincey himself had read the French economist is questionable. He would anyway surely have espoused with enthusiasm Say's notion that "Credit in general, is good, as it allows capitals to leave those hands where they are not usefully employed, to pass into those where they will be made productive" (Ricardo/1929, p.234 -- a passage singled out as an error by Ricardo). The first London "Dialogue" is dismissive of both Say and Malthus, "both ingenious writers, both eminently illogical; especially the latter" (vol.IX, April, 1824, p.354; M/IX, p.68).

13. Henry Colburn (d.1855), highly successful publisher, who ran the popular New Monthly Magazine and Literary Gazette, to the former of which De Quincey alludes here. Klancher/1987 (p.62) refers to the New Monthly as a "neoconservative" magazine which "showed great interest in what it called 'tokens of the times' [...] not national events or political cues but public attendance at Old Bailey executions or popular boxing matches". As Klancher also notes, many of Colburn's "legion critics" saw him purely as a commercial opportunist in the field of periodical publishing (ibid., p.62). The London was losing both its readership and some of its best writers to the New Monthly at this time. "Hazlitt, Patmore, Horace Smith,
and Webb [and eventually Allan Cunningham], whom [Taylor] had let go to Colburn, were all original Londoners" (Bauer/1953, p.86), tempted not just by the weakening structure of the London, but also by what Mary Russell Mitford termed Colburn's "magnificent offers" (ibid., p.42 - see also Chilcott/1972, pp.135, 149 and 157 for remarks on how the New Monthly and the London became locked in combat in the early to mid-1820's). In the light of this, one might see De Quincey's comments in his letter as themselves pointedly opportunistic. Colburn had become "that dog Colbourn" to him by 1826 (see below, 10 June, 1826, postscript).

De Quincey was being only slightly fanciful in his comments about the content of Colburn's magazines. The publisher's "Physician" (or "No Physician", according to some signatures) ran a series of articles in the New Monthly, in the early 1820's, on, amongst other things, "the tooth-ache", "animal food in general" and "the diseases of the dog-days" (Wellesley, vol.III, p.172ff, gives a complete breakdown of contents).

14. For additional material on the place of political economy in the London, see also 21 September, 1823, note 19 above, and 29 April, 1824, note 6 below. The first of the April "Dialogues" consisted of an "Advertisement", explaining why the dialogue form had been adopted, an "Introductory Dialogue", introducing the speakers and setting a context to the debate, and a "Dialogue the First/On the Elementary Principle of Political Economy" (London, vol.IX, pp.341-55; M/IX, pp.42-68). Predictably there was the usual special pleading for any shortcomings in the writing: "beauty of dialogues as dialogues [even] if my time had allowed of it - or I had been otherwise capable of producing it, would have been here misplaced" (ibid., p.341; M/IX, p.43).

The full set of "Dialogues" eventually ran to about thirty-seven pages of the London.

15. Given the close-knit, symbiotic nature - or parasitic nature in many cases - of the periodicals of the age, it is
difficult to locate exactly what De Quincey is referring to here. Word spread quickly in this environment, which thrived anyway on caricature and pseudonymous in-fighting. Misrepresentation accordingly flourished where copy was produced by the like of "X.Y.Z.", or "Incog.", or whatever (see Murphy/92 for the context to this). De Quincey's own references to publishing, in his letters, show exactly how unreliable surfaces could be (see 21 September, 1823, note 1). Possible objections from Taylor and Hessey to De Quincey's recent cameo turn in the October, 1823 Blackwood's Noctes - it wouldn't be the last time he would be mentioned there - may also lie at the root of this "insinuation". The publishers could hardly have been pleased to see a London-based creation, the "Opium Eater", flourishing in Edinburgh: "we do not like the appearance [...] of losing an Author for whom we have published" (quoted in 10 April, 1823, note 4). The immediate context of De Quincey's Noctes appearance had included a reference to the Flood of Thessaly [...] and other Poems, by B. W. Proctor (Barry Cornwall), a one-time London stalwart. He had taken the volume to Henry Colburn (see note 13 to current letter) for publication; a procedure satirised by the Noctes team: "what sort of an eater [the Opium-Eater provides the frame of reference] do you suppose Barry Cornwall? [...] I have no doubt that he carried 'The Deluge' in his pocket to Colburn, under an umbrella" (Blackwood's, vol. XIV, October, 1823, p.491).

16. See note 14. "Templar" derives from the Inner and Middle Temples of the Inns of Court in London, built on a site once occupied by the Knights' Templar. De Quincey kept terms there for some time (M/IX, p.45, note; 24 October, 1822, note 19).

17. This is how the full title was printed. The running title adopted was "The Templars' Dialogues on Political Economy".

73. TO J. A. HESSEY

[Fox Ghyll]
Sund. night - March 28, 1824.

My dear Sir,

I fear that a bill in favor of Mr. Pearson falls due about this time. I know not the amount: but little or much he is answerable for it: and therefore utmost haste I write to request that you would not pay it. I say this, because it is possible that a sum of money due to me - in about 2 months in Somersetshire may, at my request, have been paid into your hands by anticipation: and you might apply this money or part of it (according to the amount) to this purpose.

In the course of this week I hope to have in your hands the greater part of the Templars' Letters: and I will then write more fully. Meantime, if you could send me by the mail a copy of a pamphlet on Value printed for Hunter, St. Paul's C.Yd., I should be obliged to you. - It is not indispensable: but from some passages I recollect it would be of great use in showing the true nature of the perplexities which beset the subject of value.

In the utmost hurry to save the post,

Yours, my dear friend,

Thos. De Quincey.

If you happen to have Col. Torrens on the Production of Wealth, and you think that it would not add much to the carriage (i.e. if a little parcel is as dear as a big one, which sometimes is the case) perhaps you will add it. Otherwise I can add by way of Appendix or note, after coming to London, what notice may be necessary. Most unfort. this very book was sold in my sale in 1822 for a mere trifle.

If the next No. could be so managed as to admit - over and above the conclusion of 'Value', - the 4 Profits, Wages, Rent, Foreign Trade; - it would greatly assist the comprehension of the subject.

If any money has been paid into your hands on my account, and has been paid away on this bill of Mr. P.'s, - wd. you have the goodness to apprise me by a single line - since, as long as he is unaware of the bill having been paid, I may be
able to induce him to pay it. - The bill was given as an accommodation to him in return for one to me at another time: as were 2 others some time back.

Addr: J.A.Hessey Esqr./93 Fleet Street/London.
MS: Berg Collection. De Quincey MS (H).

1. See 27 November, 1820, note 3, and 29 April, 1824, note 4.
2. That is, from his mother. See 1 January, 1821, note 2 and following letter, end of note 1.
3. Untraced - See penultimate paragraph of 6 May, 1824, where De Quincey guesses that the title was "Essay on Value or Inq. into Value". The vagueness of the reference along with the fact that there were literally dozens of works around at the time with the word value in their title, makes it impossible to decide which is the relevant one. De Quincey refers to it in the first April instalment of the "Dialogues of Three Templars" - in the London about to go on sale. He notes that Ricardo's definition of value will be obscure to "M. Say - to Mr. Malthus - to the author of an Essay on Value [...] I forget the exact title; but it was printed for Hunter, St. Paul's Church Yard" (vol.IX, p.344; M/IX, p.49). R. Hunter did publish a work with the title A Critical Dissertation on the Nature, Measures, and Causes of Value, chiefly in reference to the writings of Mr.Ricardo and his followers (London), but it didn't appear until June, 1825 - perhaps this is a later version of the pamphlet De Quincey asks for.
5. See 29 April, 1822 (no.48), note 4.
6. The May "Dialogues" didn't proceed beyond the subject of value.
74. TO J. A. HESSEY
Fox Ghyll - Monday morning, April 19, 1824.
5 o'clock.

My dear Friend,

I send you inclosed the second half of the £84 bill, which in some incomprehensible way did not reach me until last night.¹ - I have indorsed it specially to you: and, as a fortnight within one day will have elapsed from the date when it comes into your hands, I presume that on my paying the discount you can do me the favor of getting it cashed: in which case I would be much indebted to you to pay two bills for me, amounting jointly to £45, which will be presented - 1. one on Wednesday April 21. for £25 in favor of Mr. Newby:² this, accordg. to my memorandum, was dated Feby. 18 at 2 months. 2. the other on Thursday April 22 for £20 in favor of Mrs. R. Fleming:³ this, by my memorand., was drawn on Feby. 19 at 2 months. I am greatly indebted to you for paying the £30 bill; and am much concerned that any time has been lost (how I know not) in giving you the means of repaying yourself.⁴ - The small balance, which will remain after the repayment of yourself and the expenses of discounting &c. and the payment of Mr. Newby's and Mrs. R. Fleming's bills, have the goodness to keep until I see you.

Now as to the Proofs and the MS., - tho' to-morrow morning is no post day from Ambleside, - I have secured a promise from a trusty person of conveying a parcel to Kendal on the evening of this day; so that it will leave Kendal by to-morrow's post. - There being no figures of importance, - it will not be necessary for me to see the proofs, if any accident should prevent my being in London in time.⁵ But this is not likely. - I am afraid you are become anxious about the delay. Meantime my anxiety is and has been greater than I can express. For I have continually anticipated that in Easter week great interruption would occur or be likely to occur to the printing. Yet, with the clear foresight of all this, such has been the perpetual and harassing interruption from a very
troublesome private business of a kind which could not be delayed, - and such the effects of my late illness, that between the two I have been reduced to this miserable dilemma: if I take no laudanum, I am in a state of semi-distraction - and cannot arrange my old thoughts, still less pursue fresh trains of thought: - on the other hand, if I take even 12 or 15 drops of laudanum - a violent indigestion comes on in 2 or 3 hours, and after that a return of bilious symptoms which often put me hors d'etat for any sort of labor. - I am anxious beyond measure to get as much published as possible in this No.: the 2nd. Dial. was printed with perfect accuracy, tho' containing some figures and symbols: these will be still less exposed to incorrectness: and therefore, if any accident shd. delay me, which is not at all likely however, - do not keep back anything for which otherwise you cd. make room.

In spite of the untoward circumstances under which I have written, the whole is - in substance - brought into the shape and arrangement which satisfy my own judgement and wishes. -

I have now a few hours' sleep to take: and therefore must hastily subscribe myself, until I see you,

Your faithful friend,

Thos. De Quincey.

N.B. The bill being drawn with the omission of the De, in which way my mother usually writes the name, - I have judged it best to indorse it in the same way.

Excuse my paper: I have none better than this grim-looking sheet.

Addr: J.A. Hessey Esqr. /93 Fleet Street/London.
PM: 21 Apr., 1824.
MS: Pierpont Morgan Library. MA 4632.

1. As the rest of this letter shows, De Quincey's diatribe to Hessey of 18 March, 1824, had obviously served its purpose: Taylor and Hessey were now re-established as his unofficial financial agents. It was something he managed to achieve with most of his publishers. The Blackwoods and William Tait ended up as ad hoc brokers of informal standing orders between De
Quincey and his numerous Edinburgh landlords and landladies. He got it down to such a fine art in the 1830's, that creditors would be given small amounts of copy to redeem as cash with the publishers. Robert Blackwood complained about the practice in a letter to De Quincey of 5 February, 1839: "in advancing your money [...] before publication [...] we do to you what we do to nobody else [...] we cannot think of contributions to our Magazine, being considered so entirely, as by you, as a means of your getting money to the precise amount, and at the particular day, you find it convenient to fix" (NLS/MS 30,007).

Under this system, copy effectively became a substitute for cash: it drew on a fixed scale of payment and simply operated as a transactional medium. There was no need of the "childish and ridiculous currency of gold and silver" here (W.G./1819, 3 April, p.3). See Heinzelman/1980 for a full discussion of the way that "the linguist" (writer) applies the "metaphorical constellation of 'economics'" as a bridging sign between his own work and the economic system that carried it (pp.10-11 - Heinzelman specifically focuses on De Quincey's work on p.88ff). Baxter/1990 (Chapter 6) sees the production of copy by De Quincey as an attempt to limit "the element of circulating capital" by substituting for it the infinite linguistic possibilities of his text (pp.179-80). De Quincey's own explanation was of course far more pragmatic: he originally wrote for the London, he asserted, "as the one sole source then open to me for extricating myself from a special embarrassment (failing which case of dire necessity, I believe that I should never have written a line for the press)" (1840: M/III, p.127).

The N. B. to this letter shows that the £84 bill was the hoped-for "sum" from his mother (see previous letter). An earlier letter runs, "By a most unhappy misunderstanding a bill for eighty guineas of the Old Bank of Bristol has been sent to me instead of being paid into your hands on my
account:- what is worse, only one half has been sent" (to Hessey, 12 April, 1824: Worcs. Coll./MS 205).

2. John Newby was a Hawkshead Miller. He is listed as a creditor in De Quincey's 1833 Omnium Bonorum (Forward/1939, p.523).

3. Mrs Roger Fleming, Ambleside dressmaker, another name on the Omnium Bonorum (previous note).

4. "On Tuesday the 13th a bill of mine for £30 in favor of Mr. J. Green will have been presented for payment [...] may I ask of you, if you possibly can, to advance that sum until you receive the second half of the 80 guinea bill" (letter of 12 April to Hessey - see present note 1). John Green was a Grasmere butcher - an 1833 Omnium Bonorum creditor (note 2). De Quincey was paying up his publishing arrears with money (at a remove) rather than writing them up with copy, as he suggested he would do in his letter of 18 March, 1824.

5. "Proofs" of the "Dialogues" for the May number of the London. The article did in fact bristle with mathematical figures.

De Quincey's proposed journey south must have become a standing joke in London by now. In his letter of 12 April (see present note 1) he remarked, "I fully expected to have been in London 7 or 8 days ago; and should have been, but for a tremendous attack of biliousness; for which, under the directions of a surgeon, I took very large doses of the blue pill: [I took] unusual quantities of exercise - in the course of which, from the extreme severity of the cold, I caught a cold."

6. De Quincey's contributions to the May London, were the "Dialogues", "Abstract of Swedenborgianism: by Immanuel Kant" (a translation), and the second part of "Education". They took up well over a quarter of the magazine, running to thirty-seven printed pages and earning him about thirty-five pounds. The opening "Dialogues" had created considerable interest, much of it evidently critical: "As for the many letters and essays on Political Economy, which have been sent us in reply
to the Templars' Dialogues, we must entreat the forbearance of their writers till our friend X.Y.Z. has more fully developed his principles. To insert their remarks now would be to anticipate several objections, which at the proper time, in the course of the discussion, will receive due consideration" ("The Lion's Head", London, vol. IX, May, 1824, p. 451).
7. The sheet is indeed a sooty-looking one.

75. TO J. A. HESSEY MS EXTRACT

Fox Ghyll

Thursday morning, April 29 - 1824.

My dear Friend, - I sent off 2 pages of MS. so as that (accordg. to my recollection) it wd. reach you on Friday April 23: 9 pages more I sent off on Sat. morning the 24th: and 2 pages more, together with the 8 printed pages, on the morning following: - the latest of these would therefore reach you on Tuesday the 27th inst.: and I have some faint hopes that even that part might be in time for the press: and with that view I expressed a wish to you in my last letter that any extra expence by which that end could be secured might be incurred and placed to my account.¹ Now, when all is over, I repeat my wish on that head. You would, I know, be very impatient - and put to horrible inconvenience. But such was the direful condition in which I stood that with every exertion I could make it was not possible for me to do more. And on the two last mornings of sending, though I sate up all night, I was so dreadfully pressed - that I had not time for one line in the way of letter, and barely time indeed for directing and sealing; so that, if it had not happened that a very long season of dry weather (which left us, by the way, the day before yesterday) had sunk the river Rotha so much as to allow a passage over some stepping-stones which a few hours' rain have now again covered for months, and had thus shortened the road to Ambleside by a mile, - but for this favorable accident my parcels would on each morning have been too late, the horse
of the post boy entering Ambleside pretty nearly in both instances with my messenger.\(^2\)

That I did not myself appear in company with my parcels — was owing, amongst other causes, to this — that a sudden demand for the Assessed Taxes\(^3\) due on April 5 absolutely took away my means of traveling. Nevertheless, I am in expectation of a small sum of money to-morrow which will enable me to set off. And I hope to be in London by Sunday or Monday. — Meantime I wish to make known to you the extent of any pecuniary engagements, and my proposals as to ways and means. [...]\(^4\)

Now as to the MS. sent, I fear that it has disappointed you by not advancing further into the heart of that science. But this, in consistency with my plan, it was impossible to manage otherwise. For, if anything were left unsettled in the question of Value, it would not have been in my power to keep my engagement of demonstrating every other law out of that single law: besides that I must have betrayed the fickleness of my plan, or rather defect of all plan, by the necessity of constantly treading backwards to the old subject of value.\(^5\) — If any reader is disappointed this month, he will be amply indemnified in the next which will carry him completely through the body of the science. — I have still a Dial. on the corrections of the Rich. Law in applying it — and on Market Value; these may occupy 5\(\frac{1}{2}\)pp., but these disposed of, and the decks cleared of the lumber which has hitherto pestered her, the vessel will then go like H--, to borrow a phrase from my nautical brother.\(^6\) Be assured of this — that though I am happy to hear that an eminent economist like Mr. McCulloch approves, yet in the teeth of all opposition I will make this — the sine qua non book to all students of Polit. Economy.\(^7\) — Tho' I have in no respect exalted Mr. Ricardo beyond what I sincerely think his just pretensions, yet the truth is — that he was very inexpert and mal-adroit in the agile management of logic. Hence, tho' he made few absolute errors, his sins of omission are very many. Not only was it no forte of his to teach and
make apprehensible, - but in many cases his very proofs and
demonstrations are defective and undeveloped.

Most truly yours,
Thos. De Q.

Do not, if you please, mention to any body my time of
arrival in London. - If my uncle, Col. Penson, - who is daily
expected fm. India, shd. call on you - have the goodness to
say generally that I was in Westmorland when you last heard
from me.⁸

Addr: J.A.Hessey Esqr./93 Fleet Street/London.
MS: Berg Collection. De Quincey MS (H).

1. These are pages of the "Dialogues of the Three Templars" -
"the" was now added to the title - for the May London.
2. The River Rothay linked Grasmere lake, Rydal Water and
Windermere, cutting Fox Ghyll off from the most direct route
to Ambleside, De Quincey's post town.
3. A property tax, on house, servants etc.
4. There follows a lengthy breakdown of De Quincey's finances
which causes one to wonder how De Quincey managed to get any
credit at all from traders in the closely-knit Westmorland
community to which he was attached. Out of six outstanding
bills, he noted that he was prepared to pay four, amounting to
£66. These related to Mr. Cooper (untraced); John Simpson (De
Quincey's father-in-law); Mr. Newton (an Ambleside wine
merchant); and Miss Preston (an Ambleside haberdasher). The
last two figure in De Quincey's Omnium Bonorum (Forward/1939,
p.523). Two other bills concerned George Pearson (an Ambleside
Grocer), who, De Quincey maintained, had "grossly swindled"
him "and compelled" him "to fling the affair into a lawyer's
hands" (see also 27 November, 1820, note 3 - De Quincey must
have lost at law, if he really took things that far, since
Pearson was to be another Omnium Bonorum creditor). Hessey was
expected to clear any amount outstanding, after he had used up
the £9 left out of the £84 from De Quincey's mother (see
previous letter), from his own pocket. This amount, De Quincey
maintained, he would settle when he arrived in London, "by writing up your account. And you need not fear any dilatoriness in me now: for I come to London for no other purpose".

5. De Quincey's "Dialogues" didn't advance at all beyond the subject of value. For readers' criticisms, which Hessey may well have pointed out to De Quincey, see previous letter, note 6.

6. "nautical brother", Richard ("Pink"), who had spent most of his life at sea (see Lindop/1981, p.276). For the general context to political economy in the London see 21 September, 1823, note 19, and 18 March, 1824 - letter and note 14. Both Bauer/1953 and Chilcott/1972 maintain that the protracted demise of the London - dead on its feet, they assert, by 1823, but not finally buried until 1829 - is attributable to its slow drift towards a materialist utilitarian stance. The inclusion of lengthy articles on political economy is cited as a contributary reason for its loss "of all significance as a discriminating review of contemporary literature", which, as far as it goes, is at least a reasonable piece of logic (Bauer/1953, pp.243-44; see also Chilcott/1972, pp.152-53).

Whilst, though, it might have become "dull" by some standards, the magazine continued (by Bauer's and Chilcott's own accounts) to attract an average readership of around 2,000 per issue, as it had always done. Note 6 to the preceding letter shows how much interest could be instantly created by a feature on the "dismal science" of political economy. An "audience overwhelmed by the uncontrollable economic forces and baffling technological transformations" of the age was in fact waiting to be instructed (Klancher/1987, p.44). All the London had really lost was its high-cultural status...in the eyes mainly of its earlier contributors. Charles Lamb perhaps summed it up in 1823 when he reflected, "I cannot but think the London drags heavily" (Lamb Letters/1935, vol.II, p.385). Another writer, Thomas Lovell Beddoes (1803-49), was to be more specific: "Taylor has lately refused a paper of Proctor's
& one of Reynolds's, & kept back Darley's reply to Terentius Secundus, for the purpose of introducing that thrice-double demoniac the oeconomical [sic] opium-eater. Exit London" (letter of April, 1824: Beddoes/1894, p.24). And according to Blackwood's, in one of its Noctes sketches, De Quincey's "original genius and consummate scholarship speedily effected the damnation of Taylor and Hessey's Magazine" (vol.XVIII, October, 1825, p.508). In this caricature, however, the London began to ail because "All the other contributors looked such ninnies beside him, that the public burst out a-laughing in the poor Magazine's face" (ibid.). Blackwood's concludes that "Political Economy is not a subject for a Magazine", not because it is a science, but because "Its principles should be explained at once - brought continuously before the mind. They may be applied to important subjects of trade and polity in a Magazine, as they often have been in yours, North - but the elements of the science must be given in a volume. The Opium-eater frittered away his philosophy of that science in detached papers that produced no effect on the public mind" (ibid.). De Quincey's letters show that he would have been entirely in sympathy with these sentiments.

7. J. R. McCulloch (1789-1864), political economist, editor of The Scotsman (1818-19) and prolific writer. De Quincey later showed little respect for either his views or his character, though such an attitude might have developed after John Wilson labelled the economist a self-plagiarist, in 1826 (see Tave/1966, pp.32-35). Ironically, McCulloch praised De Quincey's "Dialogues of Three Templars" in his The Literature of Political Economy (London, 1845, p.33). They are, he wrote, "unequalled, perhaps, for brevity, pungency, and force. They not only bring the Ricardian theory of value into strong relief, but triumphantly repel, or rather annihilate, the objections urged against it".

8. Thomas Penson, his mother's brother - whose surname De Quincey bore as his middle name - had been serving in the army in India. See Japp/1891, Memls., vol.II, p.128ff, for details
of Penson's return to England. De Quincey was expecting to inherit from him and didn't want to appear before him as a debtor (see following letter).

76. TO J. A. HESSEY

Fox Ghyll
5 o'clock Thursday morn. May 6, - 1824

My dear Sir,

Your last letter, dated April 27, reached me on Thursday the 29th. Perhaps you may already have forgotten in your hurry of business, that in this letter you charge me with "cruel delay" &c. Now on my own account, and putting your interest altogether out of the question, you were aware that I was exceedingly anxious to have as much of the Dial. printed as possible. Giving me credit therefore for all possible disregard of your interest or feelings, still you must reasonably, on that hypothesis even, have concluded that something extraordinary had occurred. Secondly, I expressly said that "something had happened" or words to that effect in a letter preparing you for the delay as a thing then inevitable. Thirdly, the 2 parcels sent off on the 26th and 27th were alone sufficient evidence that something extraordinary had occurred - containing, as had never before been the case, not one line of private letter (except that a few words were added on the outside of the first of these). Fourthly, these few words did what was possible to make the case as manageable as the circumstances allowed - by leaving it to your discretion, accordg. to your knowledge* [f/n * "Your Knowledge" says a hasty logician: why surely he knew himself how much time remained in the month of April. Not so: I knew that so many hours were left, but not virtually how many: for that can be known only by him who knows what comparative state of advance the Mag. is in.] of the time left, to print off the proofs sent without further waiting. Having apprised you on the 26th that this was possible without doing any important
injury, - I then felt myself at ease in sending on the 27th a corrected copy accordg. to an arrangement which seemed the best if time allowed of it - but which was not essential or imperative if time did not allow of it. It was so far enjoined by the revised order that, sub conditione of all other things' allowing it, I had adjusted what followed to that arrangement; yet not so adjusted it, but that all would move in good order - even if the old arrangement were retained. Thus I had done all that could be done, and had sate up 2 nights (of the 25th and 26th) in succession - and many before them, to repair the effects of my inevitable delay: which delay on 3 grounds already recited (the 1st an à priori ground, the 2nd and 3rd à posteriori) you could not but perceive, on a consideration, had been inevitable. 2 -

What was it? - I believe that few men who have ever lived can have conducted a process of argument demanding such unremitting vigilance of logic and attention as the Dialogues which I composed last month at the same time when they were contending with such a case as mine. From the peculiarities of my case in law, - I stood so situated that unless a long and most elaborate statement were drawn up for the opinion of counsel - hastily transmitted to London - and every step taken with the utmost rapidity for filing a bill in chancery and obtaining an injunction, - I had no prospect but that of quitting England immediately - in order to avoid a series of nearly a dozen arrests which must have proved fatal to some important pecuniary interests. My mother is 70 - my uncle (unmarried) 60: and, on the first hearing of these arrests, my interests would have suffered most deeply in that quarter - in which already I meet with so little candor or charity of interpretation that in cases which admit of the easiest explanation it is all in vain for me to offer any to judges so prejudiced and whose ears are so deeply abused by interested misrepresentations. Independently of this, I could not have asked any man in decency to be my bail in so many cases involving so large an amount of money: and, unless relieved in
chancery (which I am assured I shall be), in a court of justice I must have been a sufferer in a very large sum — even exclusively of costs. All this, at the very moment when I ought to be floating out of my long embarrassments. — And if, to avoid all this, I resolved to quit England — How? I, that have never yet mastered as much money as would carry me half way to London — but that I was obliged to pay it away on some irresistible demand or other before I could move, in what way was I to do this? — Thus the color of my life for many years possibly, and certainly the prevention of a most swindling trick which would have robbed me of more than 300 pounds, depended on an immediate exertion. To make my statement, I had to seek for (and to read up and down amongst) bills — letters &c. since the year 1814; — amongst many thousands of such papers. Where were they? In the house I inhabit? No: but the house I did inhabit in Grasmere — 3 miles off to an inch: here then a journey of 6 miles daily:— but my time is short. — I conclude — that your charge is rash and unadvised. I do no cruelties: but am as just a man — as consistent a man — as any that lives in London, not excepting the best. And, as to benignity and forbearance and indulgent attention to other men's feelings, if there were but 10 men in London that in that point bore to me the proportn. of 1 to 1000, London wd. be better insured against fire coming down from Heaven than I fear it is by all your Insurance Offices (the Law Insurance included even, tho' I know not whether that insures against fire). Ten such men, I shall content myself with affirming, would save London; and she would not be corrupted to the degree she is. I am incapable of cruelty; and I abhor the bloody world, because it wallows in cruelty. For the spirit of sneeering and sarcasm, which is the life of your London conversation, is the subtlest abstract of cruelty and malevolence. Dixi. — — Now concerng. my comg. to Lond., — I said I would come, and I have not come: Why is this? 1. I have no money. 2. The necessities of my law case have as yet detained me. — Meantime, concerng. my 4 last bills which I
wrote to you about on this day week (I think), - I know not what has been done: - the loss of £20 to me who have so little - 2ndly at a time so critical - and finally in favor of the very swindler who compels me to go into chancery, - is a pity: 'tis true, 'tis pity; and pity 'tis, 'tis true. However what cannot be recalled must be borne: and my philosophy, which passes all understanding, enables me to bear it. - - Meantime, by to-morrow's post, there will be remitted to you on my acct. from the Kendal Bank £22; which, if by any accident Mr. Newton's bill for that amount has been detained in London, have the goodness to pay on the bill. But, if it has been returned, be so good as to retain it until that bill is again presented to you, unless the remitter shd. find that Mr. Newton wishes to have the money in this country - of which one of us will apprise you. - Now for business. My time is short, but I hope free for 14 days certain: for so long a period is granted to my antagonist to give in a certain statement. During this time his business, I hope, sleeps. - By the therefore at the latest you shall have the last portion of MS. for this month (which nearly winds up): it will make 2½ sheets, or 40 Mag. pp. Judge how much you can admit: so much you will certainly receive, if my lawyers' assurances are valid. A good deal is ready; but unhappily, on acct. of references, I cannot ship it for Lond. till Saturday: so you will have it on Monday. This will be in time for my penultimate bill, if you have the money disposable; and will more than cover it. Every other day throughout next week you will have abt. 8pp.: i.e. say 15 on Mond. - and 16 by Thursday or Friday; and 9 on M. the 17th. 7

If you can obtain the money, - I will be in Lond. to correct: if poss., earlier. But you need not be anxious abt. corrections: little can be necessary. My last bill will leave Lond. on Friday the 13th. Before then you will have more than the quant. requisite. And my last bill is my last. (Mem: the 2 now remaining are 1. One for 12£ in favor of Mr. J. Simpson - due on Sat. May 8. 2. One for 15£. in favor of Miss Preston -
due on May 12.) — For God's sake pay no more to G. Pearson, my unworthy — I am ashamed to say — enemy. — Finally, I am not a cruel man, but I will say boldly, in the teeth of all opposition, the most benignant man that perhaps has appeared since the time of St. John. — Yours very truly,

Thos. De Qy.

You are not aware that the pamphlet you sent me, tho' useful, is not the one I spoke of and want. It is entitled an Essay on Value or Inq. into Value. The word 'Value' appears in the title: it is a 3s. pamphlet; and was that pamphlet which Mr. Taylor offered to inquire abt. on my leavg. London in 1821 — but did not: in conseq. of which it was lost (it was left with a waiter at the Swan). I must refer to it, but by memory. — This also was published by Hunter; and attacks Ricardo.

[Para. placed inverted at head of letter:] In order to reason the case justly, — begin by confessing that Messrs. Hazlitt, Reynolds, &c. have put you to a thousand times more inconvenience in a single month than I in a year. This, you know, is fact. Well then, — this granted, next let us consider the cause. Mine — that ever since I knew you I have had to struggle with difficulties more like the cases of romance than real life. Theirs — that they got drunk, — went to the play, — had a cold, — gave a party, — or "any other reason why." 10

Addr: J. A. Hessey Esqr. /93 Fleet Street/London.
PM: 8 May, 1824.

1. Many of De Quincey's spring letters contain such an intimation, which relates to money problems.
2. De Quincey is referring to the "Dialogues of Three Templars". The last of them to be published had just appeared in the May number of the London. Clearly, though, the series was not intended to end here (with "Dialogue the Sixth"). In the 1840's writing on economics De Quincey declared that the "'Templars' Dialogues'" was an "unfinished sketch" (The Logic of Political Economy, 1844: M/IX, p.151). The final words of
the "Dialogues" indicate that there is more to come: "go on, X, and skirmish with him a little more in this voltigeur style" (London, vol.IX, p.566; M/IX, p.111).

3. De Quincey never took his financial imbroglio to the Court of Chancery, in London, though it must be said that the labyrinthine nature of each made them well-suited. In Scotland the action of cessio bonorum could give legal protection to a cornered debtor. De Quincey himself made use of it in 1833: he listed his creditors in an Omnium Bonorum, surrendered his effects, and was duly empowered to negotiate more credit (see Forward/1939). The cessio did not exist in England, and the sort of drawn-out legal process which De Quincey is here writing about was the only - uncertain - course of action open to him, flight abroad excepted. That his creditors were soon to get the better of him, with an "Arrest", is shown by his letter of 10 June, 1826 to John Wilson (below). See 26 October, 1824 for his supposed trip to Boulogne.

4. Possibly a reference to George Pearson (see further on in this letter, and previous letter, note 4). One of De Quincey's critical debts may, however, have involved unpaid rent on Fox Ghyll or Dove Cottage, the latter of which he was certainly at least partially clearing out in March (see following note).

5. The whole business must have been going on for some time. On 7 March, 1824, De Quincey had mentioned to Hessey that he had "been dreadfully harassed by removing and arranging books and papers from a cottage in Grasmere" (i.e., Dove Cottage) (Boston Univ. MS).

6. Mr. Newton, see 29 April, 1824, note 4.

7. De Quincey is probably writing about a proposed - but unpublished - "Templars' Dialogue" for the June number of the London. This number contained only his "Conclusion of the Historico-Critical Inquiry into the Origin of the Rosicrusians and the Free-Masons" (probably submitted some months earlier), and the "Notes from the Pocket-Book of a late Opium-Eater/No.IV". One of the "Notes", "False Distinctions" (vol.IX, p.642ff; M/X, p.439ff), which raised the idea that
women have more imagination than men, only to attack it, was itself to be attacked in later issues of the London (in a "Lion's Head" letter, signed H.N.T.S. and "A Plea for Female Genius", by "Surrey"—both in vol.X, July, 1824, pp.3-4 and 53-5; and in "Female Genius", by George Darley, vol.X, August, 1824, p.184ff). "The champions of the female sex are rising *en masse* against X. Y. Z.", the editor noted in a preface to H.N.T.S.'s letter. Darley's is probably the most interesting of the batch. Both he and De Quincey were preoccupied with the ongoing interest of the age in the psychology of aesthetic perception: De Quincey in what was mostly an ironic parody of the topic, and Darley with determined objectivity. "X.Y.Z."
(De Quincey), Darley maintained, had reasoned "very illogically [and was] right in his position but wrong in his arguments" (ibid., p.185).

8. See previous letter, note 4.
10. This was a rather sad reflection of how far things had gone wrong with the old London team. William Hazlitt and the poet John Hamilton Reynolds had once been the London's unofficial co-editors, with its owner, after John Scott's death in 1821. Hazlitt hadn't in fact written for the magazine since 1823; Reynolds wrote for it until 1825. Neither had been anything like as consistently troublesome to editorial procedures as had De Quincey, even if Hazlitt's London career had been a stormy one, and Reynolds was indeed sometimes the worse for alcohol. It was Hazlitt himself who put the whole matter in perspective in an 1823 paper he wrote for the Edinburgh Review: "The fault of The London Magazine is, that it wants a sufficient unity of purpose and direction. There is no particular bias or governing spirit, which neutralises the interest. The articles seem thrown into the letterbox, and to come up like blanks and prizes in the lottery" (quoted in Chilcott/1972, pp.155-56; Edinburgh, May, 1823, pp.370-71). Consistency of subject wasn't necessarily a feature of the periodicals of the age, but even polychromic magazines such as
Colburn's New Monthly Magazine, or Blackwood's - both direct rivals of the London - operated on corporate editorial principles (see references in my introduction).

77. TO J. A. HESSEY

Much Woolton near Liverpool
Friday May 21, 1824.

My dear Sir,

I arrived here last week, meaning to have pursued my way to London by the next day's mail. Meantime I have been ill, and too much reduced in spirits to be capable of any exertion; so that to-day is my first attempt at writing a line. - I purpose on to-morrow and Sunday to open my trunk and see how much there is which I can make ready. - This I mention beforehand: but on your account, not mine. For, as I never attach any importance to the anticipating of the public by a month - excepting only where there is some chance of having one or more ideas forestalled by persons who have talent and knowledge enough to pursue what has been previously laid down (which chance makes this mode of publication peculiarly dangerous on such subjects), so alas, at present, in addition to my general indifference about this or that month, I am too deeply dejected by the mechanical dejection of illness and by other causes to feel much anxiety about anything. Over and above which - the time is now past at which the repetition of these exertions which I have made heretofore can save me from the evils I dreaded. Those are now incurred: and, as regards myself therefore, I have no longer any motive for making extraordinary exertions. - However, - on account of the Magazine - that no break may occur, - I will send whatever I can make ready; and will do my utmost to make it as much as possible. - This done, I shall pursue my journey to London - if I should find myself able - by Sunday or Monday's mail; or possibly by some other coach if
I should find any which promises on the whole to be less fatiguing.4 —

Of what I send — do not print a line to oblige me: but just treat it as you feel disposed with a reference to your own convenience. — If I had been in London on the 15th, — as I should have been but for illness, — 40pp. wd. have been ready at the least: as it is, I doubt whether 12.

Very sincerely yours,
Thos. De Quincey.

Addr: J.A. Hessey Esqr. /93 Fleet Street /London.
PM: 24 May, 1824. Liverpool.
MS: Berg Collection. De Quincey MS (H).

1. Now a suburb in south Liverpool. See 24 October, 1822, note 12, for details of De Quincey's Liverpool acquaintances.

2. De Quincey is probably referring to the "Dialogues of Three Templars", a lucrative series for him which he was reluctant to discontinue. As mentioned in note 6 to 19 April, 1824, his readers were not far behind him with their own commentaries on political economy. The editorial "Lion's Head" section of the June, 1824 London also showed signs of interest in the work: "The continuation of The Templars' Dialogues on Political Economy is unavoidably postponed. Our friend X. Y. Z. we are sorry to say, is too ill to be able to follow up the subject this month; but we hope to see it resumed in our next Number" (vol IX, p. 581).

3. From creditors, that is. In his February, 1841 autobiographical "Sketch" for Tait's, De Quincey outlined the circumstances of his 1824 visit to London: "In 1824, I had come up to London upon an errand in itself sufficiently vexatious — of fighting against pecuniary embarrassments, by literary labours; but, as had always happened hitherto, with very imperfect success, from the miserable thwartings I incurred through the deranged state of the liver" (vol VIII, p. 100; M/III, p. 171).

4. De Quincey seems to have left Westmorland the previous weekend. Local papers give us a sighting of him, in a report
that a few days before this weekend, "A car, in which Professor Wilson and his family were proceeding to make a call on Thomas de Quincey, Esq., of Fox Ghyll, Ambleside, was upset in ascending a steep hill" (LC/1865, p.58). He probably arrived in London early in July (see 16 June, 1824, note 2).

78. TO J. A. HESSEY
[c/o John Merritt, High St., Edge Hill]¹
Liverpool Sund. June 13. [1824]

My dear Sir,

I write a line in extreme haste to prevent your forwarding any letters to me at this place, as I purpose being in London within 3 day. - I arrived here about 30 days ago, - was taken ill soon after at the village of Much Woolton about 6 miles off, - and about the 6th or 7th of this moment, when I felt able to write, addressed a few lines to my own family - which, I fancy, were not accurately understood: for, if I interpret accurately a letter which I have just received, Mr. Walker a lawyer,² who manages some business of mine, was desired to write down to you - requesting that you would forward to Liverpool any letters for me.³ This I was sorry for; and am still more anxious to prevent it now, when I shall certainly be able to travel. -

Yours very sincerely,
Thomas De Quincey.

Addr: J.A.Hessey Esqr./93 Fleet Street/London.
PM: 15 June, 1824.

¹. Address assigned according to the letter of Margaret De Quincey quoted in note 3. John Merritt, a partner in the firm of Merritt and Wright, Liverpool booksellers, is often mentioned in the diary kept in 1803 by De Quincey when he was holidaying in Liverpool (Eaton/1927, passim). As Eaton points out. (ibid., p.228, n.51), De Quincey sometimes took advice from Merritt on commercial matters, and occasionally played
host to him and his wife in the early Grasmere days (NLS/MS 21239, f5 [1814] refers to one of their visits). Appropriately - given that he was probably lending De Quincey money, or at least providing him with financial advice at the time - Merritt is mentioned in the "Introductory [Templars'] Dialogue": "I am of the same opinion as M--- a very able friend of mine in Liverpool, who looks upon it as criminal in a high degree to assent to anything a man says: the nefarious habit of assenting (as he justly says) being the pest of conversation by causing it to stagnate" (London, vol.IX, April, 1824, p.342; M/IX, p.45). It is to Merritt and the current visit, or perhaps to that made late in 1822 (see 24 October, 1822, note 12), that De Quincey adverts in an undated letter to Hessey(?), which runs: "I had come through Liverpool on purpose to provide for this bill [...] and had received all but an absolute promise from an old friend there, with whom I have had money transactions for these 20 years" (Harvard MS - Eng.1009 [63]).

The following passage, from a letter concerning the purchase of The Nab (De Quincey's wife's family home at Rydal), shows that De Quincey's connection with Liverpool was to go on some time longer. "With regard to the transfer of the Mortgage, I had an offer of that nature made some time ago by a man of property in Liverpool [probably Merritt or possibly Francis Walker - see next note...] in the summer I am to see him in Westmorland" (De Quincey to Duckworth and Denison, 31 January, 1832: Armitt/1916, p.701). When he wrote his February, 1837 autobiographical "Sketch" for Tait's, however, he put considerable historical distance between himself and Liverpool. This enabled him to write about his former literary contacts in the city as "dead [...] half forgotten [...] dust and ashes" (vol.IV, p.73; M/II, p.135). As he probably well knew - and as was quickly brought to his attention when criticism of his article emerged from Liverpool - the names, at least, of the figures he had treated with sardonic humour were alive and well.
2. Francis Walker, a solicitor who sometimes acted for De Quincey. He assisted him in the purchase of The Nab (previous note) in the late 1820's (there are mentions of him in Armitt/1916, pp.693-94, and 701 - letters of 1829 and 1832).

3. There seemed to be a flurry of letters at this time. Hessey, in London, received a letter addressed to De Quincey from the latter's wife, Margaret. He had to forward this to Liverpool and write to Margaret on 5 June, giving her De Quincey's whereabouts. Margaret, in turn, had to write to Hessey on 12 June, telling him she had recently heard from De Quincey, and asking him to forward three other letters to Liverpool. Margaret's own letter has a familiar ring to it: "I was ill at the time I received your letter and the next day being no post to London I was obliged to miss two post days [... ] Mr. De Quincey [...] says he has been very ill, but I am happy to add he says he has been recovering for the last few days. [His] address is to the care of John Merritt Esqr., High Street, Edge Hill, Liverpool" (British Library MS/Add. 37215, ff27-28).

79. TO J. A. HESSEY

George Inn, Lichfield
Tuesday morning, June 16 - 1824.¹

My dear Sir,

On Sunday last, about 12 hours after my letter to you was put into the post, particular circumstances induced me to attempt the journey to London: more especially as the blaze of sunshine, which for the last month about has made traveling insufferable, on that day began to be overcast: and change of weather was anticipated in a day or two. Unfortunately this change came on that very night:– I took an outside place on the Mail, which leaves Liverpool at 8 in the evening: at 9 it was raining heavily; and by midnight I was soaked. At 6 o'clock in the morning we stopped (for breakfast) at this place – 85 miles fm. Liverpool – 119 fm. London: and being by
this time in a shivering fit, with very high pulse, I felt that it would be madness to go on to London — sitting for 15 hours more in wet clothes. Here then I stopped, and am left without sufficient money to get on.

Such is my case: and my reason for stating it — is this: by to-morrow's post I shall send off to you 3 pages at the least — for which I will trouble you to let me have the money by return of post:— and, fearing that you may be out on some excursion, I write the day before; the case being of great urgency; because a single day's additional expenses may make the whole difference of my being unable to clear this place and pay my fare to London: in which case I shall be again detained, and so on possibly in an endless chain.  

I remain

       Yours very sincerely,

 Thomas De Quincey.
servant-maid long before he married her, and had often made
his bed before she ascended it" - Lindop/1981, p.270.) Initial
thoughts of calling the writer of the article out to a duel
were doubtlessly rapidly evaporated by his memory of the
recent death of John Scott. He might have regretted the change
of mind, however, when he found out that the Westmorland
Gazette's rival, the Kendal Chronicle, offered substantial
quotes from the piece, scurrilous personal detail included, as
the lead article in its 14 August number. The Gazette's
response the following week, a classic instance of an
argumentum ad hominem, put the matter firmly in a political
context. "We have no more to do with Mr. De Quincey's marriage
and the birth of his first child than with the time of Mr.
Brougham's marriage and the birth of his first child"
(LC/1865, p.59). It was to defend the Lowther hegemony in
Westmorland against Brougham's political challenge in 1818,
that the Tories had founded the Gazette, a newspaper De
Quincey had subsequently edited. Brougham frequently figured
in the paper as a "radical", a word also applied by the
Gazette to the new John Bull, and by implication to Brougham's
marriage (ibid.).

The chronology of the affair has been disarranged by De
Quincey's later Tait's comments on it. He suggests in the 1841
"Sketch" that three or four numbers of the John Bull had been
published before he saw it (vol.VIII, p.101; M/III, p.172).
This could obviously not have been so had he read it
immediately on returning to London, when only the July issue
would have been available. It being impossible that he would
for long have remained ignorant of the article in London, he
must have drawn on the incident with some freedom. The extra
numbers of the magazine which he mentions in the "Sketch",
allowed him to conflate later attacks on other personalities
with that on himself. There remains the possibility that he
returned to Westmorland after his sojourn at Lichfield, and
journeyed down to London later in the summer. The publisher
Charles Knight, however, suggests that he and De Quincey met
in London in the summer of 1824, before the fifth number of *Knight's Quarterly* had been published (on 31 July) (Knight/1864, vol.I, pp.326-27). It is unlikely anyway that the Westmorland information network would not also very rapidly have apprised him of the attack. See Forward/1937 for a detailed discussion of the *John Bull* episode.

The whole business reveals, yet again, the curious symbiotic tensions within the field of periodical publishing: anodyne and internecine by turn. The author of "Humbug No.1" was William Maginn, a man of many talents and an energetic and troublesome contributor to *Blackwood's*, whence his intimate knowledge of De Quincey probably derived (see 19 November, 1823, note 8). The *John Bull*, which, he boasted to William Blackwood, was "completely in my own hands", "is going on [...] It has done one excellent job in unmasking and exposing to general contempt that base little wretch quincey, whom it has hurt pretty feelingly. You know that this ought to have been done in your pages, but on the contrary you seem to have taken a fancy to pity the scabby imposter who has done you more harm than all the scribblers of the magazine put together" (NLS/MS 4012, f313 [n.d.], and ff297-98 - 2 September, 1824). Whilst Maginn was to continue to write for *Blackwood's*, his *John Bull* performance was disliked by the Edinburgh team (see NLS/MS 4012, various letters for 1824). *Blackwood's* carried a sharp critique of the *Bull* in a poem, possibly by J. G. Lockhart, which appeared in the July, 1824 number ("To the Editor of the John Bull Magazine": vol.XVI, p.115). Maginn was ultimately to be publicly rebuked in a *Noctes* sketch for August, 1824 (*Blackwood's*, vol.XVI, p.242). Even this, though, was placed ambiguously in the context of a discussion of a "stinging" attack by De Quincey on Carlyle's translation of *Wilhelm Meister* in the *London* (ibid. - and see 4 November, 1824). The *London*’s editorial "Lion's Head", where one might most have expected to see an editorial defence of De Quincey, remained silent on the subject. Maginn and De Quincey were to continue to hold one another in contempt. The latter
was to write in 1842, with some understatement, that "for many reasons, I disliked him. His forte lay, I think, in jeux d'esprit" (letter to Robert Blackwood, 16 September: NLS/MS 4060, ff262/63).

80. TO J. A. HESSEY

[London. 11 September, 1824]

My dear Sir,

You will, I believe, receive a note fm. me this morning by Mrs. McManus for £8; whereas, by the about 7½pp. put into your hands on Wednesday night, I am entitled only to about one half that sum:— the explanation is simply this:— I gave her the note yesterday in order to calm her anxiety, and fully expecting to have finished my articles by sitting up to-night. However I have not: for I have suffered much from that incipient inflammation I told you of; so much as to stop my writing after short attempts often renewed. I am now (5 Sat. morng.) obliged to go to bed without seeing Mrs McM.; consequently I cannot explain to her. But, if you will give her £4, I will bring down my remaining papers to-night and then on Monday can pay her the remainder. 2

I must tell you that I have done a great deal of a new article, which will be very amusing, and which of all I loves you must find room for in this No. — viz. Epist. Critica: No.1 — it will contain 1. Dibdin, with whom I have some right good fun; 3 — 2. Agamemnon — and the Birds: 4 3. Boeckh - Polit. Econ. of the Athenians. 5 4. Q. Review - blunders of. — I am certain of making it an effective article. 6 Dibdin I have done. — For the bonne bouche or 5th and last art. we must have 'Walladmor' — (that is the name in the Leipsic Catal.) if Heaven or Earth can get it — An abstract of the novel, which I will make in 24 hours, will be of universal interest fm. the circumstances. — Pray send if you can to Bohte's. They have promised to lend Sir W. Scott's copy — (in default of any other) on condition of a speedy return. 7 And that within 36
hours fm. receiving it - at most - I will pledge my word for returning it. - What I fear is that the copy shd. be snapped up by somebody on the spot.

Yours very Truly

Sat. morning, Sept.11.

Thos. De Q.

Addr: J.A.Hessey Esqr./93 Fleet Street/[London].
Publ: See note 1 (part only published).
MS: British Library. Add. 37215, f29.

1. See Axon/1907: The Library, for an extract from this letter and a commentary on the Dibdin reference.

2. Mrs. McManus, probably De Quincey's London landlady. The letter is endorsed "Recd Four Pounds, S. M'Manus".


4. Aeschylus's Agamemnon and Aristophanes's The Birds, presumably. No such article(s) appeared.

5. Philipp August Boeckh (1785-1867), German historian and classical antiquarian. De Quincey is referring to his Die Staatshaushaltung der Athener (3 vols, Berlin, 1817+ - the first English edition did not appear until 1826). De Quincey occasionally touches on classical Greek and Roman political economy in his "Ricardo Made Easy" (1842) and the Logic of Political Economy (1844), but he does not mention Boeckh. He does, though, mention the subject again in 4 November, 1824, where the very same article is offered to Charles Knight.

6. Neither this piece, on the Quarterly Review, nor the previous two articles have ever come to light, as is also the case with the proposed series "Epist[ola] Critica. De Quincey did, though, offer one or two extended comments on the Quarterly during his Edinburgh Post period (1827-28). He then found it "infamous for its dotage in political economy" and
"rather surprising [that it] has been almost exclusively a political journal [...] with little or no connexion with any thing that can even by courtesy be called literature" (Tave/1966, pp.167 and 192).

It may be that what looks like an unpublished translation of a German tale also dates from the autumn of 1824. Four pages, on one leaf, titled "The Defier of Ghosts", have survived of the work (held at Georgetown University). It concerns the departure of Counsellor Gerstensaat from the town of Ruhethal to take up a Recorder's post at Klatschausen, and gets no further than sketching in the pompous central figure of the story and the initial events. The fragment breaks off - although De Quincey's manuscript obviously continues - with the benighting of Gerstensaft, "a defier of Ghosts", on "dreary tracts of heath". Its latest date of composition is October, 1824, since that is when John Taylor notes in his Commonplace Book (Berg Collection) "The Defier of Ghosts (unfinished)". The "Defier" does, however, read much in the vein of the published 1823 translations.

7. De Quincey describes the birth agonies of what eventually turned out to be something more than an "abstract" of Walladmor, in his "Autobiography...Recollections of Charles Lamb" (Tait's, vol.V, September, 1838, pp.559-563; M/XIV, p.132ff). The original, Walladmor. Freely translated from the English of Sir Walter Scott, by the German writer G. W. H. Häring, was in fact a forgery produced for the 1824 Leipzig Book Fair, in the absence of one by the real author (see Lindop/1981, pp.272-275; Goldman/1965, pp.94-102). De Quincey probably heard of the interest the book had created, from his former London landlord, the prominent German bookseller J. H. Bohte, a regular attender at the Leipzig Book Fair. Bohte lent him Scott's copy of the forgery, which he had to read without cutting the pages, and he duly produced, in two days, by his own reckoning, a compound of selected highlights and facetious commentary for the October, 1824 issue of the London
The article generated such public interest in the work that De Quincey offered to translate it: he owed Taylor and Hessey more than a little "writing up of arrears" by now. He started the job, found "that this trash was absolutely beyond hope" (Tait's, 1838 - as described above - p.563; M/XIV, p.143), recast the whole novel by altering and adding scenes, and eventually reduced the "three corpulent German volumes [...] into two English ones of rather consumptive appearance" (Walladmor/1825, p.xii). It was a curious exercise: a transposition of an original text, with an imaginary text as its referent, into an approximation to the non-existent text. "Could you not translate me back again into German"?, he asked, in the "Dedication" to the published version of 1825 (Walladmor/1825, p.xx). See 21 October, 1824, autumn, 1824 (no.83) and 4 November, 1824, for further details of Walladmor. Comments from Sara Hutchinson and Dora Wordsworth showed that the book at least found favor with the Wordsworth circle at Grasmere (Hogg/1895, p.233; Hutchinson Letters/1954, p.354). Walter Scott's valuation of De Quincey's efforts isn't known. Remarks on the original text didn't augur well: in the conversational introduction to The Betrothed (1825), he has one character suppose "the late publication of Walladmor to have been the work of Dousterswivel, by the help of the steam-engine" (Scott/1896, p.xxix). The steam-engine image might not be inappropriately applied to De Quincey's labours on his reworking of Walladmor, as depicted by Charles Knight (see 4 November, 1824, note 7).

81. TO J. A. HESSEY

[London. 21 October, 1824]1

My dear Sir,

There can be no doubt that the 1st vol. mt. be subscribed if you think it right on Monday: and yesterday I wrote a
Preface in readiness. - But I am quite out in my count of sheets. For my MS. now is so much closer and smaller that it often holds at least ⅓ more than in my usual writing.

However I am in great confusion just now. But not to keep your mess. waiting longer, I wait till to-night - or to-morrow morning.²

Oct. 21. Yours truly, Thos. De Q.

Addr: J.A.Hessey Esqr./[London].

1. Both the month of this letter and its references to a "1st vol." and a "Preface," place it in the Walladmor period. See previous letter, note 7.

2. The task of producing his rifacimento, cost De Quincey considerable labour. "Confident in my powers of rapid translation, I undertook even to keep up with the printer; three sheets, or forty-eight pages, I made sure of producing daily", he wrote in the "Autobiography", "at which rate, a volume would be finished in a week, and three weeks might see the whole work ready for the public" (Tait's, vol. V, September, 1838, p.560; M/XIV, p.137). In the event, though, "Never was there such a disappointment, or such a perplexity. Not until the printing had actually commenced, with arrangements for keeping several compositors at work, did I come to understand the hopeless task I had undertaken" (ibid.).

82. TO JOHN WHITE¹
[4 Eccleston Street, Pimlico, London]²
October 26, 1824.

Sir,

I am much concerned to find, on my return to London from Boulogne (whither I had been compelled to go for the purpose of meeting an English friend on business) that two letters of
yours have been for some time lying at the house of Messrs. Taylor and Hessey.\(^3\) - I now write to say that on the 15th of November I shall receive a considerable sum of money which will enable me to remit the sum already due to Mrs. Blakeney and (as I hope) the whole of the further sum of £30 which will then be due. If in the mean time it would better suit Mrs. Blakeney's convenience to draw upon me for £25 at one month, £15 or £20 at six weeks, - receiving the remainder in banknotes in the course of November, - I will immediately accept bills.

I remain, Sir,

Your faithful humble servant,

4 Eccleston Street, Pimlico.

Thomas De Quincey.

Addr: John White Esqr./Lowther Street/Whitehaven - "or at Egremont."

PM: 26 Oct., 1824.

MS: Berg Collection. De Quincey MS (H).

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1. Agent for Mrs. Blakeney, owner of Fox Ghyll (see 29 April, 1822 - no.47 - note 1).

2. Eccleston Street runs due west from the present Victoria Railway Station. Matthew Davenport Hill, who had read and appreciated De Quincey's *London* piece on his *Plans*, sought his reviewer out during this period (19 November, 1823, note 3).

"He was living in lodgings in Chelsea [contiguous with Pimlico] not far from my own cottage, in that quarter. [...] I invited him to a family dinner; he came, and we made a long evening of it. How he astonished me and mine by the wealth of his conversation [...] Our acquaintance, thus begun, was uninterrupted for many years" (Hill/1878, p.493). Hill's daughters were to recollect that "De Quincey spent much time" at their Chelsea house, then a country cottage, "delighting Mrs. Hill with his conversation" (ibid., p.57).

3. See 12 October, 1823, note 1, paragraph 1. While there are gaps in the known chronology of De Quincey's residence in London in 1824, it is doubtful that he ever went to Boulogne. (Local records for the town have so far shown no trace of him.)
83. TO J. A. HESSEY

[London. ?Autumn, ?1824]

My dear Sir,

I am at present unable to rise from bed. - The MS. I have is not worth sending you. It is impossible in a note to explain my situation. In addition to the case on which I consulted Dr. Darling - I caught a cold on the night before last - which has put me into a fever - sore throat and all the accompg.

What is worse is that an upper tooth broke yesterday and has left me in torments ever since. - About noon I think of going to a Dentist to have it extracted; and then hope to be easier and able to write.

My anxiety to complete the Novel (as a pecuniary speculation), you may rely on it, is far greater than yours - because if it were to succeed it will deliver me from an abyss of evil into which few have ever descended. - The moment I have any ease you may therefore be assured that I will lose no time:- But under such a triple torment - I am scarce able to support my existence. - All this will be easily made up as soon as I am better.

With respect to Newbon, I am totally unable to add anything here:- When I have been to a Dentist I can think.

Sincerely yours,

Thos, De Q.

Addr: J. A. Hessey Esqr. /[London].
MS: Worcester College, Oxford. MS 284.

1. Although this letter is catalogued as being "tucked in the cover" of a copy of De Quincey's 1832 novel, Klosterheim (Blackwood's, Edinburgh), it clearly dates from the London period - it is addressed to Hessey - and has not been through the post. It seems to refer to Walladmor, more than to that never-completed epic, The Novel, for which there are
references scattered through the 1820's letters (see 29 April, 1822 - no. 48 - note 7). De Quincey mentions the former, which he was writing in London, more than once as a pecuniary speculation; whereas he was paid for the latter in 1821. Darling was one of his London doctors and De Quincey had lodged with the Newbons in 1823, which no doubt means he would now owe them money.

84. TO CHARLES KNIGHT
[4 Eccleston Street, London. 4 Nov., 1824]

My dear Sir,

I trouble you with the following statement of the circumstances in which I stand at this moment.

Since I last saw you (viz. about the beginning of August) I have written two* papers for Messrs. Taylor and Hessey and no more; viz. a second paper on Goethe's 'Wilhelm Meister' and one upon 'Walladmor' a German hoax. [f/n *An Essay of Kant's on a Univ. Hist. was translated by me; but has been in the hands of Messrs. Taylor and Hessey nearly two years.] These two papers I wrote to clear off the arrear upon an old account between myself and them, which was made out about that time and turned out to be greater than either of us expected.

I mention this, that it may not be supposed I have been writing for others and neglecting your journal to which I was so much more bound to contribute all that I could. - Except in one instance about 2 months ago, when a sudden emergency obliged me to offer an article to another journal in order to meet the momentary pressure (which article however I never completed from ill health). I have made no overture to any other journal than that which I have been 3 years connected with: and have no sort of connection with any other excepting your own.

Now, with regard to that, I labored through two months as hard as I was able under my decaying state of health upon two articles - one entitled Secret Memoirs of a Learned Jew; the
other on the Political Econ. of the Athenians. The first of
these (which by the way, proceeds on a groundwork of real
history) was interrupted by the state of spirits which ill
health brought with it; the other, which I could have carried
on in any state of spirits, was laid aside partly for want of
a German book (Boeck's on the same subject) which I have only
lately received — and partly on the following ground. — After
the article on 'Walladmor' had been written (as I have
mentioned above) Mr. Hessey fancied that it would be a
profitable speculation to translate it. He proposed to me that
I should do it on the conditions of dividing profits and risk.
To these I acceded; stipulating however that I should be at
liberty to draw upon him for such reasonable sums as I might
have obtained in the progress of the work by other modes of
applying my labor. My hope was — that, I should be able to
carry on this work (which seemed to offer some chance of
liberating me from a long series of difficulties) conjointly
with the articles for your journal: and upon the arrangement
with Mr. Hessey I relied for putting it in my power to repay
to you all by which I might fall short. — Meantime the result
is that I have done neither. And, upon communicating with Mr.
Hessey, he declines advancing anything on these two grounds
(and perhaps very justly) — 1st. that the book has lingered so
much beyond the time originally contemplated, 2ndly. that the
size of the work is likely to fall so much below the scale on
which the computation of profits was made: in fact, after
weeding out the forests of rubbish, I believe it will make
only one decent volume. —

The object of my present application to you then is this:
to allow the bill for £40 to lie a fortnight or so, until the
Walladmor is published. — I have suffered much more in the
course of my recovery than in the illness: and I am only just
regaining my power of writing with any speed. But I imagine
that a week will enable me to finish a single volume — that
is, I mean, all of it that was not already done before the
coming on of my illness (beginning of October) in such strength as to interfere with my power of execution.

In conclusion I must beg you not to misinterpret me: I did not mean to quit my labors for you – to execute Walladmor: the fact is, I have been able to do neither; but my intention was to have done both. And my sole reason for thinking of the Walladmor at all was – that it would give me a chance of getting out of difficulties which for 3 years have gnawed at my heart (and which in fact were the reason that I ever began to write): one of the first results from which would have been such a state of spirits as was necessary for the completion of an article descending as profoundly into human feelings as 'The Mem. of a Learned Jew.'

But in whatever way I can be of service in your journal, and without <any> reference to the event of my present application to you, I beg you to believe that I consider my first service as always due to you: and, but for this loss of the entire month of October, I trust that before this time I should have made that evident.

I remain my dear Sir,

4 Eccleston Street
Nov. 4, 1824.

Very faithfully yours,

Thomas De Quincey.

Addr: Charles Knight Esqr./Pall Mall East/[London].
PM: 7 Nov., 1824.
MS: Pierpont Morgan Library. MA 1737.

1. Charles Knight (1791-1873), publisher, editor, journalist, and publications advisor (and publisher), from 1827, to the Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge. Knight was a multi-talented man, who wrote numerous books and pamphlets on a wide variety of topics, and whose circle included the most prominent liberal and radical political figures of his age. (See 19 November, 1823, note 3 - which refers to De Quincey's connection with Knight's Gallery of Portraits; 18 March, 1824, note 6; and letters to Knight – 10 November, 1824, 6 December, 1824, and 23 July, 1829). He was to be the last owner of the London Magazine in 1828-29.
First meeting in the summer of 1824, Knight and De Quincey were to enjoy a long-lasting friendship. Knight tells the story of their early relationship, when De Quincey was often a house guest at his Pall Mall East home, in his *Passages of a Working Life* (Knight/1864, vol. I, pp. 327-30). De Quincey later mentioned to Robert Blackwood that as "a collaborateur in Charles Knight's Quarterly Journal [he was 'naturally' in] company with the whole band of contributors" (7 September, 1841: NLS/MS 4055, ff173-74). This is confirmed in Hill/1878 (p. 98), where it is observed that contributors to *Knight's Quarterly*, such as "De Quincey, [T. B.] Macaulay, and Barry St Leger, used occasionally to meet at [Matthew Davenport] Hill's breakfast table on Sunday mornings; Hyde Villiers, Maule, and Charles Austin" were also sometimes present. By the standards of the age, this was somewhat liberal, coming-on-radical company, and De Quincey was decidedly the odd figure out. How well integrated he was into the group, however, is perhaps shown in a letter from fellow-contributor Henry Malden (1800-76) to Knight, urging, "If De Quincey is within reach, pray extract something from him. His last article was much liked" (15 September, 1825: Clowes/1892, p. 157, where the letter is misdated 1823). Casual references to De Quincey in the editorial pages of the magazine even before he appeared in it, underscore approved Knight's interest in his work; for example, "your great favourite the Man of Opium" or "the Opium-Eater could not have dreamed better" (*Knight's*, vol. II, January-April, 1824, p. 6 and p. 245).

*Knight's Quarterly* itself, with its varied content of original, critical and feature articles, along with original poetry, would provide brilliant literary company for De Quincey: including the future Whig politician and historian Thomas Babington Macaulay, Julius Hare, the poet and politician W. N. Praed, Derwent and Hartley Coleridge, and M. D. Hill himself. These were young, lively and open minds, with extensive interests in British and Continental culture. There
must have been something of the air of the early days of *Blackwood’s* about the short-lived venture (seven numbers only between 1823 and 1825); but the exuberance was without the venom of the early Edinburgh team (see Knight/1864, vol.I, Chapters IX and X for details about *Knight’s*). However, for all that *Knight’s Quarterly* seemed liberal in its editorial context, its inaugural make-up was predominantly patrician. The idea for the magazine grew out of another of Knight’s ventures, the *Etonian*, a periodical centred on Eton school. *Blackwood’s* categorised *Knight’s* contributors as "a set of o' spunkie chiels - Collegians, as I understan', frae Cambridge College" (*Noctes*, vol.XVII, March, 1825, p.370).

De Quincey collected just one contribution to *Knight’s Quarterly* in his *Sel./vol.XI* (1859); namely, "The Incognito; or Count Fitz-Hum", a translation from Friedrich Laun (F. A. Schulz) (*Knight’s*, vol.III, 1824, pp.143-56; M/XII, p.417ff). A translation previously thought to be De Quincey’s work, "The Love-Charm" (*Knight’s*, new series, no.1, 1825, pp.146-73; M/XII, p.434ff), attributed on the strength of comments by Charles Knight himself (*Knight/1864*, vol.I, p.339), and seemingly confirmed by an October, 1825, *Noctes* comment, "Methinks I see the Opium-eater in the last number" (of *Knight’s*) (*Blackwood’s*, vol.XVIII, p.508), has turned out to be by Julius Hare (Galinsky/1937; McFarland/1963-65, pp.74-81).

One is left with another translation from Laun, "The Somnambulist", which appeared in Volume III (1824, pp.443-463) of *Knight’s*, and which has been attributed to De Quincey by Axon/1914 (pp.34-36). As Axon notes, the piece is in the best De Quinceyan vein of translation/adaptation, and relates to an author whom De Quincey had not only recently translated but recommended as a subject for further translation (*Knight’s*, vol.III, p.143; M/XII, p.417 - "The Incognito" appeared in no.V and "The Somnambulist" in no.VI of vol.III, August- November, 1824, of the magazine). This isn’t the place to include a full-scale attribution, but it must be said that
there are many De Quinceyan elements in the work, which I will briefly enumerate. The translator refers to the story as having a "basis" (in Laun's Seifenblasen) rather than offering it as a straight translation - De Quincey's typical attitude to his source material (Knight's, vol.III, 1824, p.463); there are self referential passages in the "Somnambulist" which bear De Quincey's hallmark, p.449, for example, and especially p.463, which, as Baxter/1990 (p.194) points out, possibly refers, in the final sentence about "Hoaxing", to Walladmor, a current interest of De Quincey - see 11 September, 1824, note 7, and his reference to it as a "hoax" in the second sentence of this letter; the English translation contains typically De Quinceyan, scholarly, high-performance classical Greek references; and it also includes the expression Bergen-op-zoom (p.459), a coinage meaning bone-headed, used by De Quincey throughout his writing career - most recently it had been the title of a Westmorland Gazette article (3 October, 1818, p.2), and had appeared in the 1823 "Letters to a Young Man" (London, vol.VIII, July, 1823, p.89; M/X, p.67). This, along with the fact that the farcical humour and pseudo-supernatural, rapidly-changing scenic nature of the tale also represent a pool of interest to De Quincey, add up to there being at least a presumption in favour of "The Somnambulist" being his work. Which of the tales mentioned, though, is the "last article" referred to above (by Henry Malden) is a matter of conjecture.

2. Parts one and two of De Quincey's "Goethe" appeared in the London in August and September, 1824 (vol.X, pp.189-97 and 291-307; M/XI, pp.222-258 - second article only). It was a highly critical review of Thomas Carlyle's translation of Goethe's Wilhelm Meister's Apprenticeship (Edinburgh, 1824). The articles were more the reflex of ingrained prejudice and prudishness than judgement. Julius Hare knew exactly what De Quincey's line was to be here: "Does De Quincey mean to insert his promised attack on Mignon?", he asked John Taylor (summer, 1824: Rylands/English MS 1238, n.6 - Hare's promise, in the
same letter, to "repel the attack" with a counter-attack in the pages of the London, never emerged). A long diatribe against Mignon, whom De Quincey chose to see as an irredeemably degenerate character in Goethe's novel, duly appeared in the September number. Carlyle's immediate reaction in 1824 - mild disgust but not anger - is shown in his letters of the period (CL/vol.III, pp.101-2, 152, 156-57, 161 and 174). He didn't need to worry that much: his translation stimulated considerable interest in Goethe and himself (Morgan/1949, pp.83-87, shows that of the 18 references to the Apprenticeship which occurred over a 9 year period around this time, 10 fell in 1824-25, the direct result of Carlyle's translation). The London context to the "Goethe" articles was an unfortunate one for both writers. De Quincey's review was "included in the same issue[s] that contained Carlyle's 'Life of Schiller'" (Riga/1975, p.xviii). It was, as Riga notes, a "failure in tact" and a sign of confused editorial direction (ibid.).

When De Quincey came to write his contribution on Goethe for the seventh edition of the Encyclopaedia Britannica in 1835 (Part LVIII, pp.596-603, of the part-publication; M/IV, p.395), the malice had faded to reserved acceptance, of Goethe's dramas at least.

3. See 21 September, 1823, note 13, for details of the "Idea of a Universal History", which appeared in the October, 1824 issue of the London. De Quincey's uneven career with Taylor and Hessey was nearly over: his final "Notes from the Pocket-Book of a Late Opium-Eater", in the December number, was to be his last appearance in their magazine. The London was in fact soon to be sold to Henry Southern, editor of the Westminster Review, who had already been co-editing the London for some months (Chilcott/1972, pp.153-54; Blunden, 1975, p.133). De Quincey must have seen how Southern's Benthamite Utilitarian views were likely to affect the editorial stance of the magazine. Indeed, as somebody who had himself been trying to manipulate public opinion in recent months, with one of the
system's major apparatuses of influence, political economy, he was well aware of the potential use of "ideology". Although he was willing to write for publishers like Charles Knight, who held utilitarian views, he wasn't yet ready to write for what he doubtlessly saw as a potential organ of the utilitarian movement (see Bauer/1953, pp.150-53, and 243-45). That was to come later.

4. For Blackwood's, perhaps.

5. Unpublished. Worcester College, Oxford, have the typescript of a manuscript fragment (amongst typescripts of known De Quincey pieces) which deals - fictively, it seems - with the behaviour of Polish Jews during the Napoleonic Wars (MS 128). The connection with De Quincey's letter is, however, an extremely tenuous one.

6. See 11 September, 1824, where the article is promised to Taylor and Hessey.

7. Knight/1864 (vol.1, p.327), gives an appropriately picturesque sketch of the harassed De Quincey "groaning over his uncongenial labour, by which he eventually got very little." De Quincey's own recollection, written nearly twenty years later, suggests that, at the very least, he had bad memories of the whole affair: "Three months' literary toil terminated, at times, in a result = 0; the whole plus being just equal to the minus, created by two separate establishments, and one of them in the most expensive city in the world. Gloomy, indeed, was my state of mind" (Tait's, vol.VIII, February, 1841, p.101; M/III, p.171).

85. TO [?CHARLES KNIGHT]

4 Eccleston Street
[London]
November 10, 1824.

My dear Sir,

I am greatly indebted to you for the tenor of your letter; and inclose you the bill accepted. Of course I will do
what you desire for Monday night: my chief difficulty is about a good German basis, - the London libraries are so slenderly furnished with books of this description. However I will do something and the best I can within the time.

I am concerned to hear of the distress\(^2\) in your family; and remain, my dear Sir,

Your faithful and obliged servant,

Thomas De Quincey.

MS: Rare Books Room, Pennsylvania State University.

1. Charles Knight seems the most likely recipient of this note. He had by now become a channel for dealing with De Quincey's financial crises (see previous letter), and *Knight's Quarterly*, rather than the *London*, would be the more probable periodical for the article mentioned. Whatever its nature, the article never appeared in either magazine.

2. Knight alludes to "a severe domestic calamity" - the death of his father - in the "Advertisement" mentioned in the following letter.
urge you to some new understanding of the same kind. If that should happen, I beg to say that you may count upon me as one of your men for any extent of labors to the best of any/my powers which you may choose to command. - I have lately been struggling with great difficulties, and may have seemed irregular in my contributions. But hereafter put my name down in the list of those whom neither indolence nor caprice will ever cause to slacken in the expression of my obligations to your kindness.

Believe me, my dear Sir,
Your faithful Servant,
Thomas De Quincey.

MS: Cornell Wordsworth Collection. (No Healey number.)

1. Established from context (see note 2).
2. *Knight's Quarterly Magazine* ran for just six issues in the latter half of 1824, when Knight and the group of Cambridge intellectuals who had inspired the magazine, and were its main supporters, quarrelled (McFarland/1963-65, pp.74-75; see also 4 November, 1824, note 1). By Knight's own account, the Cambridge contributors, including T. B. Macaulay and Winthrop Praed, complained about cavalier editorial practices, and shortcomings in the promised classics-based structure of the magazine (it had become much more of a miscellany than they had envisioned). Knight responded by pointing out the unreliability of the contributors in forwarding copy. The resulting impasse produced firstly the "Advertisement", to which De Quincey refers here, and then a war of letters in the *Cambridge Chronicle*. *Knight's* was summarily discontinued at the end of the year and resurrected in the autumn of 1825, to survive for just one issue (Knight/1864, vol.I, pp.335-36).

The "Advertisement" declared that the magazine "was established at the earnest solicitation of some young men of great talents and acquirements [...] Their promises of support were cordial and enthusiastic [...] the work, as it proceeded, acquired a considerable distinction amongst the discerning and
the intelligent. [But the publisher] had to contend, in one or
two instances, with unsettled opinions, with captious
objections, but above all, with something like a heartless
indifference to the consequences of wanton neglect. [...] The
publisher [...] would not commit his own opinions to an
inexperienced and incautious dictation [...] He has therefore
to announce that the present Number [...] will be the last"
was just the sort of peevish response to justified criticism
that was close to home with De Quincey.

87. TO JOHN WILSON
London, Thursday, February 24, 1825.

My dear Wilson, - I write to you on the following occasion: -
Some time ago, perhaps nearly two years ago, Mr. Hill, a
lawyer, published a book on Education, detailing a plan on
which his brothers had established a school at Hazlewood, in
Warwickshire.¹ This book I reviewed in the London Magazine,
and in consequence received a letter of thanks from the
author, who, on my coming to London about midsummer last year,
called on me. I have since become intimate with him, and
excepting that he is a sad Jacobin (as I am obliged to tell
him once or twice a month), I have no one fault to find with
him, for he is a very clever, amiable, good creature as ever
existed: and in particular directions his abilities strike me
as really very great indeed. Well, his book has just been
reviewed in the last Edinburgh Review (of which some copies
have been in town about a week).² This service has been done
him, I suppose, through some of his political friends - (for
he is connected with Brougham, Lord Lansdowne, old Bentham,
etc.)³ - but I understand by Mr. Jeffrey. Now Hill, in common
with multitudes in this Babylon - who will not put their trust
in Blackwood as in God (which, you know, he ought to do), yet
privately adores him as the devil; indeed publicly too, is a
great proneur of Blackwood. For, in spite of his Jacobinism,
he is liberal and inevitably just to real wit. His fear is - that Blackwood may come as Nemesis, and compel him to regorge any puffing and cramming which Tiff has put into his pocket, and is earnest to have a letter addressed in an influential quarter to prevent this. I alleged to him that I am not quite sure but it is an affront to a Professor, to presume that he has any connexion as contributor or anything else, to any work which he does not publicly avow as his organ for communicating with the world of letters. He answers that it would be so in him, - but that an old friend may write sub rosâ. I rejoin that I know not but you may have cut Blackwood - even as a subscriber - a whole lustrum ago. He rebuts - by urging a just compliment paid to you as a supposed contributor, in the News of Literature and Fashion, but a moon or two ago. 4 - Seriously, I have told him that I know not what was the extent of your connexion with Blackwood at any time; and that I conceive the labours of your Chair in the University must now leave you little leisure for any but occasional contributions, and therefore for no regular cognizance of the work as director, etc. However, as all that he wishes - is simply an interference to save him from any very severe article, and not an article in his favour, I have ventured to ask of you if you hear of any such thing, to use such influence as must naturally belong to you in your general character (whether maintaining any connexion with Blackwood or not), to get it softened. On the whole, I suppose, no such article is likely to appear. 5 But to oblige Hill I make the application. He has no direct interest in the prosperity of Hazlewood: he is himself a barrister in considerable practice, and of some standing, I believe: but he takes a strong paternal interest in it, all his brothers (who are accomplished young men, I believe) being engaged in it. 6 They have already had one shock to stand: a certain Mr. Place, a Jacobin friend of the school till just now, having taken pet with it - and removed his sons. Now this Place, who was formerly a tailor - leatherbreeches maker - and habit-maker - having made a fortune and
finished his studies, - is become an immense authority as a political and reforming head with Bentham, etc., as also with the Westminster Review, in which quarter he is supposed to have the weight of nine times nine men; whence, by the way, in the 'circles' of the booksellers, the Review has got the name of the Breeches Review. 7

Thus much concerning the occasion of my letter. As to myself, - though I have written not as one who labours under much depression of mind, - the fact is, I do so. At this time calamity presses upon me with a heavy hand; - I am quite free of opium: but it has left the liver, which is the Achilles' heel of almost every human fabric, subject to affections which are tremendous for the weight of wretchedness attached to them. To fence with these with the one hand, and with the other to maintain the war with the wretched business of hack author, with all its horrible degradations, - is more than I am able to bear. At this moment I have not a place to hide my head in. 8 Something I meditate - I know not what - 'Itaque e conspectu omnium abiit.' 9 With a good publisher and leisure to premeditate what I write, I might yet liberate myself: after which, having paid everybody, I would sink into some dark corner - educate my children - and show my face in the world no more. 10

If you should ever have occasion to write to me, it will be best to address your letter either 'to the care of Mrs. De Quincey, Rydal Nab, Westmoreland' (Fox Ghyll is sold, and will be given up in a few days), or 'to the care of M. D. Hill, Esq., 11, King's Bench Walk, Temple:' 11 - but for the present, I think rather to the latter: for else suspicions will arise that I am in Westmorland, which, if I were not, might be serviceable to me; but if, as I am in hopes of accomplishing sooner or later, I should be - might defeat my purpose. 12

I beg my kind regards to Mrs. Wilson and my young friends, whom I remember with so much interest as I last saw them at Elleray, - and am, my dear Wilson, very affectionately yours.
1. See 19 November, 1823, note 3. Hazlewood School was a boys' boarding-school, near Birmingham, where M. D. Hill himself had once taught. It had been founded by his father, a Unitarian and a close friend of the radical Dissenter Joseph Priestley (1733-1804) (see Hill/1878, passim; M/XIV, pp.9-11). Hill had been active in the radical political circles of Birmingham in the 1800's and 1810's, and as a lawyer (he had then been a barrister at Lincoln's Inn) he defended many of his left-wing colleagues who found themselves in court facing such politically-based charges as conspiracy or seditious libel. The bantering tone of De Quincey's letter is no doubt an attempt to create an ironic gap between himself and Hill's ultra-liberalism, which was distant from his own ultra-Toryism.

2. De Quincey's own review of Hill's Plans for the Government and Liberal Instruction of Boys in Large Numbers (1822) was published in the London in April and May, 1824. The other review De Quincey refers to here is "Public Education - Hazlewood School" (Edinburgh Review, vol.XLI, 1825, pp.315-58 - by Francis Jeffrey).

3. Henry Brougham (1778-1868), statesman and politician with utilitarian sympathies and adaptable liberal views. Brougham had inspired De Quincey's bitterest political satires during the latter's Westmorland Gazette days (see 16 June, 1824, note 2).

Henry Petty-Fitzmaurice, third Marquis of Lansdowne (1780-1863), statesman and liberal politician, whose views were flexible enough to allow him to serve in both Tory and Whig cabinets in quick succession. De Quincey accused him of "ratting", in an article of 1828 (Tave/1966, p.305).
"old Bentham" is the philosopher and expounder of utilitarianism, Jeremy Bentham (1748-1832). All three men were indeed associates of Hill.

4. De Quincey is being ironic here; he knew well that Wilson's connection with Blackwood's was a close editorial one. Although he published nothing in Blackwood's until November, 1826, De Quincey may, at this stage, have had open to him a channel of communication with William Blackwood, via the publisher's son, who was in London for one year, from the autumn of 1825, soliciting copy from London contributors for one thing (De Montluzin/1987, p.177). There was, of course, no such publication as the The News of Literature and Fashion.

5. Blackwood's didn't, in the event, review Hill's book. This is in some ways surprising, since the magazine wasn't usually silent on educational matters, and wouldn't normally miss an opportunity to maul liberal, or radically-inclined proposals on education. See, for example, "Brougham on the Education of the People" (vol.XVII, May, 1825, p.534ff), published close to the date of De Quincey's letter but silent on Hill: an especially surprising circumstance in view of the close link between Hill and Brougham.

6. All of Hill senior's male children worked at Hazlewood School during the early part of their lives. It seems that four of Matthew Davenport Hill's brothers, one of whom was Rowland Hill, the Post-Office reformer, were still teaching there (DNB; M/XIV, p.10).

7. Francis Place (1771-1854), progressed "from being a journeyman breeches-maker into a prosperous shopkeeper and employer, the close confidant of Bentham and the Mills, and the adviser of M.P.'s" (Thompson/1982, p.845). De Quincey's thumbnail satire is at least a partly accurate one. As Thompson goes on to point out, Place provided the utilitarians not just with a link between their own intellectual sources and the working-class movement, but also, through his own political influence, with a seat in Parliament in 1807. He had been instrumental in bringing about the repeal of the
Combination Acts in 1824: one of the events which was to feed De Quincey's 1831 essay "On the Approaching Revolution in Great Britain" - a title which speaks for itself (Blackwood's, vol.XXX, August, Pt.II, pp.313-29).

De Quincey was obviously taken with the joke about the "Breeches Review": he repeated it again in a *Post* article in 1827 (Tave/1966, p.162; and see also 3 December, 1820). As Tave points out, De Quincey indulges in a rare piece of sexual innuendo in this article, which touches on post-Malthusian ideas about birth-control. Breeches, the Westminster Review and birth-control are crudely linked at one point in the brief sketch. Place, though still a powerful political force in the country in the 1820's, was not in fact to be closely associated with the Westminster (est. 1824). He wrote two mediocre articles only for it, in 1826 and 1827.

8. If one is to believe Charles Knight on the subject, there might be an element of literalism in this. "A little before I knew him", Knight recounted, "he had come one morning to my friend [M.D.] Hill, wet and shivering, having slept under a hayrick in the Hampstead fields", avoiding creditors, it appears (Knight/1864, vol.I, p.327). Statements about an opium-free existence, however, were often to be made by De Quincey when matters of credibility and reliability were at stake, and are not, consequently, themselves reliable.

De Quincey seems to have been leading a rather aimless life at this time. Though he remained in London for much of 1825, and though there was talk of projects in hand, he added nothing to what had already been written in 1824 for later publication. He told John White, agent for Fox Ghyll, that he had "little connexion [...] with Messrs. Taylor and Hessey" (7 February, 1825: Berg Collection). He was in touch with his old publishers again on 3 April, 1825, the subject once again being his own financial difficulties (Sotheby's, 8-9 June, 1903/Lot 585 - This is the final letter between De Quincey and the publishers that I have come across). That these difficulties were intense is perhaps shown by the fact that he
wrote on the same subject to his old friend Allan Cunningham three days later (ibid. - for details of Cunningham see 20 March, 1823, note 1; note 11 below suggests that De Quincey would have had little luck with Cunningham). An earlier letter, dated 13 January, 1825, from his mother, shows that he had also been applying to her for money. She was, after the return of her brother Thomas Penson from army service in India, living on a reduced income, but promised her son a small amount of money, "part by March, and the whole by May". "I cannot", she couldn't resist adding, "expect that your literary productions either as a Translator or an Author will rise in moral tone to my point, for I suppose you must please your Readers" (Japp/1891, Memls., vol.II, p.131). Charles Knight's picture of De Quincey "in a miserable lodging on the Surrey side of Waterloo Bridge", in hiding from creditors because he had misunderstood how he could cash a bankers draft, probably relates to this application (Knight/1864, vol.I, p.330). It is highly improbable, however, that De Quincey wasn't aware of a quick method of raising money on the bill.

9. "And so it departed from the sight of all". (See foot of this page.)

10. De Quincey must have been more convincing than usual in outlining his literary plans not long after this. John Wilson commented to his close friend (and writer of a considerable part of his lectures on moral philosophy, it seems from their correspondence) Alexander Blair: "I fear De Quincey is in the Bench at the instance of Taylor and Hessey. He has cut that concern, and is going to set up a new Periodical. That is silly madness" (30 May, 1825: Swann/1934, p.232). Wilson wasn't, perhaps, so much thinking of De Quincey's opium habit being an impediment, which it obviously would have been, as the fact that a gradual publishing recession, one of the harbingers of the financial crash which occurred in London in January, 1826, was becoming evident. Henry Crabb Robinson noted in his diary on 9 June, 1826: "The booksellers are in a deplorable condition: [Alaric] Watts says that with the

[Add. 9. Source untraced. The words do not fit in a hexameter verse and the numerous vowel elisions are too harsh anyway to suit a poetic medium. They may well come from some then well-known Latin grammar or schoolbook.]

11. De Quincey had not relinquished Fox Ghyll easily (see Lindop/1981, pp.278-79). Mrs. De Quincey, with the children, went to live with her parents at The Nab, near Rydal, early in the spring. It wasn't an ideal situation and Margaret was soon acutely depressed, or even suicidal if De Quincey's letter of 16 July, 1825 to Dorothy Wordsworth, begging her to visit Mrs. De Quincey, is anything to go by (Jordan/1962, pp.330-332). Knight/1864 (vol.I, p.330) tells us that De Quincey was staying with him at his Pall Mall East home in the summer of 1825, but says no more. In his letter to Dorothy Wordsworth, De Quincey professes that "repeated interruptions from the Press have not" allowed him to finish a "very long letter" to Margaret (Jordan/1962, p.331). Walladmor is the only known topical work by De Quincey that might have exerted such pressure, but that had been published by Taylor and Hessey earlier in the year. There are no further letters from De Quincey himself to clarify the matter. It isn't difficult to see how Thomas Carlyle could report that De Quincey "lives here in lodgings, with a wife and children living or starving on the scanty produce of his scribble, far off in Westmoreland. He carries a laudanum bottle in his pocket; and the venom of a wasp in his heart. Allan Cunningham has cut him, men generally have cut him; [Maginn] has been frying him to cinders on the gridiron of the John Bull" (20 December, 1824: CL/vol.3, p.233 - see above, 16 June, 1824, note 2, for Maginn).

12. De Quincey didn't return to Westmorland until mid-October, 1825.

88. TO JOHN WILSON

Grasmere - Saturday June 10, 1826.¹

My dear Wilson,

My long silence I hope that you will have attributed to
the true cause - without which it would be inexcusable. - My mother's gift of £300, and of £100 since then, did not wholly liberate me: debts, for which I was either not prepared - or else not prepared for the actual amount, came upon me very soon after you left Westmorland - i.e. in last November: and at the time when your last letter reached me, I was under all the miserable consequences of an Arrest for £90. - Seeking Bail - carrying my Bail to Kendal - then in a few days seeking special Bail² - and carrying my special bail to Kendal - with all the odious circumstances attendant on such cases, added to the certainty that a little knowledge of business in those about me would have saved me from all these disgusting exertions and expenses, totally broke down my spirits: and throughout the winter I continued in a very low way indeed - not able above 3 or 4 times in as many months to bear going into the smallest company - such for instance as that of Rydal Mount.³ From this state I am slowly emerging; but it is slowly: for one consequence of my Opium has been that the sensibility of my stomach is so much diminished, that even now (where I am totally weaned from it) nothing ever stimulates my animal system into any pleasure.⁴ Suffer I do not any longer: but my condition is pretty uniformly = 0.

What leads me into the commission of a letter at this moment (the first I have written for 8 or 9 months, except a few lines on business) is the urgency of a particular embarrassment in which I am placed by the conduct of a man in London. In order to stave off payments as long as possible, I gave bills: these I made payable at the house of a petty bookseller in London, to whom I regularly sent the money as the bills fell due.⁵ This went well until just now, when his own necessities have driven him [to] the appropriation of a small sum, which from some misunderstanding he supposed would not be called for until I came to London - when no doubt his hope was that I should be satisfied with books. - He is sorry of course and all that: but "all that" does no good. He is honest also after a fashion, and all that: but "all that" does
me no good either. So my only course was to apply to the holder of the bill — and to request that it might stand over until the 25th inst. for part and the 30th inst. for another part. — This was granted: and I now have this choice before me — either to obtain the money by writing something or other, or by selling a portion of my remaining books. Unfortunately the last scheme is pretty nearly made impossible by the Election, which I fear would clash with the only week which is soon enough to meet the necessity and late enough to allow me to have all the books collected — arranged &c. between this house and the Nab. And at any rate the electioneering Committees of Kendal carry off many of the book-buying people during the evenings of every day until the Election. — This scheme therefore I set aside: and the other is the one I adopt. Could you therefore find time to enquire and let me know whether there is anything in which I could assist Mr. Blackwood at this moment: any question to be discussed such as I am conversant with, — any book to be reviewed — or translated: — or in short any literary works looking out for a customer. For, though I shall want about £40 in all, yet if I could raise £25 or £20 in this way I might obtain enough of what is due to me in other quarters to sail over the bar — I have written nothing at all for the Press these last 10 months: — a little work on Polit. Econ. addressed to a "Young English | . |" — I have made some progress in but it would require a few diagrams and other things that within the fortnight allowed me I fear could not be accomplished. —

In a general conflagration of my papers your last letter went to wreck, my wife having understood me to comprehend in my incendiary instructions every letter whatsoever without exception: consequently I cannot quote it: but I remember that you spoke of an article for the Q. Rev. on Brown which you thought we might compose in partnership. I should be very glad to furnish my <quota ?towards> such an article: but I fear that there would be this <?problem ?in> harmonising the parts — viz. that, tho' I would gladly resign to you the final
summing up of his pretensions, still I think that the tendency of my criticisms would almost foreclose the possibility of consistently praising him as highly as you perhaps would choose to do— if not entirely from your own sense of his rights, yet at least from the situation in which you stand. But this will be better discussed when we meet. —

And when is that to be?— From W. W. some time ago I heard that Mrs Wilson and your family generally would not come down to Elleray this summer, but that you would yourself pass thro' Westmorland in August on your road to London. This was from a lady recently visiting at your house in Edinburgh. — A week ago I heard this confirmed by Mr. Greenwood of this vale, who had been taken in to see the grounds at Elleray by Mr. Barber;¹⁰ but with this addition furnished by your gardener—viz. that in the course of the summer you meant to spend 3 or 4 weeks at Grasmere:— these gentlemen interpreted him to mean (what however he did not say) at my cottage: which I hope is so: for in a fortnight hence I could with perfect ease offer you a bed. At this moment we are in great disorder; this cottage having stood empty for 5½ years. —

Your last letter, I remember, spoke of Mrs Wilson as being properly restored.¹¹ I hope she has since continued so. — Many a time, if I had been in better spirits, I have thought of taking a week's trip to see you: but for this and every scheme I have been unfitted by the heart-withering depression of this last winter. With my best regards to Mrs. Wilson, and kind remembrances from all of us to your interesting young people. I remain,

Most affectionately yours,
Thos. De Quincey.

Ought not that dog Colbourn to be put a stop to? — As a puffer, I mean? — A greater degradation of literature in my judgement has never existed: for, to balance the undue means put forth to circulate his authors, others will resort to the same horrid tricks.¹²

Addr: Professor Wilson/Edinburgh.
1. De Quincey had returned to The Nab on 13 October, 1825 (WL/1978, p.388). "He is here in great force, his mother having given him 300£ to pay his debts", Wordsworth's sister-in-law, Sara Hutchinson, announced (21 November, 1825: Hutchinson Letters/1954, p.310). He was to move, with his family, back into Dove Cottage the following summer; around the time of this letter, to judge by what he says later on in it. The previous December he had written to Mr. Nicholson, postmaster at Ambleside, asking him to notify the owner of Dove Cottage, Mrs. Benson, that he would renew his "lease of the Town End Property for five years from next May Day. - The house will be put into repair and occupied by the beginning of January next" (8 December, 1825: Univ. of California/Clark).

2. Special bail would be granted in cases where an ambiguity in evidence had led to an inconclusive decision being made by the court. The matter obviously involves debt (see also 6 May, 1824, note 3). A check of the Quarter Sessions Rolls for Kendal between Michaelmas, 1825 and midsummer, 1826, has revealed nothing relevant. There is a strong likelihood that a case of debt would have been heard in the Kendal Borough Court of Record, but nothing has survived from the court for this period.

A few years later De Quincey's mother was to express surprise at the bottomless chasm of her son's financial problems. Why, she asked rhetorically of Dorothy Wordsworth, who had become embroiled in the matter, could De Quincey never manage on his multifaceted income: an allowance, her own gifts, income from writing, and "the contributions which he is not ashamed to raise among his too generous friends [amount altogether to] a better income than many tolerably endowed Clergymen, Rectors too, and Gentlemen, with large families"? (13 December, 1834: Dove Cottage MS/A Quincey 1 - see also 2 August, 1821, note 5 for further details of De Quincey's
income; and 29 April, 1822, no.48, note 4 for information about his book-buying practice).

3. Rydal Mount, Wordsworth's home, about half a mile from The Nab and one-and-a-half miles from Dove Cottage.

4. According to Sara Hutchinson, De Quincey told "Miss W[ordsworth] that he had entirely left off opium before he came hither, but has been obliged to have recourse to it again; 'as he has no Shoes to walk in & without exercise he is obliged to take it'" (21 November, 1825: Hutchinson Letters/1954, p.310).

5. The bookseller may perhaps be J. H. Bohte or Isaac Sheldon, with both of whom De Quincey seems to have had extended financial dealings (see 2 August, 1821, note 2; and 29 April, 1822, no.48 respectively). Since Bohte was not a "petty" bookseller and since Thomas Carlyle refers to "Bohte's widow" on 25 April, 1826 (CL/vol.IV, p.81), the dealer is not likely to be him.

6. A general election was pending. Voting in Westmorland took place at Appleby Castle during the last week of June. Henry Brougham was to stand unsuccessfully for a county seat against the Lowthers for the third and final time. After his zealous participation in the 1818 election, when Brougham had also stood for a seat, De Quincey's inactivity during this one is conspicuous.

7. This statement falls a long way short of De Quincey's usual public textual constructs of his authorial self. The "Life of a Scholar", supposedly the focus of the Confessions (Conf./1821, p.1), was now the life of the hack writer. And the struggle with an oneiric alien other in the former work, had become the "war with the wretched business of hack author" of the previous letter, an equally alien construct but more threatening, perhaps, because it exchanges a sleeping nightmare for a waking one. It could only be distanced by the alienating of publishers, who, in the absence of a workable gift-economy culture or the security of patronage for De Quincey, sustained both literary and physical life. In an
angry letter of 17 July, 1839 to his publisher William Tait, De Quincey tried to sum up the matter. "Publishers mistook my position", he wrote, "Classing me erroneously with the mob of authors whose patrimony is in their talents, they, as monied men, despised me. My head was under water for the time: and that moved their contempt. Hence it has happened - that advantages of power and versatility far beyond competition for Periodic Literature, I have found unavailing even for the narrow purposes of shielding my children from bitter calamities" (A.A./1936). The semiotics of power, corollary of literary transcendance, it appears from this, could not transcend the cash nexus: money could buy talent, indeed it could even buy "The Opium-Eater", but it couldn't, it seems, buy De Quincey.

He appears in fact to have passed over a number of opportunities to earn money with his pen during this period. He was solicited to write a piece for Wilson and J. G. Lockhart's annual, Janus, which was published towards the end of 1825 (dated 1826, it ran for one number only). De Quincey seems to have accepted the commission. It was to be the same old story, however, and Wilson was left making familiar-sounding comments: "No word yet from the Opium-Eater" (15 November, 1825); "I am in daily expectation of hearing from Mr. Lockhart of the Opium-Eater" (26 November, 1825) (Gordon/1862, vol.II, pp.374-75). In a letter to De Quincey (undated but late 1825), Wilson tried to cajole De Quincey into producing something for Janus: "Fifty guineas a year will add to your Incomings or Comings-in [...] and, if Janus prospers, that you will receive [...] every 1st of December till Doomsday. Do not disappoint me" (Japp/1891, Memls., vol.II, pp.51-2). Lindop/1981 (p.280) conjectures that one of the pieces in Janus, "Hints Concerning the Universities", might be De Quincey's work. Another letter of Wilson's, quoted by Gordon (ibid., p.371), however, makes it clear that "Hints" is actually by Lockhart, and one must conclude that De Quincey never produced anything for the annual.
Similarly, he doesn't seem to have picked up potential reviewing work from the Wordsworth circle. Dorothy Wordsworth had him in mind to review Charles Waterton's *Wanderings in South America* (1825), a work he alludes to with some interest in "The English Mail-Coach" (*Blackwood's*, October, 1849; M/XIII, p.288) (23 December, 1825: WL/1978, p.415). "We want him to review M.J.J.'s Book" (*Phantasmagoria*, by Maria Jane Jewsbury), Sara Hutchinson was to write with comparable hope (21 November, 1825: Hutchinson Letters/1954, p.310). Nothing seems to have emerged in either case. (See note 9 for details of another rejected offer.)

There *is*, however, another possible site for an 1825 work by De Quincey. Lindop/1981 (pp.281-82) and Lindop/1985(b) (pp.224-25) offer *The Literary Souvenir*, a popular annual run by poet and editor, Alaric Watts (1797-1864). Lindop gives as De Quincey's contribution to the annual for 1827, which was published on 1 November, 1826, "The Peasant of Portugal". The attribution stems from a comment made by Wordsworth to Watts: "I will with pleasure speak to Mr De Quincey of your wish to have him among the contributors to your *Souvenir*; but, whatever hopes he may hold out, do not be tempted to depend upon him. He is strangely irresolute" (18 June, 1826: WL/1978, p.455). Whilst it is true, as Lindop indicates, that there are De Quinceyan elements in "The Peasant", these really only operate as conventional paradigms and tropes, the stuff of writing more generally rather than the stuff of De Quincey's writing specifically. Verbal parallels between De Quincey's other work and this crudely-managed piece are in fact limited. External evidence for the attribution isn't strong. Wordsworth's remarks damage rather than support any defence case. Alaric Watts's son writes at length on the *Souvenir* and its 1820's contributors, but doesn't mention De Quincey (Watts/1884, passim). Similarly, Polk/mf, which includes many topical letters referring to the 1827 *Souvenir*, again contains no allusion to De Quincey. Watts himself in his *Men of the Time* (1856) includes some comments on De Quincey, but makes no
reference to a link between De Quincey and his own annual (Watts/1856, p.211).

8. This is perhaps a relic from the "Dialogues of Three Templars", the last of which appeared in the London in May, 1824. The missing word is illegible in the manuscript, but might be "Printer".

9. In a letter of 12 November, 1825, Wilson told De Quincey that he wanted to offer a "review of Brown" for the first number of the Quarterly Review to be published under its new editor, J. G. Lockhart; the March, 1826 number, that is (Japp/1890, p.193). The subject here is Thomas Brown (1778-1820), metaphysician and professor at Edinburgh University, whose successor to the Chair of Moral Philosophy, John Wilson was. While De Quincey could respect Brown's interest in metaphysics, he found him intellectually shallow, and accordingly attacked his scholarly integrity in two articles ("Letters to a Young Man" - London, vol.VIII, July, 1823, pp.89-90; M/X, pp.68-69; "Professor Wilson" - 1850, M/V, pp.296-97). The pointers Wilson gave De Quincey in his November letter - "what is his theory of the moral feeling or faculty? [...] I shall be happy to have your opinion on any other or every other part of his philosophy" - must have reminded De Quincey of his friend's earlier queries, in which he had solicited information for his own lectures. There must, in fact, have been more than a little sense of history in all this: William Blackwood had written to De Quincey in 1820, noting that "By desire of Prof. W[ilson] I send you Dr. Brown's work of Cause and Effect [published in three forms in 1804, 1806 and 1818] and trusting that I will have the pleasure of hearing from you ere long" (NLS/MS 30304, ff150-51). The collaborative article, like the earlier one expected by Blackwood, never got written, and Wilson didn't furnish Lockhart with any article for his inaugural issue.

10. James Greenwood (1788-1845), lived at the Wyke, immediately across Grasmere lake from Dove Cottage; Samuel Barber (d.1832), was Greenwood's immediate neighbour, at
Gell's Cottage, a man noted for his bizarre ideas about landscaping (WL/1979, p.507).

11. Mrs. Wilson had never fully recovered from the carriage accident of 1824 (see 21 May, 1824, note 4).

12. In an age when publishers regularly promoted their books - or the books of politically-related publishers - by having them favourably reviewed in their own magazines, Henry Colburn's "puffing" stood out with particular notoriety (see 18 March, 1824, note 13). A satirical attack on Colburn's practice was introduced into a Noctes sketch in 1828 (Blackwood's, vol.XXIII, May, p.792). The previous letter, from De Quincey to Wilson, provides a good example of how easily political incest might be achieved.

89. TO [ROBERT SOUTHEY]¹

6 Gloucester Place, Edinburgh²
Tuesday night, Jany. 9, 1827.

My dear Sir,

At the request of Mr Gillies,³ - with whom I think you are a little acquainted, but who wishes notwithstanding that his application should go through me, - I write to state to you the plan of a new journal which he is going to establish in two or three months - and his earnest desire that you would countenance his plan by allowing him to mention your name as a contributor (in what proportion of course to be left to your own convenience hereafter). The journal is to be entitled 'The Argo, or Importer of Foreign Literature'; or rather it was so entitled but I think some change will be made in the title; and the plan is that it shall be dedicated to Foreign Literature, especially German, Spanish, and Portuguese: for this it is to perform the usual services of a Review, retrospective as well as concurrent, and also to give complete Translations of all such articles as seem fitted to the English taste.⁴ It is to be published quarterly in London and
Edinburgh; in London by Treuttel and Würg; the Edinburgh publisher is not yet fixed.5 -

The persons who have already given their names as contributors (with permission to announce them publicly) are Sir Walter Scott, Professor Wilson6 (at whose house I am now staying), Sir W. Hamilton an excellent German scholar in this place,7 Mr. Colquhoun a clever man who was educated at Göttingen, and myself.8 These are all particular friends of Mr. Gillies: but many others, who are less or not at all acquainted with him - both here and in London, have promised their assistance; and in fact his prospectus is now waiting only for the honor of your name. Having myself a great affection for Gillies, who (I am sorry to say) has been of late years in some pecuniary difficulties,9 I should feel the very greatest pleasure in receiving your permission to say that it will be agreeable to you to contribute occasionally as your other engagements may allow you time. - The scale of payments to contributors, I believe, is not yet finally arranged; but I understand that it is to be at the same rate that the leading journals profess to go upon.10

Believe me, my dear Sir, with my best regards to the ladies of your family,

Very faithfully yours,

Thomas De Quincey.

Publ: Musgrove/1953, pp.6-7.

1. There is no clue as to the identity of the addressee, either on the letter, in Musgrove/1953 (see publ:), or with the holding library at Harvard. A Sotheby's catalogue for 5 December, 1900 (Lot 790), however, gives Southey unequivocally as the recipient. I have assumed that the cataloguer had a cover sheet, or other original details, since lost, to consult. Given his connection with the periodical mentioned in this letter, Southey's seems the likely name here.
2. John Wilson's home, as the letter makes clear further down. De Quincey had migrated to Edinburgh to seek work, without his family, in September, 1826 (Lindop/1981, pp.282-83, where October is given in error – see below). The arrangement was to exert a near-intolerable amount of pressure on his wife. After seeing how things stood at Dove Cottage in November, Dorothy Wordsworth wrote to De Quincey and tactfully suggested that he consider setting up home in the Scottish capital, if, as she had heard, he had received "an offer (or something to this effect) of a permanent arrangement" (WL/1978, p.492).

De Quincey procrastinated. He lodged with Wilson for most of that winter, doubtlessly much to the relief of the Edinburgh Professor. Wilson had recently ensured the rejection of a proposal to establish a separate chair of political economy at the university, by undertaking to lecture on the subject himself. Although his own chair combined moral philosophy and political economy, he had never hitherto lectured on the latter, about which he knew little. As Gordon/1862 suggests, with some understatement, "it is more than probable that De Quincey may also have influenced his opinions on that head" (vol.II, p.83). Never able to pass up a chance to cause trouble for De Quincey, William Maginn was more direct: "I heard from a gentleman who is or was a friend of Mr. De Quincey's that it was said that the object of his visit to Edinburgh was to render you some assistance in your politics & economical studies [...] I knew that this could not be true" (letter to Wilson. 19 November, 1826: NLS/MS 21240, ff55-56 – for details about Maginn see 16 June, 1824, note 2).

De Quincey's return to the Blackwood's circle was achieved with ready ease. On 18 September, 1826, William Blackwood described, in a letter to his son Alexander, how De Quincey had suddenly appeared from nowhere, "to our great astonishment", at a dinner party (NLS/MS 4016, ff121-23). "He is come down", Blackwood continued, "expressly to write articles for the Magazine. We will soon see whether or not he will be able to do anything." A month later De Quincey was on
regular dining terms with the publisher. "De Quincey is here just now and has just given me a very elegant article of 16 pages 'By the English Opium Eater'"; he wrote to Alexander on 17 October (NLS/MS 4016, ff126-27). The potent and fluid currency of the epithet "English Opium Eater, viewed so ambiguously by De Quincey (see 21 September, 1823, note 10), is exploited to the full here. His "Gallery of the German Prose Classics/By the English Opium-Eater/No. I - Lessing" appeared in the November, 1826 and January, 1827 issues of Blackwood's (vols.XX and XXI; M/XI, pp.156-214). The articles were an introduction to and annotated translation of part of G. E. Lessing's Laokoon (1766), and represented the first appearance of the German writer's treatise in English. (Morgan/1949 shows how Lessing had been "almost wholly ignored" in Britain between 1809 and 1823; at which later date "attention began to be directed towards this significant aspect [the study of aesthetics] of his work" - pp.97-98. De Quincey's papers on Lessing take their place in this new wave of interest in Lessing.)

Maginn was again ready with critical advice: "De Q. you will soon find a bore of the first magnitude. His contribution to this number [November] is very valuable, but you may wait a year for such another - & by that time you will have wished him at the bottom of the Forth. Is it true what his old London Magazine friends are giving out here, that he is writing Wilson's political economy lectures for him?" (letter to William Blackwood, 6 November, 1826: NLS/MS 4018, ff11-12). It must be said that a note written by William Blackwood to De Quincey in October, was not a little like the notes of 1820/21, in its ambiguous, cajoling tone: "I cannot tell you how happy I am in having it once more in my power to say I am your debtor. And [now] that you are fairly begun I feel perfectly confident that you will do all you have so long intended, and what I have so anxiously expected [...] I hope I shall have the pleasure from time to time of sending you good round sums" (NLS/MS 30309, ff418-19).
3. Robert Pearse Gillies, see 12 December, 1820, note 5. De Quincey published a review of his *German Stories* (1826), in the December, 1826 issue of Blackwood's (vol.XX, pp.844-58, "Gillies German Stories").

4. The journal was to be called *The Foreign Quarterly Review*, the first number of which appeared on 28 July, 1827, with Gillies as its contributing editor. See Wellesley, vol.II, pp.129-38, for context; and Gillies/1851 - the Memoirs - vol.III, pp.134-36, 143-46, for the editor's own comments on the subject. The magazine, as it emerged, was to be much more limited in scope than De Quincey's prospectus suggests, and ran until 1846, with Gillies editing it actively for one volume only, and abandoning it in 1830. According to Gillies, in his Memoirs, De Quincey was meant to be a contributor from the beginning, but his actual support ran only to his producing this petitioning letter and a brief article on the magazine. The latter, an expansive eulogy, appeared in the *Edinburgh Saturday Post* on 15 December, 1827 (Tave/1966, p.221ff).

Musgrove/1953, offers a persuasive argument that an incomplete manuscript translation of Ludvig Holberg's *Niels Klim*, held at Auckland City Library, was a piece by De Quincey originally intended for the Foreign Quarterly.

5. The firm of Blackwood's declined to publish the magazine, and it wasn't until 1830 that the Foreign Quarterly found an Edinburgh publisher.

6. Scott published four articles in the Foreign Quarterly (which had been the fruit of his advice to Gillies in the first place), Wilson none.

7. Sir William Hamilton (1788-1856), philosopher and German scholar, was to become a good friend of De Quincey. In his 1852 essay on Hamilton, whom he first met in Edinburgh in 1814, De Quincey was to refer to "the splendid accomplishments of this Titan amongst students" (M/V, p.309). The politicised election of John Wilson to the Chair of Moral Philosophy at Edinburgh University in 1820, had been at the expense of the
much better qualified Hamilton: a fact which must have rankled with De Quincey when he got to know the latter much better. Hamilton didn't contribute a piece to Gillies's magazine.

8. John Campbell Colquhoun (1785-1854), lawyer and writer, who had studied law and philosophy at Göttingen. In Germany he developed interests in the new - and fashionable - science of animal magnetism, and published a number of works on this and other branches of physical research. It is to Colquhoun's translation of a French report on the subject, published with his own views in 1833 as the Report of the Experiments on Animal Magnetism, that De Quincey alludes in his article "Animal Magnetism" (Tait's, vol. IV, January, 1834, pp. 456-74). He wrote nothing for the Foreign Quarterly.

Colquhoun may well have studied philosophy with one of Kant's early disciples Anthony Willich (Wellek/1931, p. 13 - if the connection stands, the date given by Wellek probably doesn't: Colquhoun would have been 13 in 1798).

9. Much of the description of Gillies in Wellesley/vol.II (p. 130) also fits De Quincey: "ineffectual", "improvident", "a good translator", "an unpromising editor". The intellectual and temperamental similarities between the two men also extended itself to the way that, as magazine contributors, they approached their publishers. Gillies, for example, wrote to William Blackwood in 1829 asking him to help with a plan that "would not only pay [his large debts] but even retrieve my affairs". If Blackwood could fend off his creditors, he went on at great length, then Gillies would write articles "as fast as they can be used [including his] 'Journal of a Year in Germany'" (NLS/MS 4019, ff104-7).

10. Southey wrote one article only for the Foreign Quarterly, "The Spanish Moors", which opened the first number of the new magazine. He had been having difficulties with John Murray and the Quarterly Review, where he regularly published his work, and was perhaps able to use the new magazine as a device to exert pressure on his old publisher. Before "The Spanish Moors" appeared he was to write to Murray that he had "no
desire to form new connections and to break old ones" - implying at the same time that the new editor of the Quarterly, J. G. Lockhart, was an inefficient manager (16 June, 1827: Southey/1965, vol.II, p.314). After publication of the article in the Foreign Quarterly, he was able to write to his friend, C. W. Williams Wynn, "Murray has behaved better to me than ever man of business did before" (18 August, 1827 - ibid., p.315 - see also pp.493-94).

According to Gillies, Southey was paid at the same rate for both his Foreign Quarterly and Quarterly work; viz., 100 guineas for 2½ sheets, an almost prodigal rate for the times (Wellesley/vol.II, p.130).

90. TO WILLIAM BLACKWOOD
[Edinburgh. 8 December, 1827]¹

My dear Sir,

The article on Mr. Brougham is rapidly advancing.² - Meantime I send you what I hope will suit you for one article. The introductory letter explains the nature of the thing sufficiently: you will see that it is no translation but a digest and a very condensed digest. The book was lent to me by Sir W. Hamilton; and I have really read, as I profess to do, every line of the book - in all 1480 odd pages since Friday (yes Friday) week.³

Believe me very sincerely yours,
Sat Decr 8, 1827
Thomas De Quincey.

Addr: Wm Blackwood Esqr./[Edinburgh].
MS: NLS. MS 4019, f68.

1. See Lindop/1981, pp.285-288, for details of De Quincey's movements during 1827. He spent the spring and part of the summer of 1827 back in Westmorland, and was joined by his two eldest children shortly after he returned to Edinburgh in July. All of his Blackwood's work was crammed into the beginning of the year. In January there appeared the second
part of his translation from Lessing (see previous letter, note 2, para.3); and in February, the third part of the "Gallery of the German Prose Classics/By the English Opium-Eater/No.III - Kant" (a free translation from the German) (Blackwood's, vol.XXI, pp.133-58; M/IV, pp.323-79) along with "On Murder, Considered As One of the Fine Arts", consisting of an introductory letter signed X.Y.Z. and a lecture (ibid., pp.199-213; M/XIII, pp.9-51). With this latter signature, the semantic integration of the London construct into a Blackwood's setting was complete. The commodity mark did not, however, signify that De Quincey's authorial personna became an exclusive, homogenized Blackwood's product. It was now a movable construct open to exploitation by its multiple owners.

The Blackwood's contributor D. M. Moir (1798-1851 - the "Delta" of the magazine) wrote to William Blackwood with his comments on the February issue, as indeed he did for every issue. "The best article in the No. is De Quincey on Murder [...] I can easily suppose that you must have had some qualms in publishing the article [it] will be generally read and relished. Kant is interesting - but his last moments last too long" (NLS/MS 4020, ff9-10). Blackwood's qualms had, in fact, produced an editorial footnote to the article, affirming "We cannot suppose the lecturer to be in earnest" (vol.XXI, p.199). A similar thing was to happen to the writer and physician (and Blackwood's contributor) Robert Macnish (1802-1837), when he published his paper "The Philosophy of Burking" in Fraser's Magazine (vol.V, February, 1832, pp.52-65). The editor, the ubiquitous William Maginn, perhaps deliberately replicating the Blackwood's context, included a note, denying that the article bore any relationship to "reality". Not only this, but Macnish, who was later to write about De Quincey in his Anatomy of Drunkenness (see mid-September, 1821, note 2), also faced the charge that his "Burking paper [...] was a servile plagiarism from De Quincey's 'Murder, one of the Fine Arts'" (Moir/1838, vol.I, p.214).
If De Quincey wasn't writing much for William Blackwood, he was very busy elsewhere. In July, 1827 he had started contributing articles to the weekly newspaper, The Edinburgh Saturday Post (published from 10 May, 1828 as The Edinburgh Evening Post), a paper of small circulation (around 4-500, Groves/12, p.48). It was ultra-Tory in its politics and was, according to one critic, "a sort of successor of the Beacon, of disgraceful notoriety. It stickles for church and state, the ascendancy of the aristocracy, and every one of the exploded or faded abuses in politics and political economy" (WR/1830, p.85). An article which appeared in Fraser's Magazine in 1838 was a little less combative: "It was always Conservative in its politics; but, on coming into Mr. Blackie's hands [the proprietor while De Quincey was a contributor], it assumed that unflinching constitutional tone for which it has ever since been distinguished [...] in the exposure of the hollow pretensions and dangerous principles of its Whig-Radical opponents, it is fearless" (F/1838, pp.567-68).

De Quincey wrote for the Post with surprising regularity through 1827 and well into 1828, probably longer. Tave/1966 offers an edition of these writings and Groves/1, 1a, 5, 6, 9, 10, 10a and 12 supplements this (extending the period of De Quincey's contributions to 1830). One prominent feature of his connection with it is that he was once again an alien element in his publishing context, potentially the loose cannon he was to be in so many of his writing ventures. Groves comments that De Quincey "enjoyed an unusual position" - as a non-ecclesiastical Englishman - in the Post hierarchy, which he describes as "highly ecclesiastical, Presbyterian, and Scottish" in nature (Groves/12, p.48). It is tempting to argue that there must have been some sort of psychological imperative operating in all this; characteristic impulses which tried to structure an organically-ordered world, but which ended up with self-alienating binary distinctions (see Barrell/1991, p.8ff). De Quincey certainly writes in his
Suspiria of a process in which individual perception reaches for autonomy of expression, but finds that the practice has involved an anxious mixing "a little with alien natures" (Susp./1985, p.156). J. Hillis Miller has written of this as a sign of an "unavailability" of assurance, to be filled only with expanding digressive texts (Millier/1975, pp.21 and 27ff). On the other hand, though, the fact remains that the ideological basis of De Quincey's work - his semiotic attack, anxious or not (Baxter/1990, passim) - didn't much fluctuate, whatever the context it found itself in. The "mixing" occurred in the compositors' room or in the publisher's office: a remedial editorial footnote here or there, perhaps, in the case of Blackwood's (or, later, Tait's), or an editorial headnote explaining an "absence" in the case of the London; and in all cases the wilful blending by De Quincey of debt and copy to the extent that the one became an index of the other.

Groves/10a, shows that William Blackwood was aware of De Quincey's connection with the Post. De Quincey did in fact write a number of reviews, balanced judgements rather than blatant eulogies, of Blackwood's for the newspaper (Tave/1966; Groves/10a). His precise status with it is unclear. There is little evidence to suggest that he edited it, even though his Westmorland Gazette experience would have appeared to suit him for the task, but he did "help to establish its editorial policy" (Tave/1966, p.10). A commentator could write (in 1830) of De Quincey's days with the Post, that there was "a much greater proportion of original writing in the Post than in any of the other Edinburgh papers" (WR/1830, p.85). De Quincey's reviews and political leaders circulated with his translations and extended remarks on political economy; much in the vein of his Gazette writings, in fact. If the subject was one of direct political engagement, articles would remain unsigned; if the issue was predominantly a cultural one, a translation from F. G. Klopstock or an examination of the identity of Junius, for example, then X.Y.Z. would appear at the end of the piece (Tave/1966, pp.62, 183, and 271). He was even to
raise the same charge about Blackwood's as he had about the London (see 21 September, 1823): "in one thing, we find a want - there is no politics" (Tave/1966, p.95).

2. Henry Brougham, see 16 June, 1824, note 2, and 24 February, 1825, note 3. De Quincey didn't publish any extended post-Gazette articles on the politician, although in 1839 he could still write to a publisher that he was "most anxious to execute the article" on Brougham (to Adam Black, 19 January, 1839: Yale MS). That Brougham was still a fixed preoccupation in 1827-28, is shown by De Quincey's lengthy comments on him in the Post (see Tave/1966, index). The most sizable of these, in the issue dated 24 November, 1827 (Tave/1966, pp.197-203), is in fact virtually contiguous with this letter.

3. The book is The Hebräerin am Putztische und als Braut (1809, 1488pp.), by Ernst Hartmann. De Quincey's article was published, as "Toilette of the Hebrew Lady, Exhibited in Six Scenes", in Blackwood's in March, 1828 (vol.XXIII, pp.295-308; M/VI, pp.152-78), where a similar claim about the relationship between text and article is made (in an introductory letter). However, as Goldman/1965 (pp.75-76) writes, "far from being an abridgement of the entire work, it is merely a translation, with judicious deletions, of a single chapter in the first volume" (of three volumes). D. M. Moir's ambiguous criticism of the article shows what one part of Blackwood's audience wanted: "It is learned and laborious - quite creditable to Maga - and will be acceptable to biblical adepts, and illuminati of antiquarian societies" (NLS/MS 4022, ff135-36).

For William Hamilton see previous letter, note 7.

91. TO WILLIAM BLACKWOOD

[Edinburgh]

Thursday morning [24 April, 1828]

My dear Sir,

I learn from Professor Wilson that you are going to London. I write therefore to ask you whether you leave any
person as your *locum tenens* so far as to determine upon articles in your absence. I have written so much of an article upon *Dr. Whately's Rhetoric* - that I shall have the whole (a sheet) certainly ready by Sunday evening or Monday morning next of all (April 26-9):¹ and it is of great importance to me to know whether, for this article (supposing it accepted) and for the half-sheet* on Fonk accepted some time back,² I can draw the money on Saturday morning, May 3. - I mean of course supposing that Prof. Wilson (who assures me that he shall not leave town till that day), or any other to whom you may delegate this duty, should approve of the article as likely to suit the Magazine.

I remain

Very truly yours,

Thos. De Quincey.

I wrote yesterday: but my messenger found all closed on acct. I suppose of the K.'s birthday.

Fonk, I learn from Mr. Colquhoun, was pardoned.³

*with an Introduction ready this evening it will make half a sheet.

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Addr: William Blackwood Esq.,/Prince's Street/[Edinburgh].

MS: NLS. MS 4717, ff42-43.

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1. De Quincey's "Elements of Rhetoric", a review of Richard Whately's book of the same title (1828), didn't appear in *Blackwood's* until December, 1828 (vol.XXIV, pp.885-908; M/X, pp.81-133). Wordsworth recognised De Quincey's hand in it, as indeed he should, since De Quincey's running comments on the relationship between language and thought expressed his own ideas on the subject. "Whatever he writes", the poet noted mildly, "is worth reading - there are in it some things from my Conversation - which the Writer does not seem aware of" (27 January, 1829: WL/1979, p.17 - see also Wordsworth's *Essays upon Epitaphs* of 1810, for parallels, and Devlin/1983, pp.94-100 for a discussion of De Quincey's debt). The article ran to
about 1½ sheets, 23 printed pages. (See also 3 March, 1830, note 12.)

2. "Fonk" shows a further development of De Quincey's interest in murder (context given in note 10 to 19 November, 1823). The National Library of Scotland hold a finished fourteen-page manuscript in De Quincey's hand, about the murder in Cologne in 1816 of William Coenen by fellow-merchant Peter Anthony Fonk (MS 4789, ff56-62 - see Byrns/1956b, pp.993-98). This letter confirms Byrns's conjecture that the manuscript was submitted to Blackwood around 1828. Another manuscript in De Quincey's hand, also held by the National Library, serves, as Byrns notes, to introduce the Fonk piece (MS 4789, ff33-36). It is a "letter" of eight pages, signed X.Y.Z., "To the Editor of Blackwood's Magazine", and opens with an attack on the writer - X.Y.Z. - of the preface to the 1827 article "On Murder" (De Quincey, of course), an interesting instance of self-destruction in the context of murder. Although De Quincey writes in "To the Editor" that he sends "herewith the most eminent German murder that has been produced for the last 50 years", it is evident from the current letter that the introduction was written after the Fonk piece itself. In an undated note to William Blackwood, De Quincey refers again to the publisher's imminent "excursion" and concludes, "I now send you the Introduction to the Fonk article" (NLS/MS 4717, ff64-65).

The composite article is a more sophisticated performance than its predecessor in the same field; much closer to the later writings of 1839 and 1854 on the subject (particularly the latter) in terms of intensity of focus and assurance. The section dealing with the murder of Coenen examines the scenic detail of the case with obsessive thoroughness, as it tries to attenuate the facts to a conclusive end. It is rather as though a judicial precognition were being recast for aesthetic effect. When De Quincey came to write his "Second Paper on Murder Considered as One of the Fine Arts" (Blackwood's, vol.XLVI, November, 1839), he used some of the 1828 paper "To
the Editor" in the early pages (verbal parallels suggest he had to paraphrase from memory).

3. For Colquhoun, a lawyer, see 9 January, 1827, note 8. Having been sentenced to death in 1822, Fonk was pardoned only after years of legal wrangling and an appeal to the monarch.

92. TO DAVID BLACKIE¹

Rydal Nab
Wednesday eveng. May 6, 1829.

My dear Sir,

You need be under no alarm. I am now staying here merely to collect information from Prof. Wilson about the article on himself.² - Last week you would have had the art. promised on the day appointed: but, as this would have thrown me into the greatest difficulties, in order to ascertain how stood your final arrangements with the Public, I took a chaise over to Elleray (Prof. W.'s place) - instead of going by the Whitehaven mail, on my road to Manchester via Kendal. At Elleray I learned of course that your 1st appearance was fixed for the 16th inst.³ (The Wilsons had reached Elleray on Sat. April 25). Hence I pursued my journey without anxiety; and now, having returned fm. Manchester,⁴ I have only to go over again to Elleray for the conference with Prof. W., and so far as relates to my articles all will be done. - Some business here will keep me till Friday or Sat. morng.: but, at the latest, I shall be in Edinb. on Sunday night May 10.⁵ And as I allow nothing to interfere with the papers for your Gazette, - everything will be ready before it is wanted.

Pray excuse my hurry, for I am much perplexed with business at this moment, - and believe me, my dear Sir, very faithfully yours.

½ past 7 P.M.

Thos. De Quincey.

MS: Dove Cottage. WLL/De Quincey, Thomas/56a.
1. David Blackie (d.1832), proprietor of both the Edinburgh Saturday Post (later, the Edinburgh Evening Post) and the Edinburgh Literary Gazette, while De Quincey was writing for them. Robert MacNish described him in 1829 as "shrewd and sensible; as sharp as a razor [...] At first I thought him a dry, vulgarish, commonplace mortal; but in the course of the evening, he improved immensely upon me, and I liked him very much" (Moir/1838, vol.I, p.148). After buying the copyright of the Post, Blackie started up the weekly Edinburgh Literary Gazette, which ran from 16 May, 1829 to 10 July, 1830 (ibid., p.153). Blackie, whose name De Quincey insisted on writing as Blaikie, was also a Writer to the Signet, and it comes as no surprise to find De Quincey referring to him as his legal agent in subsequent letters. The life of the Edinburgh Literary Gazette, the periodical which sets the context to this letter, was always a precarious one. The magazine can best be described as a miscellany, made up of articles on cultural matters, reviews, and original pieces, much in the mould of the London Magazine, if its context was distant ideologically from the latter (the Gazette's descriptive subheading ran "Devoted Exclusively to Literature, Criticism, Science, And the Arts"). Its narrow budget and small circulation was to make it yet another speculation of Blackie's "by which he ultimately lost all his fortune" (F/1838, p.566 - Blackie was briefly registered as a bankrupt in both 1829 and 1830 - Groves/12, p.48). When Blackie announced the closure of the magazine in 1830, he showed how precarious its situation had been: "its real Circulation after all my Exertions has never exceeded 250-300 [...] I have weekly been losing by it about £5 to £10" (letter to D. M. Moir, 14 July, 1830: NLS/Acc 9856, No.37).

De Quincey's original intended connection with it was to have been a significant one: the magazine was, D. M. Moir wrote, "ably edited by the Rev. Andrew Crichton [also editor of the Post]; and the literary department was to be principally entrusted to Mr. De Quincey and myself"
The falling-off of his active interest seems to have been rapid. The inaugural issue was "to contain an introduction by De Quincey [...] No. 3 'Life of Wilson' by De Quincey [and issue no. 5 to have a] 'Life of Coleridge' by De Quincey" (ibid., p.137). In the event his only acknowledged contribution did not appear in it until its fourth number (dated 6 June – see following note for details). Groves/2 offers a review, "Danish Bibliothec" (number 2, 23 May, 1829), as being De Quincey's first article. There is nothing to contradict Groves's tentative attribution – De Quincey's knowledge of Danish literature was a highly distinctive feature, and none of the other named contributors had known interests in Danish culture – though the evidence is still only circumstantial.

De Quincey's fellow-contributors numbered two old London friends, Thomas Hood, and Allan Cunningham, and his Blackwood's colleague D. M. Moir. It may be that De Quincey even persuaded the former two to write for the Literary Gazette (9 January, 1827 above shows that he was no inferior canvasser). The magazine was in fact encouraged by William Blackwood, who would not anyway feel threatened by the size of its circulation (various letters in NLS/Acc 9856, No.37). See Groves/7 and 11 for more details on the subject of contributors, and the latter article, along with Groves/4 and /8, for other conjectured contributions by De Quincey to the magazine. (See also 29 March, 1830 and 2 June, 1830 below for further letters to Blackie).

2. De Quincey gives a detailed description of his movements during 1828 and 1829, in 23 July, 1829. He had spent part of the summer of 1828 in Westmorland and returned to Edinburgh in the autumn with Margaret and his two eldest children. Dora Wordsworth reported that he had been "coming home every month, & then every week", an unlikely scenario (Jordan/1962, p.299; see also Japp/1891, Memls, vol.II, pp.166-171). When exactly he returned to Westmorland on the current occasion is not known (ibid.). The sudden departure from Edinburgh mentioned
in the present letter had obviously surprised his fellow contributors on the Edinburgh Literary Gazette. Moir notes his own promise to the magazine's proprietors "to give them some aid at starting, understanding that De Quincey was to be their Magnus Apollo, when lo! and behold! the eloquent chewer of Opium takes sick in Westmorland, and, up to this hour, has done little or nothing for them" (letter to Robert MacNish, 3 June, 1829: Moir/1838, vol. I, p. 141).

The "article" referred to here is the "Sketch of Professor Wilson/(In a Letter to an American Gentleman)", by "Parmenides". It was the lead article in three issues of the Literary Gazette: numbers 4, 6 and 9 (vol. I, 6 and 20 June, and 11 July, 1829; M/V, p. 259ff). Given De Quincey's confidential knowledge of Wilson, not to mention his previous private comments, the "Sketch" is a remarkably anodyne performance. There is perhaps intentional irony in the fact that De Quincey seems much more concerned with the settings Wilson moves through than with the man himself. Westmorland, the "Lake Poets", Oxford and Wilson's Elleray estate, are all detailed at some length. And it is the "gymnastic proportions" of the professor rather than his intellectual attainments which are generally foregrounded when he does appear on the scene (M/V, pp. 265-70). The epistolary article represents in the first place not just a linguistic displacement of the figure of Wilson, but is also a straightforward substitute for him. Its addressee, "L.", on a literary lion-hunting tour of Europe, has "missed" the professor, who was absent on business, and "Parmenides's" letter is to fill in the gaps (ibid., pp. 259-60). The initial absence is compounded by the further absences, as Wilson strains to get a look in at his own life. There is little in the way of a hermeneutic exploration of character here, and there is nothing of the fragmentary solipsistic biographical approach that De Quincey was to offer a few years later. The distancing of Wilson from his writings and even from his own estate, replicates the
distancing of De Quincey from his rightful character by critics and caricaturists.

Wilson expressed his "pleasure" at the first instalment, in a letter to De Quincey, but it isn't difficult to see that he found it rather a bland portrait (June, 1829: Gordon/1862, vol.II, pp.153-54). "It has occurred to me", he suggested, "that you may possibly allude, in the part which is to follow, to the circumstances of my having lost a great part of my original patrimony, as an antithesis to the word 'rich' [...] in a way which is flattering to my character" (ibid.). Wilson also suggested that De Quincey offer him as an "original" poet, an essayist with a "sense of the beautiful", and as a "thoroughly logical and argumentative" lecturer in Moral Philosophy" (ibid.). Of the writer, De Quincey says nothing, and of the lecturer, merely that the election of Wilson to his Chair was the product of "political influences" (M/V, p.288). A final letter to the "American Gentleman", "on the position which [Wilson] occupies in relation to modern literature", is promised, at the end of the third instalment (ibid.). It never appeared and it anyway seems unlikely that De Quincey would have wanted publicly to focus on the writings of a man whose intellectual pretensions he privately despised. He even qualifies his promise to write "a short critical notice" of Wilson's "literary career", by adding that it will be "such as it may be proper for a friend to write" (ibid., p.286). His silence perhaps speaks volumes. It must be said that Wilson needed his defenders. Given the dubious circumstances of his appointment to a professorship, and the rather ambiguous nature of the Christopher North/Professor Wilson axis, he was vulnerable to the many attacks he suffered. In 1826, for example, he reported a "false and wicked libel [written "without anger" in] the Christian Instructor. [...] It is said that my private character gives the lie to my moral doctrines delivered from the Chair", and in 1837 Robert Blackwood noted "the absurd report wh[ich] has got into the London papers of
the Professor being insane, [which] may have a bad effect on the Magazine" (NLS/MS 4018, ff278-81; MS 4044, ff88-89).

De Quincey maintained his slender connection with William Blackwood at this time by producing a political article, "The Duke of Wellington and Mr. Peel" (Blackwood's, vol.XXV, March, 1829, pp.294-302). By both De Quincey's and Blackwood's standards it was a fairly average achievement. William Blackwood, however, was full of flattering encouragement: "I feel so much pleased with it and am so sensible of the exertion you have made to get it ready in time that I beg to enclose you ten pounds" (February, 1829: NLS/MS 30311).

3. A reference to the first number of the Edinburgh Literary Gazette, which appeared on 16 May.

4. Manchester - De Quincey was at this time involved in convoluted negotiations to buy The Nab, his wife's family home. It was, as Lindop/1981 (p.290) writes, "hard to understand how anyone could have placed the slightest confidence in the plan he worked out" to raise the money that would not only secure him as an estate owner, but also pay off his and Margaret's grandfather's debts. Somehow, though, a mortgage was raised through a Manchester solicitor, and later in the summer of 1829 De Quincey at last found himself a man of property. It was of course to be a delusive step towards solvency and, as De Quincey's letters soon show, would result in a deepening of his problems. For details of The Nab purchase see Armitt/1916, pp.675-704 and Lindop/1981, pp.290-92.

De Quincey later calculated that the value of the mortgage had been reduced by £10, "spent in 4 journeys (viz. Edinb. to Ambleside, Amb. to Manchester, - and the same reversed)" to visit the Manchester solicitors Duckworth, Dennison and Humphrys (letter to the solicitors, 31 January, 1832, in: Armitt/1916, p.701). These "journeys" must be what he refers to in the current letter.

5. De Quincey's return visit to Edinburgh was a brief one, as 23 July, 1829 shows. His colleagues on the Literary Gazette,
My dear Sir,

I write to thank you and Mr. John Wordsworth for the favor of your calls, - a thing which I ought to have done long ago, and should have done but for the great disgust I have connected during my late illness with the very sight of pen and ink.

My illness was a fever caught, I believe from a fellow passenger on the Edinburgh Mail upon the 12th of June: for 18 days after I arrived at this place (June 13) this fever utterly prostrated me, and during all that time I was able to take only a little lemonade or ginger beer. Hence, or from the malady itself, I was left so weak as to be scarcely able for a fortnight to crawl from room to room; and have not yet felt myself strong enough, though otherwise perfectly well and in good spirits, to go more than a few yards into the field behind the house.

I trouble you with this account of myself only to explain why I have not hitherto acknowledged the favor of yours and Mr. John Wordsworth's call. I should be very sorry to find that I have missed the pleasure of seeing Mr. J. Wordsworth; but hope that this will not be so. In the course of this week I shall certainly be able to come over; and meantime I beg my best regards to him; - and remain, my dear Sir,

Ever yours most truly,
Thos. De Quincey.

Publ: Jordan/1962, pp.332-33.
December and now curate to the Rector of Whitwick, near Coleorton. He is the "Johnny" of De Quincey's early letters to the Wordsworths, and the writer's pupil in the Dove Cottage days (see Jordan/1962, passim).

2. As he explains in the following letter, De Quincey arrived back at The Nab with Margaret and their two eldest children to join his other five children and his wife's family. This added up to a complement of sixteen people in a moderately-sized farmhouse.

3. Wordsworth's friendliness was in marked contrast to De Quincey's evident unneighbourliness. "Mr de Quincey I am sorry to say admits no one on account of illness", he wrote on 4 July [...] "This grieves me much, as he is a delightful Companion and for weightier reasons, he has a large family of young Children with but a slender provision for them" (WL/1979, p.89). Dora Wordsworth likewise seems to have been refused admission on at least two occasions during the summer (Jordan/1962, p.300). The mood of this letter of De Quincey's is itself in marked contrast to that of the following letter, written just a few days later.

94. TO CHARLES KNIGHT

[Rydal Nab]

Thursday, July 23, 1829.

My dear Knight,

If it should happen that the post brings you, at the same time with this letter, any other letter or letters relating to business, and, above all, to money (money that you are to receive, and not that you are to pay) — in that case lay aside this letter of mine for those others; for this of mine brings you neither money nor any immediate prospect of money; and, in fact, its whole and sole purpose is to refresh the recollection of myself in yours and Mrs. Knight's mind, to express the warm interest I feel in everything that relates to your family, and to give you an earnest invitation from Mrs.
De Quincey and myself to come and see us. By you, of course, I mean, as essential members of the party, Mrs. Knight, Miss Knight, and as many of your younger daughters as you can bring with convenience to yourself. I cannot express to you how much pleasure this visit would give to us all; and the reason that I now first send you such an invitation is, that I now first have it in my power to send it. If you were to come immediately some inconvenience would arise, but inconvenience only to yourself, and not to us. And, that you may understand everything that is necessary to guide your plans, I will make you exactly acquainted with my present situation.

You know probably (for poverty and debt, and everything else that throws a shade upon a man's respectability, are sure to travel quickly) that, merely to stave off the extreme pressure of my pecuniary embarrassments, in the summer of 1827 (in fact, more than two years ago, and about the very time when I received the melancholy statement from you of your own misfortunes, of which more hereafter). 2 I quitted my home at this place for Edinburgh, and there I continued until after the 12th of last month, writing, but of necessity consuming a great part of my emoluments on a separate establishment in that city. This was managed with great economy, but still was a heavy burden upon me, as you may suppose, when I go on to add that in the autumn of that year, 1827, feeling myself depressed by this entire separation from my family, and recollecting besides that the education of my two eldest children was now urgently calling for my attention, I resolved to bring them up to my own lodgings in Edinburgh. Accordingly, on the 3rd of October, 1827, I went down to Carlisle, where they met me, and the next day I brought them (my eldest son and daughter) on to Edinburgh; and there they stayed, one of them, however, for more than a year of the time, at the houses of old friends until the said June 12, 1829.

In 1828, for many important arrangements which my Philistines (Duns videlicet) made necessary, Mrs. De Quincey joined me in Edinburgh, so that for three-quarters of a year
we had a larger establishment in Edinburgh than in Westmoreland. In fact, this Grasmere house I directed to be shut up, servants all but one dismissed, and that one sent with the little insignificant cubs of children that remained in England to a rich farmhouse, flowing with milk and honey, and in other respects a paradise to them from the mighty barns and spacious pastures which they thus obtained for playrooms. Well, by good management and better luck, I contrived early in this present year to silence mes Anglois (as the French do, or did use to, entitle creditors). This odious race of people were silenced, I say, or nearly so: no insolent dun has raised his disgusting voice against me since Candlemas, 1829: they now speak softly and as if butter would not melt in their mouths; and I have so well planted my fire-engines for extinguishing this horrid description of nuisance, that, if by chance any one should smoulder a little too much (flame out none durst for shame), him I shall souse and drench forthwith into quietness. Whilst this great operation was in progress, concurrently almost with that I entertained, and about April 6 brought to a tolerable state of maturity, an overture sent to Edinburgh early in 1828 by my wife for purchasing that same estate with that 'milk and honey' aforesaid, with those 'mighty barns,' and those 'spacious pastures' heretofore mentioned. 'Purchasing!' you say. 'What the devil?' Don't swear, my dear friend; you know there is such a thing as buying a thing and yet not paying for it, or at least paying only the annual interest. Well, that is what I do, can do, and will do. For hear finally that the thing is done. April 6, all things seeming to be ready and waiting only for me, I came down from Edinburgh to this house and estate in Westmoreland; but, as lawyers are an insufferable race of procrastinators, and as there was an infinity of cross business and oblique interests connected with the affair, and trusteeship, and all that (some particulars of which cost me a further journey down to Manchester), it was not until May Day that I became legally possessed of the property and produce, and not until Old May
Day (May 12) or the day before, that I could return to Edinburgh. The month which followed was occupied with winding up our Scotch affairs, of which the main part consisted in arranging and burning papers of mine, returning books and other fash (to speak Westmorland) which, well you know, infests and dogs the movements of literary men. Friday morning, June 12, my wife, myself, children, and appurtenances, mounted the Carlisle mail at 7 o'clock in the morning, which mail we had wholly to ourselves; left Edinburgh probably for ever, under a heavenly summer morning lighting us back to England. By five in the evening reached Carlisle (ninety-six miles), rested for three hours, and then for the rest of our road (forty-five miles), by taking an open carriage (such as you may get in this country if you wish) and four horses, hoisted over the great mountain of Kirkstone (an ascent of three miles) ourselves and a weight of luggage, live and dead, that would have cost three ordinary post-chaises to carry. Thus you are in possession of my journal in all its important movements for the last two years, down to a ridiculous circumstantiality. And now, my friend, think what a glorious El-Dorado of milk and butter and cream cheeses and all other dairy products, supposing that you like those things, I can offer you, morning, noon, and night. You may absolutely bathe in new milk, or even in cream, and you shall bathe if you like it. I know that you care not much about luxuries for the dinner-table, else, though our luxuries are few and simple, I could offer you some temptations: mountain lamb, equal to Welsh; char, famous to the Antipodes; trout and pike from the very lake within twenty-five feet of our door; bread, such as you never presumed to dream of, made of our own wheat, not doctored and separated by the usual miller's process into fine insipid white flour and coarse, that is, merely dirty-looking white, but all ground down together, which is the one sole receipt (experto crede) for having rich, lustrous, red brown, ambrosial bread; new potatoes, of celestial earthiness and raciness, which with us last to
October; and finally, milk - milk - milk - cream - cream - cream (hear it, thou benighted Londoner), in which you must and shall bathe. 9

But the mountains (for these things, tho' temptations, you will say, are not temptations for two hundred and seventy miles) - the mountains, lakes, etc., are so to both Mrs. Knight and yourself. And, therefore, hear what inconvenience you will have to face, if you come immediately.

But a worse inconvenience I fear may be this: at present we have two houses, and yet neither fitted separately to receive our friends as we wish; the cottage at Grasmere being too small, or rather (which is its more capital defect) having no bed but one, i.e. not two beds, large enough to receive two persons; and this farmhouse on the estate which I have bought (from which in fact I write, and which I call Rydal Hay, though I date always from Grasmere, two miles off, as my old domicile for twenty-one years back) - this farmhouse, though a capital Westmoreland farmhouse, is merely such, and moreover loaded with human weeds in a degree insufferable to you. At this moment, what with children, servants, and the old original possessors of the estate, who have not found it possible or convenient to themselves sarcinas colligere 10 and to evacuate the fortress, we (including Margaret and myself) muster sixteen strong. This, with the bustle it occasions, being too much for M.'s spirits, to-morrow we remove ourselves, two children, and two servants to Grasmere; 11 and there it is that we shall hope for your visit, if you will pardon us the inhospitality of offering you no better accommodation than a bedroom and dressing-room (but very clean and neat) at an old servant's, now rich, and living within twenty feet on the other side of the road. Miss Knight could have a room at our cottage at Grasmere, and perhaps your younger children would join mine in roaming through the barns and pastures of Rydal Hay, and milking new milk for themselves. But stay, my paper is out; and I think that you are one of those who do not grudge postage. I will therefore
write a second letter to you by to-morrow's (or the following) post; for I have more to say, though of matter chiefly retrospective. Meantime farewell; you know my great regard and friendship for you, my dear Knight, and Mrs. Knight I shall always remember with the affection of a brother.  

Yours ever most faithfully,

Thomas De Quincey.

1. See 4 November, 1824, note 1, for details about De Quincey's relationship with Knight.
2. In the mid-1820's Knight proposed publishing a "National Library" series of cheap educational digests. The scheme was held up firstly by the financial crash which bankrupted many publishing businesses (see 24 February, 1825, note 10), and then by a bitter dispute with the publisher John Murray, who was to have co-published the series. Knight was eventually forced to hand his business over to trustees; an event he was to write of in his autobiography as one which "clouded [my prospects] in a few weeks of 1827" (Knight/1864, vol.II, p.48). He wasn't overthrown for long, though, and had in fact been the owner of the London Magazine until the previous month. "Several years of bad management", he wrote, "had reduced that Miscellany to a much lower level than that of the brilliant days of Charles Lamb, and Hazlitt, and Hood, and De Quincey" (ibid., p.109). Ironically, Knight sold the magazine to its one-time enemy, Henry Colburn, who duly absorbed it into his own New Monthly Magazine (Riga/1975, p.xxiv).
3. The De Quinceys had lodged at 19 Pitt Street (not 18, as in Eaton/1936, p.313), and at "Porteus's Lodgings", 18 Duncan Street. The brief notes from Captain and William Hamilton to De Quincey, published in Japp's Memorials and there dated 1831-37 by Japp, probably belong to this earlier period, or at least to 1827-29 (vol.II, pp.52-57; NLS/MS 21239, ff26-39). Watermarks and addresses suit the latter dates rather than
1831+, and it is probable that William Hamilton or his brother accommodated one of De Quincey's children on occasion.

(One wonders if De Quincey had walked up to the High Street on 28 February, 1829 to attend the public execution of the murderer and bodysnatcher William Burke.)

4. The "farmhouse" is The Nab, which stood immediately across a road from Rydal Water.

5. De Quincey had presumably silenced his creditors on the strength of the £500 in cash that came to him in the mortgage arrangement for The Nab. He had in fact bought the estate from his father-in-law and then divided the money raised on the mortgage between them.

6. Like De Quincey, the father-in-law, John Simpson, was broke, and Margaret's "overture" was probably the information that if something wasn't done quickly the Simpson's would lose The Nab. In the short-term, De Quincey had to pay interest on the £500 advanced to himself and on £1,100 he had agreed eventually to give to Simpson's heirs (Lindop/1981, p.291).

7. De Quincey is remarkably casual about his references in this letter to what had been for him a fairly intensive period of mostly journalistic labour. He was now, no doubt, hoping to resume the sort of life of a gentlemen scholar he had achieved at the beginning of his Grasmere period, in the late 1800's and early 1810's. The link between property and non-labour was an indissoluble one with him.

8. By June, 1830 it was to be the other way round: he was in Edinburgh and never to live in Westmorland again, even if, later in life, he was to talk on a number of occasions about moving back down.

9. De Quincey had offered a similarly extravagant though ironically subversive picture of Westmorland in an earlier, unpublished sketch: "Blest in these riches [of Char and Poets] beyond the rivalry of all other counties [...] as to cream, I believe there never was any in Westmorland. The milk is of a beautiful azure or cerulean colour as soon as it first sees the light [...] Westmorland milk comes into this world ready
skimmed" (Japp/1890, p.162 - The original four-page fragment, headed 11-14, is held at Cumbria Record Office, Kendal - It mentions Castlereagh, who died in 1822, as a living figure [as Foreign Secretary], and alludes to a reference to Ashantee in "a former number of the magazine", which must be Blackwood's for May, 1819, vol.V, p.175ff. It is probable, therefore, that the fragment is an early part of De Quincey's rejected "Lakes" article of 1820 [see 3 December, 1820 and notes]).

De Quincey's letter to Knight makes an amusing contrast to an invitation that he had himself received from Thomas Carlyle the previous December. The two writers had, by a strange reversal, become good friends (see 4 November, 1824, note 2 and Lindop/1981, pp.287-88). Carlyle had settled at Craigenputtoch, near Dumfries, and invited De Quincey (then in Edinburgh) to visit him and his wife. "We sometimes project founding a sort of Colony here, to be called the 'Misanthropic Society'", he wrote, "We have a solitude altogether Druidical, grim hills tenanted chiefly by the wild grouse, [and here] the 'Bog School' might snap its fingers at the 'Lake School'" (CL/vol.IV, p.433). The relative comments from the two men say much about their corresponding temperaments and aesthetic viewpoints.

"experto crede", "believe the person who has experienced it" - Virgil, Aeneid, Bk.XI, 1.283.
10. "to tie up their bundles, baggage".
11. To Dove Cottage, that is.
12. If the letter itself doesn't give indication enough, this casual reference to the postal system is a sure sign that De Quincey was feeling at ease with himself. More habitually, the system is entered with some anxiety. Unreliable deliveries, untrustworthy messengers, doubtful access to the system in the first place, and the prying eyes of strangers, more usually set the context to De Quincey's references to it. Even in the more settled days at Lasswade, he was to worry inordinately about losing information in the postal network; complaining at one point that it was probably quicker to get a letter to
Astrakhan than to his Lasswade home (17 December, 1844: NLS/MS 5509, ff113-14). In the light of this, there is a peculiar irony in the fact that De Quincey asked John Wilson to ensure that Blackwood's spared the critical rod with Matthew Davenport Hill's book on education (see 24 February, 1825). He wanted, for one thing, to protect the school which was a major subject of the book, and which was the major form of support for Hill's brothers. These latter numbered Rowland Hill, founder of an integrated postal system, and the man who "successfully articulated a new ideology of the mail. Under Hill's Benthamite system, all letters are equal and equally subject to the same central authority" (Favret/1993, p.202). Such an inflexible, centred authority would but magnify De Quincey's anxieties about external interference with his texts. In the present case it is noticeable that his text is to be sent on credit: the reader will pay to look at it and not the sender to dispatch it. A linguistic exchange is already also a commercially exploitable one. See also 3 December, 1820, note 1 (para.5) for further remarks on this subject.

13. In his Passages Charles Knight mentions his delight at receiving this "warm-hearted" letter, which signalled a "renewal" of his correspondence with De Quincey (Passages/1864, vol.I, pp.340-42). Knight didn't visit, and the two men weren't to meet again until 1831. By this time the ambrosial days of The Nab were over, and De Quincey was labouring for the periodicals again in Edinburgh.

95. TO [MRS. HILL]

[Nab Cottage]¹

Monday Night, October 12. [1829]²

My Dear Madam,

I have been obliged to go to bed from mere overpowering want of sleep, and thus - viz. by sleeping too long (having only this minute awakened) - I have unavoidably broken up our
plan, which was to have come up in a coach, and have left it to your choice either to return with us (viz. our party of last night), or else to retain us as your companions during Mr. Hill's absence:—This on the assumption that you had no other engagement. At present, though too late for this choice, yet on the same assumption of your being not otherwise engaged, I write to propose that Mrs. De Quincey, myself and my daughter, should come up:—we shall take tea before coming. But we are not quite sure whether we were right in understanding that you did not yourself mean to accompany the gentleman to the dinner-party. One word of answer will suffice —viz. YES, meaning that you are at home and disengaged, or not better occupied in reading, writing, etc. NO, meaning generally that you are unavoidably engaged.

Believe me, my dear Madam,

Ever your faithful Servant

Thomas De Quincey.

Publ: Hill/1896, pp.97-98.
MS: None located.

1. The precise context to this letter is a little obscure: all Hill/1896 tells us is that it was written to Matthew Davenport Hill's wife. We do know, however, that the two men had become good friends by now. In September, 1828, Hill wrote home to his wife to report that he had visited De Quincey on his way through Edinburgh and found that he had "for the tenth time renounced opium, which he said he had not tasted for one hundred and eighty days. He received me with great warmth" (Hill/1878, p.85). The two men met again in Edinburgh, in the autumn of 1835. Hill received a bizarre memento of this later visit in the form of a lengthy recipe for "Oatmeal (or, as it is often called, Water) Porridge". Neatly written in De Quincey's hand, and with a careful drawing of a "thible" —a wooden device for stirring the porridge — it is perhaps an indication of what the opium-eater, then probably living in
the debtors' sanctuary at Holyrood, was living off at the time
(Folger MS/Y.d.543 [a] - Hill has noted on the recipe the
circumstances under which it was presented). For Hill see also
19 November, 1823, note 3, and 31 January, 1830.
2. 1829 is the only possible year that fits the details of the
letter. Eaton/1936 (p.313) maintains that the Hills visited De
Quincey in Westmorland that year; and the circumstances of the
letter - both parties involved as families, and the De
Quinceys in a position to offer hospitality - tally with the
date, where the year also matches the stated month and day.

96. TO JOHN WILSON

[Rydal/Grasmere]

Thursday Jany. 14, 1830

My dear Wilson,

You remember our innumerable contracts about the Novel.¹ At length I am nearly in a condition to claim it, - that is, if you still think yourself bound by our old treaties. And the object of my present letter is to ascertain that. My MS will be finished in less than a month at furthest, and it will bear the following <?title>: "New Canterbury Tales" (...on the model of Miss Lee's) "by the author of the Confessions of an Eng. Op. Eater".² It is so prepared as to make a volume of 400 pages equal to Miss Lee's. Now for this can you give me 100 guineas? and in some shape immediately negociable? - Formerly you used to say that - on the same day on which I delivered the MS. - you would lay down the blunt. But say how far this holds at present - in the year 1830. - Pray, spare me time for a single line of answer by return of post, if you possibly can.

I beg my best remembrances, and in the greatest hurry - to catch a messenger in this profound frost and snow (which drives everybody to the fire-side)³ - remain, my dear W.

Yours affectionately,

Thomas De Quincey
Perhaps you will not think it unreasonable that if par
hazard - more than 1000 or 1200 copies should sell - a fresh
bargain shd take place. But on this point say what you think
is fair. For neither of us wish anything but that: and you are
better master of the grounds for such a calculation than I.

Addr: Mr Professor Wilson/Gloucester Place/Edinburgh.
MS: NLS. MS 4027, f79.

1. For a discussion of De Quincey's "Novel", see 29 April,
1822 (no.48), note 7. Wilson himself, perhaps, confirms the
aptness of the word "innumerable" when his mouthpiece
Christopher North, in a Noctes sketch for October, 1825,
comments on De Quincey, "Would that we had his promised
'Romance!' For, with all his logic, he is a man of
imagination, and, bateing a little formal pedantry now and
then, a master of the English language" (Blackwood's,
vol.XVIII, p.508).

2. Harriet Lee (1757-1851), dramatist and novelist, published
her Canterbury Tales, to which her sister, Sophia (1750-1824),
also contributed two tales and an introduction, in five
volumes between 1797-1805. The Chaucerian context, of a
miscellaneous group of travellers thrown together by accident,
contains twelve stories best described as variations on a
gothic/pseudo-historical theme. De Quincey refers to the
highly popular gothic novel The Recess (1783-5), by Sophia
Lee, a number of times in his 1803 diary; concluding, "[I] cry
at the latter part of Recess" (Eaton/1927, p.192).

De Quincey was a lifelong enthusiast of the Lees' Canterbury Tales. It is to one of Harriet Lee's contributions,
"Kruitzner, or the German's Tale" (often reprinted, and
Byron's source for Werner), that he repeatedly recurs.
According to his daughter Emily, her father thought it
"wonderful"; and Francis Jacox, who befriended De Quincey in
the 1850's, noted that "he was emphatic in praise of Harriet
Lee's, 'The German's Tale', as being almost unequalled in
narrative skill" (Japp/1890, pp.439, and 300). In 1840 he was
to refer to the *Canterbury Tales* in print, this time noting
that "the very inferior tales of Miss Sophia Lee are mingled
with those of Miss Harriet. Two of those written by Harriet,
viz., The Landlady's Tale and The German's, are absolutely
unrivalled as specimens of fine narration" ("Sketches",
Tait's, vol.VII, October, 1840, p.635; M/III, pp.204-5). He
goes on in the same passage to single out for praise the
"colossal exhibition of fiendish grandeur in Conrad; the fine
delineation of mixed power and weakness in Siegendorf; [and]
the truly Shaksperian [sic] portrait of feminine innocence and
nobility in Josephine" (ibid). These were of course the
primary character elements that De Quincey liked to employ,
with varying accents, in his own fictions; particularly
*Klosterheim* (1832), "The Household Wreck" (1838) and "The
Avenger" (1838) (indeed, if one characterises opium - De
Quincey certainly apostrophises it - one might also include
the *Confessions*).

Since De Quincey's *Tales* qua *Canterbury Tales* never
reached publication, it must be asked how much his proposal
was a money-raising ploy and how much a serious project.
Wordsworth seems to confirm at least some genuine intention to
complete such a work. In a letter dated 18 February, 1830, he
told Edward Quillinan that he had "called upon and seen Mr De
Quincey [at the Nab] - looking very well, and busy (he says)
in writing a series of *Canterbury Tales*, for money - which he
is in great need of [he has] resolved not to be seen among his
neighbours, till the foresaid Tales were concluded" (WL/1979,
p.206). See 3 March, 1830 (letter and notes 3 and 4), and 29
March, 1830 (note 2), which show that William Blackwood
believed the proposed work to be a publishable one. To both
publisher and writer, the success of Harriet and Sophia Lee's
*Canterbury Tales* might have indicated speculative wisdom in
producing a sequel, even if it wouldn't have been the first.
There was also the long-term success of the *Confessions* by
which to judge De Quincey's commercial potential.
It isn't difficult to see the appeal of the fragmented, episodic form of the split narrative to De Quincey. The discordant, spasmodic bursts of effort that were the habitual lot of the drug-addict, were not suited to linear narrative movement. "In parts and fractions eternal creations are carried on, but the nexus is wanting", De Quincey was himself to admit in the mid-1840's (Japp/1890, p.242). It looks as if he were trying with his Tales to make an aesthetic virtue of a pathological necessity. Although his promised "large works" more often than not turned out (accidentally) to be what Thomas McFarland has called "fragmented modalities" - where the "phenomenology of the fragment is the phenomenology of human awareness" and is a deliberately-sought form (McFarland/1981, p.5 and ff.) - De Quincey still held on to ideas of organic completeness. Such could, though, as the scheme for the Tales shows, only be an external imposition, and even then ended up as a form of "Infinite incoherence, ropes of sand [...] a disorganised wreck" (Japp/1890, p.242). It was only in a periodical press format that the incoherence could at least be blurred by the gaps provided through successive part-publication. (See 19/26 March, 1831, note 3 for a possible link between the Tales and De Quincey's Klosterheim.)

3. Wordsworth's letters of the period show that the winter was a particularly severe one. The poet went skating a number of times on Rydal Water, immediately in front of The Nab.

97. TO MATTHEW DAVENPORT HILL
Grasmere, January 31st, 1830.

My dear Hill,

I was greatly obliged to you for the letter which you enclosed in Mr. Brougham's frank last summer.1 That letter I answered immediately; but, some accident or other having interfered with my actually signing and sealing it - to this day it has remained, with other inchoate labours of mine, in a
table drawer. The drawer happens to be a cedar one; now, had the letter happened to be such that in the classical sense I could pronounce it 'cedro digna' (i.e., oleo cedrino, a preservative from worms, &c., &c.), I could even yet have forwarded it. I find in it, however, nothing worth repeating at this distance of time; except perhaps that, in the way of news, it communicated (what may still be sent to you in London) the marriage of our learned friend Sir William Hamilton. A famous scholar of your profession, Selden, is reported to have said that - 'Of all the actions of a man's life, his marriage does least concern other people's, yet, of all actions of our life, it is most meddled with by other people' (Selden's Table Talk). A very great digger amongst Hebrew and Phoenicean roots is rarely, I fear, a great philosopher; and accordingly in this particular remark of Mr. Selden's, though he should bring Samaritan or even Coptic authority for it, I see little truth. Abstracting from a merely selfish 'concern,' what can better be entitled to determine the proportions of a liberal and disinterested 'concern' in another man's actions than simply the degree in which they expound his physical and moral constitutions? Now surely no action of a man's life unveils so much of his temperament, taste, understanding, degree in which ambition is an active principle of his nature, and so forth, - or at least furnishes so many conjectural grounds for appreciating all that, as precisely this one act of choosing the partner of his life - the depository of his honor - and the determiner of his household happiness.

Pardon me this digression, I had forgotten for the moment that I was writing a letter. To return to my subject...I remember, amongst my boyish acquaintances of thirty years back, a vulgar woman - an heiress - who had married a younger brother of an Irish noble family, a certain Hon. Colonel -. She, this same Hon. Mrs. -, as vulgar in mind as in manners, used - by way of irritating the gallant Colonel - to sum up the story of her marriage thus: 'Yes; the Colonel and I had a
table drawer. The drawer happens to be a cedar one; now, had
the letter happened to be such that in the classical sense I
could pronounce it 'cedro digna' (i.e., oleo cedrino, a
preservative from worms, &c., &c.), I could even yet have
forwarded it. I find in it, however, nothing worth repeating
at this distance of time; except perhaps that, in the way of
news, it communicated (what may still be sent to you in
London) the marriage of our learned friend Sir William
Hamilton. A famous scholar of your profession, Selden, is
reported to have said that - 'Of all the actions of a man's
life, his marriage does least concern other people's, yet, of
all actions of our life, it is most meddled with by other
people' (Selden's Table Talk). A very great digger amongst
Hebrew and Phoenician roots is rarely, I fear, a great
philosopher; and accordingly in this particular remark of Mr.
Selden's, though he should bring Samaritan or even Coptic
authority for it, I see little truth. Abstracting from a
merely selfish 'concern,' what can better be entitled to
determine the proportions of a liberal and disinterested
'concern' in another man's actions than simply the degree in
which they expound his physical and moral constitutions? Now
surely no action of a man's life unveils so much of his
temperament, taste, understanding, degree in which ambition is
an active principle of his nature, and so forth, - or at least
furnishes so many conjectural grounds for appreciating all
that, as precisely this one act of choosing the partner of his
life - the depository of his honor - and the determiner of his
household happiness.

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that I was writing a letter. To return to my subject...I
remember, amongst my boyish acquaintances of thirty years
back, a vulgar woman - an heiress - who had married a younger
brother of an Irish noble family, a certain Hon. Colonel - .
She, this same Hon. Mrs. - , as vulgar in mind as in manners,
used - by way of irritating the gallant Colonel - to sum up
the story of her marriage thus: - 'Yes; the Colonel and I had a
hundred thousand pounds between us when we married; just a hundred thousand;' and then, after a little pause, she added with an air of indifference - 'Yes, just; I had ninety-nine, and Colonel - had one'...³

I know not how I have come to detain you so long on one topic, having so many others before me of nearer interest. My hands are by this time so frozen, and from the first have been so benumbed, that I fear you will have a difficulty in reading many words: and at this moment my messenger is clamorous for his dismissal. Yet two questions I must ask. Do you know of any literary work, tolerably lucrative and fitted for me?⁶ Secondly, is the Chair of Moral Philosophy still open at your London University?⁷ And, if so, by what avenues to be approached? On this I have much to say to you. But at this moment I have no possibility of adding one syllable more than my best regards to Mrs. Hill.

Yours ever, my dear Hill, most faithfully,
Thomas De Quincey.

Remember me very kindly to the Knights, when you see them.

February 1st.

Publ: Hill/1878, pp.494-95.
MS: None located.

1. Hill had been one of the founding members with Brougham of the Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge in 1826. He was becoming increasingly involved in agitation for parliamentary reform, and was to enter the reformed parliament of 1832 as M.P. for Hull. De Quincey's writings, conversely, were to become increasingly counter-reformist as the instituting of the 1832 Reform Act approached.
2. "worthy of cedar oil, worth treating with cedar oil" (there are numerous classical sources for the expression).
3. Hamilton married his cousin, Janet Marshall, on 31 March, 1828.
4. John Selden (1584-1654), historian, lawyer and antiquary. The *Table Talk*, a compilation of Selden's aphorisms edited by his secretary, was published in 1689. De Quincey has quoted the first axiom from the section titled "Marriage" (accurately, except for the addition of the first definite article) (Selden/1689, p.69). An earlier, unpublished comment of De Quincey's showed more enthusiasm for Selden than is displayed in this letter: "We rarely find at this day", it runs, "such a scholar as our English Selden" (Harvard MS/fMS Eng 974 [13]). De Quincey's line in this letter is unwittingly ironic, to say the least, in view of the initial unwillingness of many people, the Wordsworths and his mother amongst others, to accept his own marriage.

5. The story probably dates from, or around, the period of De Quincey's trip to Ireland with his friend, Lord Westport, in 1800. In his "Sketches" of 1834 (*Tait's*, vol.1. March, April, May and August; M/I, pp.207-66, and p.333-66), De Quincey refers at length to his numerous encounters with both English and Irish families.

6. This comment, taken with those in the previous letter (especially Wordsworth's in note 2, paragraph 3), indicates that De Quincey's brief spell of financial independence was already coming to an end. He was presumably asking if Hill could use his connection with the Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge, to obtain a commission for him to write some of the Society's extensive educative literature. It is probable that De Quincey's "Milton", one of the Society's publications in 1832, stems from this early contact with Hill, or alternatively with Charles Knight (see 19 November, 1823, note 3).

   The original remit of the S.D.U.K. was, to quote its prospectus, "strictly limited to what its title imports, namely, the imparting [sic] useful information to all classes of the community, particularly to such as are unable to avail themselves of experienced teachers" (Smith/1974, p.5). In an illuminating essay on the subject, Scott Bennett has shown how
the S.D.U.K. took its place with other publishing ventures as part of the movement in the 1820's, 30's and 40's towards "the creation of a mass market for reading matter" (Bennett/1982, p.246). The failure of the ideological thrust of the S.D.U.K. - predominantly middle-class and liberal Whig in its executive guise - shouldn't, Bennett argues, be allowed to obscure the fact that it did eventually manage to reify an audience of "common readers", and that it was, by Charles Knight's own assertion, "essentially a commercial operation" (ibid., pp.226-28).

De Quincey's interest in reaching as wide an audience as possible, for his own commercial reasons, is perhaps one of the main moving forces behind a number of his comments to publishers. Popularising articles on political economy and philosophy, popular translations (and recasts), instructional "Letters", and the hoped-for bestselling New Canterbury Tales, all suggest a wish to enter as large a market as possible. Interpolation into a wider market than the narrow one allowed by the demarcations of the periodicals, is an obvious concern. From the base of the London Magazine, for example, sprang the book publication of the Confessions, Walladmor, and, as his letters indicate, proposals for collected publications on political economy and on contemporary philosophy, to name but two. His own admitted dilatoriness, and his preoccupation with the ideological modality of self-presentation, shouldn't, in turn, be allowed to conceal the fact of his wish to enter a mass-market economy.

Notwithstanding its ironic banter (and inconsistency), Blackwood's itself wasn't slow to see the potential commercial power of the S.D.U.K.'s proposed publication network, disordered though it then might have been. "For all the enlightened labours of that Society have I always prayed for success; [Blackwood's] may be said to be in herself a Library of Useful and Entertaining Knowledge. [The S.D.U.K.] will be a gaining concern [they] have resolved that the [Library of Entertaining Knowledge] shall be sold at the lowest possible

7. The idea to establish a college in London had originated in 1826 with Henry Brougham, and the institution took its first students, as the University of London, in October, 1828. It must be said of De Quincey that whilst his intellectual qualifications for an academic post were excellent, he would probably have been constitutionally incapable of rounding them into curricular form. That he was serious, though, and that he really was prepared to play the part of political chameleon, is shown by the fact that he wrote another letter on the subject, to Charles Knight. He asked Knight how "a man might make his way to a professorship in the London University. I pointed my question I believe to the Moral Philosophy chair in particular - as being that to which the course of my studies had more eminently prepared me - " (19 February, 1830: Sotheby's, 10 March, 1920/Lot78). Wilson's example, and possibly the thought of a reference from the Edinburgh professor, were doubtlessly leading him on, though he never got beyond the informal stage with the idea. De Quincey's own, rather conservative, views on what should constitute a university, are given in his 1835 "Sketches". The Oxbridge collegiate system he saw as "the church militant of knowledge, in its everlasting struggle with darkness and error [its strength lay] in human memories"; elsewhere, a university "announces little more [...] than that here is to be found the place of rendezvous, [which does not seem] enough to call for very extensive national aid" ("Sketches", Tait's, vol.II, February, 1835, pp.79-80; M/II, p.16-18). It is typical of De Quincey that his standard should be represented by a metaphysical paradigm; something which, as with political economy, or with the balance of opposites that he believed to be the political state of the country (or, indeed, the "infinite activities, infinite repose" of an opium reverie - Conf./1821, p.49), stood motionless in a condition of organic dynamism. See following letter, note 15, for details of the
Tory response to the founding of London University, which De Quincey would have seen as the re-establishing of a state of equivalence.

98. TO WILLIAM BLACKWOOD
Grasmere near Ambleside
March 3. 1830.

My dear Sir,

In that short letter which I addressed to Professor Wilson,¹ and which you were kind enough to reply to immediately, one thing only was omitted — viz. the day on which the MS. Would be ready for delivery into your hands. This has been delayed by dreadful illness in my family, Mrs. De Quincey having been at the point of death from jaundice — and one of my children from Erysipelas.² At present however both are recovering: and I can venture to assign some day between March 25 and April 3 as that on which you will receive the MS. The Mail, I take it for granted, will be the best conveyance — though it would be a sad calamity to me, if in any way my unique copy (using that word in the Bibliographical sense) were to miscarry. — I fancied that it might be as well that you should know when to expect the book; but perhaps I should hardly, on that account only, have troubled you with a letter: my principal purpose is to ascertain the two following points:

1. Whether, if it should so happen that the Tales run beyond a volume, you would be disposed to offer the same terms for each volume separately as you have already offered for one. With these terms, as agreeable to your well-known spirit of liberality in such matters, I am perfectly satisfied. Should the work hereafter warrant you in offering higher terms for another of the same class, I am well assured that you will do so: if not, it would be very unfit — and a thing unendurable to me — that I should be a gainer out of the fund of your losses.³
2. What your views are in reference to my nom de guerre ('Author of the Confessions of an Op. Eater') appearing in the title page? I should wish, if it were possible, to be anonymous for this first début; that is, anonymous in the Title-page: for otherwise, it would be easy to you, with your command of all avenues to the public ear, to make the authorship effectually known—though not so formally as by this distinct acknowledgement on the Title. Do not suppose that I am underwriting myself: I neither ever did, nor do I think that I could, underwrite myself on any subject whatever: for, in order to write at all, I find it necessary to create for myself a real interest in my theme. Neither again have I any nervous tremors connected with the act of appearing before the public. But simply on politic considerations, looking forward to the possibility that I might not realize the whole of what was expected of me, it seems prudent in a first attempt—first I mean in this department of literature—to provide the means of retreat by coming forward in a masque. 4

My Canterb. Tales finished, I have several papers in a state of forwardness for Maga—which I am inclined to think, will suit you; in particular

1. One on the flight of the Calmuck Târtars from Russia to the frontiers of China: 5
2. One on the celebrated work (if a work so little known, and of which only two copies are said to survive, can properly be called so) of Giordano Bruno—entitled Spaccio della Bestia triomfante. 6 A copy, which occurred at an auction in Q. Anne's time and drew the public attention by the price which it fetched (viz. £30), is noticed by Steele (as perhaps you may remember) in No. 389 of the Spectator; but with great inaccuracy. 7 I have Dr. Farmer's transcript of that copy which exists in the library of Trint. Coll. Cambridge. 8 I am also rich in other works of Giord. Bruno—bought at the Roxburghe sale in 1812; 9 and have really read the books which the
German Historians of Philosophy (Buhle, Tennemann, and others) are compelled to sigh for as jewels unattainable even to princes.

3. - A miscellaneous paper of remarkable literary notices; something of the nature of Ana, but more select than Ana usually are.¹⁰

Further, I wish much to commence upon the Orators.¹¹ And also - a thing I mentioned to Prof. W., - I have matter for a pointed article on the Hist. of Logic in connection with Whately's book.¹² But for that purpose I shall need two books, viz. Whately's - and Reid's Anal. of the Organon of Aristotle, furnished originally to Lord Kames, for one part of his Sketches and reprinted (as no doubt you remember) by one of our Fathers in the Row - Μακρόχειρ, I think, i.e. Longimanus as Coleridge used to call him.¹³ On the whole, you may rely upon me during next summer as a really active contributor; for I am in firmer health at this time than ever before in my whole life, and now first capable of writing much.¹⁴

I hear (but, living very much alone this winter, I cannot say that I 'know it of my own knowledge') that Maga has of late been thundering and lightening with more splendor than ever. Four recent Nos., but not the very latest, I had a momentary peep into last week. In one of them I saw a good review of the Family Library; and much I wish that the able writer would fulfill his engagement and trace the melancholy record of that ruinous torpor and inertia which too justly he charges upon the Tories.¹⁵ One memorable instance, well illustrating his general thesis - that the Tories never step forward in any career but when forced into it by the Whigs, he has overlooked; that I mean of Bell and Lancaster. Bell, it is true, was first; and he was even slenderly patronized (zealously perhaps for the degree, but slenderly for the number); yet when was it taken up as a national affair? The first when Lancaster had stolen his plan, and Whigs - Radicals - Malcontents of every class had adopted Lancaster into their train of artillery. And, but for this hostile movement, would
the Tories ever have looked aside at Bell? I think not. Your Reviewer's illustrations from the cases of the Edinburgh and Quart. Reviews - from the two London Universities - and from the cheap bodies of popular literature - all speak the same melancholy language. I doubt indeed whether there has been one exception - beyond that of your own journal. You unquestionably had no precedent, though you have since had so many followers. And everybody must envy you the proud recollection of having not only established and reared its present supremacy - without guide or example - so potent an engine for acting on the national mind - but also of having achieved this triumph in a region where of all others in the empire the principles of your journal had the least possible toleration to expect. Other journals, in other countries have had to fight in a minority. But in your case, and speaking of Tory Principles &c., I apprehend that even a minority did not exist in Edinburgh (that is, not in an avowed shape) until your journal either half created it or half gave it courage to declare itself.

Hence, by the way, the misplaced hauteur of Southey in his Dialogues with Sir T. M. - if in the contemptuous terms applied to Magazines &c. he had any eye to yours. I drew the attention of Prof. W. to this last September; and I see that he has noticed it a little since then; but surely not with the requisite severity. Perhaps he forbore out of consideration for Lockhart, or perhaps even for Southey himself. Else, to speak in Jonathan's phrase, surely it is an 'almighty' absurdity for a writer in the Quart. Rev. to conceit himself standing upon higher ground than one in Blackwood's Magazine. The one, with every allowance for its talent and knowledge (though often, God - he knows, ponderous as nightmare) notoriously owed much, everything almost, to the name and prestige of the aristocracy which from its earliest appearance gave it countenance and support. It was a pet child of the family. The other made its way, as a foundling or an adventurer would, by mere absolute weight of power - not
counting upon favor, but trampling upon opposition.\textsuperscript{22} In a question therefore of native strength, and abstracting from everything adventitious, the contest is almost absurd; and Mr. Southey's conceit most ludicrously misplaced.

I fear I am prosing. - However, I do not prose often in the epistolatory way: so, excuse me; and Believe me ever, my dear Sir,

Very faithfully yours, - Thomas De Quincey.

\textbf{Addr:} William Blackwood Esq./Princes Street/Edinburgh.
\textbf{Quoted at length in Oliphant/1897, vol.I, pp.432-34.}
\textbf{MS:} NLS. MS 30969, f81.

1. The letter dated 14 January, 1830, concerning the \textit{New Canterbury Tales}, that is.
2. A letter by Wordsworth, dating from mid-February, mentions that Margaret had "been suffering long in the jaundice" (WL/1979, p.206).
3. Given Wordsworth's comments on the Tales (see 14 January, 1830, note 2, para 3) and De Quincey's specific detail on the subject, it looks as if the work did have substantial existence of some sort or the other. The probability is that De Quincey intended producing one or two finished stories for Blackwood. By this expedient he would probably have been able to keep any financial arrangement struck with the publisher afloat for some time. What progress there was to be after this, he perhaps hadn't worked out himself. William Blackwood's cash books for the period, however, show no payment to De Quincey large enough to represent acceptance of a work the size of the proposed one (NLS/MS 30769). For the mean time the publisher took the proposal seriously. "I am perfectly willing", he wrote in reply to De Quincey's letter, "to give you Two Hundred Guineas for the entire copyright of your work should it extend to two volumes of 400 pages, and should you yourself be satisfied that this would be a preferable book than the single volume for which I made you the offer through Prof. Wilson. In this event I make you an
additional offer to be contingent upon the sales" (6 March, 1830: NLS/MS 30311, ff527-28). See also 29 March, 1830 (letter and note 2) for details of the "deadline".

4. For a discussion of the subject of De Quincey's pseudonym, and its perplexed modality, see 21 September, 1823, note 10. The proposed sleight-of-hand circulation of his real name - if such is being proposed in the letter - after the erasure even of his pseudonym, shows how great was his crisis not just of semantic self-identity, but also of self-value in performance. On the other hand, if his "authorship" is "effectually known" through his pseudonym alone, then his value is certified by an alienated construct, a state which seems both to preserve him, uncompromised, from direct public criticism and to distance him from the drug experience which he hopes is past (see Wilner/1981, pp.493-95). Wilner writes of the ambivalent nature of the representation here: "the character of the Opium-Eater stands somewhere in between the generalized subject implied in a theoretical discussion of autobiography and the historical person of Thomas De Quincey [...] the theme tends to [...] cut across or suspend the historical or organic continuity of the subject and institute in its place a depersonalized and detemporalized machinery of imaginative production" (ibid., p.493). De Quincey's confusion seems to be a matter of how closely this "second identity projected from my own consciousness" (Japp/1891-3, P.W., vol.I, p.21), can shadow his idea of his future successful authorial self. It is evident from Blackwood's direct response to De Quincey's questions, that the publisher would exclude the writer from the publishing process only so far as this didn't materially alter the embodied selling power of his authorship: "I do not insist upon your nom de guerre being put up[on] the title page merely trusting to the Authorship becoming known in the way you mention, and that you do not disavow it" (6 March, 1830: NLS/MS 30311, ff527-28). Blackwood's enthusiasm for the project was great: De Quincey had now received two immediate
responses to his letters and had been issued with an instant ad hoc verbal contract.

5. De Quincey's "Revolt of the Tartars; or, Flight of the Kalmuck Khan and His People from the Russian Territories to the Frontiers of China" did not appear in Blackwood's until 1837 (vol.XLII, July, pp.89-115; M/VII, pp.366-421). There is nothing in the published version to suggest that it might not have been drafted at this earlier period. Goldman/1965 (pp.114-27) argues convincingly that the basis of De Quincey's article was a translation of Benjamin Bergman's work on the Sino-Russian events of the early 1770's, by a French writer (Voyage de Benjamin Bergmann chez les Kalmucks, tr. de l'Allemand par M. Morris, 1825). The mass migration that figures in the "Revolt" contains many obvious structural and verbal parallels with the exodus of the cavalcade from Vienna which figures in De Quincey's 1832 novel, Klosterheim. No doubt the psychological impulse behind both pieces had grown from De Quincey's own embattled, traumatic migrations between both London and Edinburgh, and Westmorland!

6. Giordano Bruno (1548-1600), Italian philosopher, whose notion of what Coleridge called a "universal Law of Polarity or essential Dualism [in which] all opposition is a tendency to re-union" (Col./F. 1969, vol.I, p.94), much appealed to De Quincey. The Spaccio della Bestia triomphante (Expulsion of the triumphant Beast) first appeared in 1584, and was subsequently reprinted as a translation, in London, in 1713 (it is to the first edition that De Quincey alludes here). He didn't publish an article on it.

7. The Spectator, no.389, 27 May, 1712 (pp.428-29) carried a brief history of this particular copy. De Quincey's quibble is probably partly with Richard Steele's inaccurate bibliographical description of the Spaccio, but mostly with his satirical "fair account" of the book, which follows it.

8. Richard Farmer (1735-97), literary historian, antiquary, and Master of Emmanuel College, Cambridge. Trinity College Library currently have two copies of the 1584 Spaccio
(acquired in 1855 and 1863, and not the only extant first editions), along with Dr. Farmer's transcript. One of their copies came with the library of Julius Hare, who bought the book at the Roxburghe Library sale of 1812, which De Quincey also attended (see following note, and McFarland/1963-65, pp. 46-47).

9. Four copies of Bruno are listed in the sale catalogue of De Quincey's library (Nisbet/1860), three of them from the Roxburghe sale. Hogg/1895 (pp. 333-4) lists another, the "De Monade Numero et Figura [1591]: on the fly-leaf at the end there is written in De Quincey's clear hand, 'Bought this day, Wednesday, May 31st, 1809'" (when he was in London, seeing Wordsworth's Cintra pamphlet through the press, that is). De Quincey himself gives a graphic description of the liberation of some "rare volumes (Giordano Bruno - about 8 separate works)", from detention by an Edinburgh landlord, in 1841 (NLS/MS 4055, f147). See 29 April, 1822 (no.48), note 4 for details of De Quincey's book collection.

10. See 20 April, 1822 (letter and note 4), where De Quincey uses a similar description. No such article appeared.

11. De Quincey had mentioned the subject to William Blackwood, in a note of February, 1827: "if you could lend me a copy of Reiske's Greek Orators [Johann J. Reiske, Oratorum Graecorum, 12 vols., 1770-75] [...] I would be making exertions to get an article finished of the kind you pointed out" (NLS/MS 4019, ff66-67). It later transformed itself into a proposed series of "Papers on Ancient Oratory as compared with Modern, in France and Gt. Britain" (De Quincey to William Blackwood, 24 April 1833: NLS/MS 4717, ff9-10). And it was finally accepted by another publisher, William Tait, as the second instalment of De Quincey's "A Brief Appraisal of Greek Literature in its Foremost Pretensions", and duly appeared as "No.II - The Greek Orators" (Tait's, vol.VI, June, 1839, pp.374-80, M/X, p.323ff - see also 18 June, 1830, note 6 for an indication of how the subject splintered and recombined).
12. A discursive review by De Quincey of Richard Whately's *Elements of Rhetoric* had appeared in the December, 1828 number of *Blackwood's*. In the final paragraph of that article he notes that he is "most anxious to see [Whately's] Logic, which treats a subject so much more important than rhetoric, and so obstinately misrepresented, that it would delight us much to anticipate a radical exposure of the errors on this subject, taken up from the days of Lord Bacon" (vol.XXIV, p.908; M/X, p.132). The work De Quincey's alludes to here is Whately's *Elements of Logic* (London, 1826). Both of these works by Whately were overviews of their subject, and both grew from articles originally published in the *Encyclopaedia Metropolitana*. De Quincey's review of Whately's *Rhetoric* had been a disjointed, free-ranging historical survey of the subject, rather than of the book: had the second article ever been written it would no doubt have followed the same pattern. This wasn't the first time he had proposed writing an article on logic: his letter to Hessey of 20 January, 1823 had offered a logic "Letter". He gives a thumbnail review of the subject in his 1852 articles on Sir William Hamilton (M/V, p.303ff). (See also 24 April, 1828, note 1.)

13. Thomas Reid's "A Brief Account of Aristotle's Logic" first appeared in the second volume (1774) of *Sketches of the History of Man*, by Lord Kames (Henry Home - 1696-1782). Reid's work was subsequently published under a number of different titles, including *Analysis of Aristotle's Logic*, though not, it seems, in London, by Longman.

Both the Greek and the Latin mean "with long hands", or perhaps "with long forearms" (in the case of the Persian King Artaxerxes who was given the Greek form of the name on account of his long forearms). Coleridge had, in fact, evolved a whole battery of names for Longman and Co. during years of negotiations with them over various works; "the angels of Paternoster Row", was one of his more choice ones (Col/Let., vol.III, pp.327-8).
Judging by the authoritative manner in which John Wilson presents them in *Blackwood's*, the writers mentioned here were something of a special preserve for him (see, for example, *Blackwood's*, vol.XXV, p.539, and vol.XL, pp.256 and 524).

14. William Blackwood's response to this large fund of promises was restrained: "I am very glad you are thinking of Maga, and I trust so soon as you have the Tales off your hands you will set vigorously to work. All the articles you mention will be most acceptable, and when you require them I will send you all the books you want" (6 March, 1830: NLS/MS 30311, ff527-28). A *Noctes* sketch of December, 1829 perhaps displayed his real sentiments on the subject: De Quincey, it ran, is "like the lave o' the Lakers - when he wons in Westmoreland, he forgets Maga, and a' the rest o' the civileezeed warld" (*Blackwood's*, vol.XXVI, p.861).

15. J. G. Lockhart's review of the publisher John Murray's Family Library series appeared in *Blackwood's* in September, 1829 ("The Family Library", vol.XXVI, September, 1829, Part II, pp.413-436). The ideological drift of the article runs absolutely counter to that which De Quincey seemed to be supporting in his previous letter, to M. D. Hill. Lockhart attacks both Brougham's "cheap-book system - the apparatus of pocket libraries and miscellanies" (ibid., p.416) and his non-sectarian "Gower-street machinery", London University (ibid.). He consequently offers praise to "the first Tory series of cheap books" (ibid.), Murray's Family Library, and welcomes the plan to found King's College in London, an educational institution which would support the established order (it opened in October, 1831, and was incorporated with London University in 1836). That the series of the two publishing organisations are political in their origins and aims, Lockhart has no doubt: "the dearest interests of society must either be signally promoted, or lamentably injured, by those who possess the control over such an engine" (ibid., p.413). Given De Quincey's comments in this letter, it is evident that he accepted the ideological framework of Lockhart's comments
with some ease, indeed it is evident from the following letter, that he had already written to him offering to write for the Family Library, from within just this framework. The ideological volte-face was unlikely to have been a matter of altered commitment, but rather a case of one potential mass market being as good as another, all "essentially a commercial operation" (see note 6 to previous letter).

16. Joseph Lancaster (1778-1838) and Andrew Bell (1753-1832) were educationists who recommended a monitoryal system of school instruction. The Nonconformist Lancaster implemented a plan first set out by Bell, deviser of the Madras system of education, and his non-denominational schools quickly multiplied. The Tory establishment, in the form of the Church of England, took fear at this, and started to open schools under their own control, with Bell as the organisational head. De Quincey had given qualified praise to the Madras system, at the beginning of his 1823 review of M. D. Hill's book on education (London, April and May, 1824). In his "Memorial Chronology", De Quincey again raised the charge, which was more a matter of prejudice than reason, that Lancaster had "dishonourably appropriated the discoveries and adaptations of Dr. Bell" (1850?, M/XIV, p.306).

17. Apart from a period of Tory domination, under Lord Melville, before 1806, Edinburgh was consistently Whig/Liberal during the nineteenth century.

18. In his Sir Thomas More or Colloquies on the Progress and Prospects of Society (London, John Murray, 1829), Robert Southey had pointed out a decidedly regressive aspect to journalistic writing. "Our journals", he wrote, "indeed, have been the great corruptors of our style [...] Men who write in newspapers, and magazines, and reviews, write for present effect [...] they consider, like public speakers, not so much what is accurate or just, either in matter or manner, as what will be acceptable to those whom they address. [They are susceptible to] the inaccuracies inevitably arising from haste" (ibid., pp.390-91).
De Quincey would have agreed with much of what Southey had to say here, indeed, he echoed some of it in the Preface to his *Selections Grave and Gay*: "By its harsh peremptory punctuality, [periodical publication] drives a man into hurried writing, possibly into saying the thing that is not" (*Sel./vol.I*, p.vi). What would have offended him in Southey's strictures, was the charge that such writing, with its "artifices and efforts of an ambitious style" (*Sir Thomas More*, p.391), could only be superficial aesthetically. De Quincey had, and was, to spend much time in print tirelessly promoting the idea that there were different levels of aesthetic signification in language. His third "Letter to a Young Man" (*London*, March, 1823) had contained a long discussion of the distinction between the literature of knowledge and the literature of power; the core of a lifelong preoccupation (see Jordan/1952, Chapter II). Such distinctions allowed De Quincey, for one thing, to separate his own writings into generic classes, ranging from the transient journalistic to timeless "impassioned prose" (*Sel.*, vol.I, pp.ix-xix). Whatever we make of this as an hermeneutic device today, it is obvious that De Quincey wanted to give himself the latitude to sift out of one section of his opus just the writings "for present effect" to which Southey refers.

19. De Quincey refers to a short discussion of the topic in the *Noctes*, which Wilson was now mainly responsible for writing. There, Christopher North records that he "cannot help thinking, that by speaking so bitterly and contemptuously in some passages of his admirable 'Progress and Prospects of Society', of magazines and newspapers, [Southey] has glanced aside from the truth, and been guilty of not a little discourtesy to his literary brethren" (*Blackwood's*, vol.XXVI, December, 1829, p.860). Whether as a result of De Quincey's comments to Blackwood, or by prior plan, the *Noctes* for April, 1830 returned to the subject with much more animus. "What right", the English Opium-Eater says in the sketch, "had Mr. Southey, who gains an honourable livelihood chiefly by his
contributions to Reviews, to put into the mouth of Sir Thomas More [words] insulting to the minds of the same order with his own" (Blackwood's, vol.XXVII, p.681).

20. John Murray, effectively the employer of Lockhart, who edited his Quarterly Review, had been the publisher of Southey's book.

21. J. J. Blunt's review of Southey's Colloquies, for the Quarterly, had adopted a tone that was morally elevated to the point of being pompous (vol.XLI, July, 1829, pp.1-27). Blunt hadn't so much attacked other magazines as risen above them in his moral fervour.

"Jonathan", collectively, Americans; though there may be some in-house humour here, since Mr. Jonathan Spiers was an occasional Noctes character (I haven't found any use of the word "almighty" by him).

22. This was to be the usual line of Blackwood's and De Quincey, who didn't see any contradictions in depicting the magazine as a fragile foundling with superhuman powers. Not long before this De Quincey had written of both the Quarterly and the Edinburgh Review as magazines that had "connexions with the great parties in the state: [which] was the ground of their advantage" (1827: Tave/1966, p.191). In his reply to De Quincey, William Blackwood warmed to the idea: "I quite agree with you in all that you say with regard to Dr. Southey & the Quarterly. Maga has fought her way fairly in spite of all these great Dons & big wigs. Last month I pubd two Nos at once and I am bold to say they will stand a comparison with any No of the Quarterly or Edinburgh" (6 March, 1830: NLS/MS 30311, ff527-28).

99. TO J. G. LOCKHART

Grasmere near Ambleside
March 10, 1830

My dear Sir,

I feel greatly indebted to you for your obliging and very
encouraging answer to my application. Do not suppose that I am likely to be a troublesome correspondent, because I trespass on your time with a second epistle on my literary projects, and so nearly upon the heels of my first. Indeed I am sure that it is more to your kindness, than to any leisure which you can have for such correspondencies, that I owe your circumstantial answer of March 3; and, except by way of reply to the suggestions which you have there done me the favor to make, I think that it is hardly possible that I should again have had occasion to annoy you with anything relating to my plans; or not until I have the opportunity of a personal communication with you in London — when one-quarter-of-an-hour's conversation would do more for me in the way of explanation than a score of letters.

First, with regard to the Lakes, I am ashamed to say that I want much of the commonest knowledge called for in so miscellaneous a subject. I am not an Ornithologist, nor an Ichthyologist (unless a dissertation on Potted Char would avail me, for that I could obtain); I am no Botanist, no Minerologist: as a Naturalist, in short, I am shamefully ignorant. And, in this age of accuracy in that department, I doubt whether anybody less than a Humboldt or a Davy would satisfy the miscellaneous demands of this subject. By the way I do not remember to have seen any scientific theme treated with so much grace and attractions of popularity combined with so much original observation, as those of Forest Trees and the Salmon Fisheries &c. by Sir Walter Scott; and had I been within a thousand degrees so extensive an observer, or even extensive in the same degree as I myself am accurate, I would not have shrunk from the subject merely because I was not a regular school-built naturalist. But my hatred of all science, excepting Mathematics and its dependencies, is exquisite; and my ignorance, in consequence, such as cannot be disguised. Further, is not the subject thread-bare? In all that part of it which relates to the Picturesque, I fear that I have been forestalled by Wordsworth. Finally, I should
clash inevitably with both Wordsworth and with Wilson. Wilson's book is yet, I believe, unpublished: nor do I remember to have heard him say in what way he had treated the subject: but, I presume, with great variety—both from the size of his work (as then projected), not less than 3 volumes, and from the extraordinary activity of his mind whenever he does not wilfully throw it asleep under the Sentimental: which, to my thinking, is his evil genius. What solitary grace of originality I could give to such a work—would be philological. In learning Danish, I fell upon a discovery which I believe I once mentioned to you—viz. that the peculiar dialect of this country (more particularly of the district about Ulswater &c) is pure Danish, i.e. (as might be expected from its antiquity) archaic Danish, or Icelandic. Accordingly the Proper Names (as of mountains and generally of the permanent features of the scenery) are all significant in Danish, and rarely so (or only by those accidents of affinity which are to be presumed in all sister languages) in any other Teutonic dialect. The German, Dutch, Swedish, &c. may casually present a key, but the old Danish only I believe to be a master-key. This idea of mine I stated and illustrated, perhaps a dozen years ago, in a little memoir; and, with proper revision and expansion, it would make a suitable Excursus or Appendix to such a work as you conceive: but in itself it would obviously do nothing. Now, after this one contribution, I fear that my exchequer of original matter would be exhausted.

Next, for Oxford,—but I will not trouble you with the Pros and Cons. Suffice it, that until I come Southwards, I have no materials: and I will discuss it therefore, when I am fortunate enough to see you.

Now generally, as to the want of materials for works of any research wheresoever there are no great libraries, what you say is feelingly known to me from long and rueful experience. How Southey manages in that respect, even with his private advantages of a tolerably well-mounted library and his
extensive connexions, I never could divine. For myself, as well on this account as for the benefit of my children with a view to ordinary accomplishments, either London or my old residence—Bath is the mark I aim at within a year or so. Meantime would not such a work as this which follows be useful to the Family Library—a Digest, at most in three at least in two volumes, of the Corpus Historiae Byzantinae; that is, a continuous narrative (woven out of the Byzantine Historians) of the Fortunes of the Lower Empire from Constantine to its Destruction. There has been, you know, of late an expurgated Gibbon and, I believe, it has found favor with the public: but an interpolated Gibbon, or perhaps more accurately speaking an integrated Gibbon, I imagine to be more of a desideratum. And I think that Gibbon would have been of that opinion himself. However much of labor and research he bestowed upon particular parts of his subject, I do not believe that he ever could have designed his work to be taken for a comprehensive body of Byzantine Records, except under that one single aspect of its Decline. Of what bore upon that principle or tendency in its annals, he may have omitted nothing important, or nothing however that much invited the case of illustration and display. But, with this allowance, he must have been sensible that he omitted much. And must have designed to do so. —Now then, I think that such long a favorite speculation of mine—might be accomplished even here, in the bosom of mountains, with no help—one of the two old editions (for I suppose it vain to wait for that better edition now issuing in Germany) of the Byzantine Historians, —Tillemont,—Gibbon himself, a few books on the Geography and on the Ceremonies and Dignities of the Byzantine Court, with occasional aids as to such great collateral subjects as might cross one's path in a course of so many centuries, Mahomet for instance, or the Crusaders. I am of opinion that, considering how little the Byzantine Histt. have been read or translated, even in spite of Gibbon—the ground may be regarded as almost untravelled.
Another plan of mine is - A History of the Crusades. I conceive that we have no decent one. Mills I read. In point of composition and philosophy he seemed to me very unsatisfactory. But that he is gone to Hades, I should take the liberty of calling him a coxcomb... Old Fuller, however defective by relying on bad authorities, gives a far more rememberable portrait of the age and the romance. - However here I am more at sea for the proper helps, some recent works having been brought forward, I think, in Spain. The other is my favorite project for the present. And I commend it earnestly to your indulgent consideration. A readable - a popular book, I am satisfied that I could make it. And the accurate abstracts, which I could manage to interweave, of dissertations upon the Byzantine Aulic ritual and concerning works that, generally speaking, do not let themselves be read (to borrow a phrase from our German friends), - might contribute to give it a permanent value - be the same little or much.

Entremum (I speak of the epistolatory bores I am inflicting on you - in that sense Extremum) nunc mihi concede laborem: and believe me

Ever yours,

Thomas De Quincey

My letters have to travel to Ambleside in the pockets of country louts: for we have no post-office here. Excuse them therefore if they have come into your hands soiled.

[Endorsed by De Q. on cover: March 11]

Addr: J. G. Lockhart Esqr./50 Albemarle Street/ London.
PM: 13 Mar., 1830.
Publ: Part of the letter is printed in Lang/1897, vol.II, pp.46-49.
MS: NLS. MS 924, f62.

1. One thing which would have inspired De Quincey to write to Lockhart was the latter's connection with John Murray. As editor of Murray's Quarterly Review, and editorial consultant for the Family Library series of cheap books, which the
publisher had recently started, Lockhart could be considered, quite correctly, a channel for implementing lucrative ideas (see Lang/1897, vol.II, pp.42-45, for general context). De Quincey's direct experience of Murray's negotiating manner had not previously been a happy one, making this connection a useful one. See 2 August, 1821, note 4 for details of this and for an outline of the possibility that the "Lakes" book referred to in the current letter, might have been proposed for inclusion in Murray's series of travel guides, another recent venture. De Quincey was also possibly hoping to tap Lockhart's connection with the publishing firm of Constable, which had published Lockhart's Life of Robert Burns, in its Constable's Miscellany series, in 1828. From its original plan, in 1827, to publish "a new volume, priced at 3s.6d. [...] every three weeks" (Altick/1967, p.269), however, the enterprise seemed to have gone quiet. In 1829 a member of the Noctes team was to comment "no original works of much note have been published in the Miscellany [...] I have not seen the concern these six months or so" (Blackwood's, vol.XXV, June, 1829, p.797).

The heterogeneous set of proposals offered by De Quincey here, suggests that publishers hadn't exactly defined the nature of their "common reader" (see Bennett/1982, p.227ff, for a discussion of this topic). That so many of the cheap books intended for mass-marketing accordingly showed little profit in the early days of the phenomenon, didn't, though, alter the fact of the clustered publication of the like of "Constable's Miscellany, the Libraries of Useful and Entertaining Knowledge, Murray's Family Library, Cadell's cut-rate Scott, and the rest" (Altick/1967, p.332).

Lockhart might not, in fact, have been predisposed to help De Quincey develop any of his plans to enter this potential Eldorado, if his later comments are anything to judge by. "When sober", Lockhart wrote of De Quincey in 1852, "he was a very interesting companion - a good scholar & a sharp critic - arrogant enough already [in 1815] & pompous
but not at all so absurdly as afterwards [...] he drank all he cd get & between glasses kept munching opium pills [...] I soon dropped him as unfit for a decent house with ladies in it" (Parsons/1934, pp.196-97). An indication that Lockhart and John Wilson had spoken on the subject of De Quincey and the effects of opium, soon after De Quincey wrote the current letter, might be seen in the Noctes that appeared in the August (Part II), 1830 number of Blackwood's. Lockhart had spent the summer of 1830 at Chiefswood, his Scottish home, and had paid the occasional visit to Edinburgh, where he and Wilson produced this jointly-written Noctes sketch (Wellesley, vol.1, p.35). It contains a conversation between the English Opium-Eater and the Modern Pythagorean (Robert Macnish, author of The Anatomy of Drunkenness) on the subject of "intoxication". Although the discussion is inconclusive the Opium-Eater is allowed the last word: "when eighteen hours' toil out of the four-and-twenty have bowed down both soul and body to the dust, [may not] a few drops of laudanum [...] be, in the best term, a blessing" (vol.XXVIII, p.392).

See 17 August, 1831 for a second, very different letter from De Quincey to Lockhart, whose response to this first letter is not recorded.

2. F. H. Humboldt (1769-1859) and Humphry Davy (1778-1829) were, among other things, well-travelled figures with extensive knowledge of chemistry, agriculture, and mineralogy.

3. The reference is to Scott's article on Humphry Davy's book, Salmonia, or Days of Fly-Fishing, which appeared in the Quarterly Review for October, 1828 (vol.XXXVIII, pp.503-35).

4. "foursquare".

5. William Wordsworth's variously-titled book on the Lake District was to reach its fifth edition, as A Guide Through the District of the Lakes, in 1835. De Quincey's offer, in 1812, of "an account of the origin and character of the language of the Lake district, which unlocked all its peculiar nomenclature" for the guide, had been brusquely rejected by the poet (Hogg/1895, p.156). In 1847, however, Wordsworth was
to write to John Wilson, suggesting that De Quincey look over the glossary of Lakes terms for the latest edition of his *Guide*, though even then he cautioned Wilson that "my name must on no account be used in the business" (Jordan/1962, pp.347-48).

6. Wilson's work on the Lakes never reached publication, though he did revise and publish some of his own *Blackwood's* sketches of the area, in *The Recreations of Christopher North* (3 vols., Blackwood, 1842), which is what De Quincey may be referring to here. There is praise for Wilson, as a naturalist "of original merit", in De Quincey's 1829 "Sketch of Professor Wilson" (M/V, p.260).

7. This "discovery", of which De Quincey was inordinately proud, was first revealed by him in a series of articles for the *Westmorland Gazette* (13 November, 4 and 18 December, 1819, and 8 January, 1820). He records in the articles how his close study of Danish between 1811-14, unlocked the secret of a collection of unique words, first gathered in his rambles around the Lake District in the 1800's. It was this finding that De Quincey had offered as an appendix for Wordsworth's book on the region (see note 5).

8. The scope of the proposed work isn't known. When De Quincey published the three-part "Oxford" in his *Tait's* autobiographical "Sketches" (vol.II, February, June, August, 1835; M/II, p.9ff), he included a mass of detailed factual information that might well have been gathered for an extended study of the university, if not the town. Much of the first two parts of the "Sketches", which deal analytically with the Oxford collegiate system, are an ill fit with the autobiography generally; though such is a charge that might also be levelled at some other parts of it.

9. The close textual association of Southey and Edward Gibbon, who becomes the next writer to figure in De Quincey's letter, is repeated elsewhere. In one of his "Lake Reminiscences", De Quincey draws a number of parallels between the two men: Southey, "like Gibbon, was a miscellaneous scholar; he, like
Gibbon, of vast historical research; he like Gibbon, signally industrious and patient [...] Like Gibbon, he had dedicated a life of competent ease [...] to literature", and so the list goes on (Tait's, vol. VI, August, 1839, p. 514; Rec./1970, p. 239). One might conclude that despite his doubts about Southey's literary resources, De Quincey too wanted, "like Gibbon" and Southey, to return "to the shores of a beautiful lake, remote from great capitals" (ibid.), to collate the product of his researches.

10. Such a work would have well suited the Family Library series, which had so far included books on Napoleon, Alexander the Great, and a history of the Jews. How De Quincey would have followed the supposedly apolitical principles behind the series is a matter of conjecture. Political neutrality was not his strong point as an historian; a fact which is skilfully illustrated by Robert Maniquis, in his study of the personal/public axis of De Quincey's writing. De Quincey, Maniquis observes, thought that "in man's history-making there is a freedom in seeing oneself seeing [...] Historical study, he thinks, realises this same polymorphosis and self-transformation" (Maniquis/1976, p. 83). It doesn't really take a post-structural analysis of De Quincey's work to show that his troping, self-reflexive manner would be just the thing to "convert popular histories into the vehicles of popular delusion and deceit", the very thing the Family Library supposedly didn't stand for, according to Lockhart's review of it (Blackwood's, vol. XXVI, September, 1829, Part II, p. 416).

De Quincey was subsequently to write on classical historical subjects on numerous occasions, but never with focussed consistency. His most sustained attempt, "The Caesars" (which appeared in Blackwood's in October and December, 1832, January, 1833 and June, July, and August, 1834), is as much a fragmentary discourse on the link between personal and national degeneration as an historical study. He shows how he might have applied his historicist principles to a Byzantine history, in a review he wrote for Blackwood's, in
October, 1844, of George Finlay's *Greece Under the Romans* (1844). There, he looks at the logic of a possible philosophical overview of the subject, and concludes that, theoretically, such would have to examine the continuities and discontinuities between "the fortunes and main stages of this Empire [and] the greatest modern interests" (M/VII, p.255). His focus for a Byzantine study, one gathers from his comments in the essay, would have been the growth of Christian ethics and - a favourite theme - the threat from alien (non-Christian) systems.

11. Edward Gibbon's *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire* (1776-88) had been published in an edition adapted by Thomas Bowdler "with the omission of all passages of an irreligious or immoral tendency" (5 vols., London, 1826 - the quotation is taken from the work's subtitle). There were, of course, many abridgements of it in existence by 1830.

12. Henry Hart Milman (1791-1868) produced just such an edition, in twelve volumes, in 1838-39. He had only recently (1829) published his *History of the Jews*, with the Family Library, and would, all things considered, have been a good choice to execute De Quincey's current plans. Since Milman believed *Decline and Fall* to be a "bold and disingenuous attack on Christianity" (Gibbon/1985, p.16), and, as Dean of St. Paul's Cathedral, annotated it accordingly, one can only wonder how De Quincey's preoccupations would have led him to footnote a work that already ran for about one-quarter of its length in footnotes.

13. De Quincey is presumably referring to the *Corpus Scriptorum Historiae Byzantinae* (1828+), by B. G. Niebuhr (1776-1831). Niebuhr's incomplete *Romanische Geschichte* (1827-28) was then being translated into English by De Quincey's acquaintance from the *London Magazine* days, Julius Hare. De Quincey found the latter work by Niebuhr "a pile of materials, not an edifice; and the most embarrassed in its plan of any work we know" (*Blackwood's*, vol.XLIX, May, 1841, p.583).

15. In the light of interest raised in this subject by Walter Scott's recent "crusader" novels, *The Betrothed* and *The Talisman* (both published 1825), themselves part of a topical concern with the Crusades, De Quincey's plan seems an opportune one. Indeed, the topicality of most of the subjects he raises in his letter marks them as part of the ongoing preoccupation of the age with romantic Hellenism and its middle-eastern adjuncts (proto-imperialist as the mark might be); concerns that fed the pages of contemporary periodicals as well as, a little earlier, the work of Byron, Shelley and Keats (see Butler/1981, Chapter V, Bauer/1953, pp.277-303, Webb/1982, passim). This particular proposal was, however, peculiarly ill-timed: Constable's Miscellany were just then in the process of publishing Henry Stebbing's *History of Chivalry and the Crusades*, and a related book, G. P. R. James's *The History of Chivalry*, was also to appear in 1830. It was, of course, more than a little pragmatic of De Quincey to propose writing on the Crusades. Not only were they contiguous with later events in the Byzantine Empire, but, in their connection with the latter, also involved the sort of labyrinthine religio-political machinations that De Quincey's logical mind loved to disentangle and remould for the reader. Although he never came to write the histories he outlines here, the conjoining of them in the letter illustrates how his mind was working at this time. With political reform activity gaining pace, he probably saw the ebb and flow of historical empires as a peculiarly apposite metaphor for the ebb and flow of the established British political parties in the face of "alien" challenges. When he came to write "The Prospects of Britain", in 1832 (ostensibly a review of a book by the same title), he brought all of the subjects mentioned here together, to try to show the dangers of constitutional change, or unbalance, as he held it to be (*Blackwood's*, vol.XXXI, April, 1832, p.569ff). The *Blackwood's* writer, Archibald Alison, had offered a
similar construct only a few months before: "another period", he wrote, "equally memorable both in the violence of its passions and the magnitude of its effects, is that of the Crusades [...]" ("On Parliamentary reform and the French Revolution", vol.XXX, August 1831, Part II, p.281).


18. Whilst a few works on the Crusades did indeed issue from Spain during the 1820's and 1830's (by, for example, Ramon Llull and Ramon Muntaner), more were being published in France at this time.

19. "Allow me now or grant me now a last extreme labour/task" - In Virgil's Eclogues, ib X,1, the goddess Arethusa was to grant Virgil strength for a last task.

100. TO [DAVID BLACKIE]

Grasmere near Ambleside
Monday March 29 1830 (but I fear I shall have no opportunity of forwarding the letter to Ambleside before to-morrow.)

My dear Sir,

I am truly concerned that, after doing my very best, I am quite unable to send you anything which can be of any service to your purpose in time. What I have done is so poor and so unsuitable, and run out to such a length, that I have burned it. - Listen to my condition, and you will see how impossible it is that I could have done anything. First of all your letter did not reach me until 14 days after the date. - Still that would not have been of much consequence. But a dreadful event in my family has not only prevented every attempt of that sort - but has absolutely, by compelling me to break a contract for a volume to be delivered on the 3rd of April -
robbed me of 100 guineas,\(^2\) without which I am utterly in despair for the means of meeting the interest on a large mortgage due in this very month.\(^3\) The case was this; though I am too much panic-struck to be capable of relating it minutely: In one moment a servant woman of mine went mad, and threatened and continually plotted destruction to herself and several persons of my family. From the peculiar state of her health at the moment the surgeon would not sanction her being removed. Thus, for a fortnight and a little more, were we obliged to keep a howling—yelling maniac in our house—under guards continually falling asleep or losing their caution—and consequently never for a moment liberate from the horror of seeing a murder perpetrated on some one of the family: for the poor creature had preternatural strength, and required to be held by 5 persons when bled. Many times she escaped from her guards. And altogether such a scene of horror I never witnessed. And from this I was not freed until last week: for not until then would the surgeon sign a paper authorising her removal. Since then I am quite incapable of doing anything. The dreadful consequences to myself of this fatal event leave me no spirits to struggle with difficulties. And the difficulties of writing anything in this situation fitted for your journal are at any rate so great, even if I am better qualified at this moment to write, that I must delay my assistance till I come to Edinburgh, which will happen in a month. I shall also be in London this spring: and thence I will correspond with you vigorously.\(^4\) But here I assure [you] that I have only mathematical books—books of German metaphysics—and a few Greek and Latin classics. What can I manufacture out of these for your purposes? And as to my own brain, under my present calamity, I could not (I protest), under pain of death in case of failure, produce a line that could serve you. Perhaps your great No. may have been delayed, as I see no notice of it advertised.\(^5\) If it should not make its appearance till May, I will endeavour to assist effectually. But I protest that I have wearied myself in
devising a subject for an essay; and have written parts of many – that in the end all alike seem too poor to place in so conspicuous a situation as that of a No. presenting itself expressly to challenge admiration. – Whether that plan of having crack Nos is a good one I need not here discuss: but I am certain that nothing which I have been able to half-finish as yet could have done service either to me or to you. – Pray, wait until you see me early in May; and I will then concert a plan for giving continued and effectual help. Meantime believe me

Ever most truly yours,
Thos. De Quincey.

MS: Dove Cottage. WLL/De Quincey, Thomas/56b.

1. Blackie (see 6 May, 1829, note 1) is judged to be the most likely recipient of this letter on the strength of the information given in note 5 below. See Groves/4 and /11 for details of articles that De Quincey may have published in Blackie's *Edinburgh Literary Gazette* for 22 August, 1829 and 13 February, 1830. Contemporary comments in the Gazette and in advertisements elsewhere (Groves/4, p.56), suggest that the "Opium-Eater" was still contributing to the magazine in 1830. While these might be taken as a simple ploy to raise interest in the weekly, the current letter does seem to confirm an ongoing practical connection between De Quincey and the Gazette.

2. A reference to De Quincey's *New Canterbury Tales* (see 14 January, 1830, note 2, and 3 March, 1830). In the second letter, the date set by De Quincey for submitting his copy to Blackwood is not a binding one. The publisher's enhanced expectations over the novel seem to have spilled over into a Noctes sketch, in the April, 1830 number of Blackwood's (which would have been published by the date of De Quincey's letter). In this, Wilson has the "English Opium Eater" respond to criticism that he is "a lazy cretur [else he] would hae putten out a dizzen vollumms syne the Confessions", with the
assertion that "I am at present, my dear friend, - allow me to call myself so, - in treaty with Mr Blackwood for a novel" (vol.XXVII, p.663).

3. On The Nab, that is. It is difficult to believe that De Quincey had ever seriously contemplated keeping up his mortgage payments. The idea that he might pay the interest on the advance had only really been tacked on as an afterthought to his statement to Charles Knight that, there was "such a thing as buying a thing and yet not paying for it" (23 July, 1829). The distinction had been more than a semantic one. He seems to have used credit not just to subsist, but as a means of registering himself as a touchstone of potential value. Time after time, most recently with the "Tales", his investment had been the authority of his literary promise (in both senses), which served to polarise the distinction between two types of value. Marjorie Levinson equates and summarises these as "a negation or renunciation of concrete material value [which] critically determines the ideal, representational value of money" (Levinson/1988, p.260). The renunciation in De Quincey's case could only take place after the paradigmatic state had been achieved - and would merely be a prelude to further performances. It was the level that his credit-inspired inactivity reached which became a measure of his "scholarliness". No doubt his mortgage negotiations had been based partly on his ability to produce work in the literary market-place; a parallel of the way that his loan-raising strategy was carried through with his publishers. One notices, in this letter, that it is "madness" which has caused De Quincey to break the financial circle by temporarily abandoning his credit rating.

4. He arrived back in Edinburgh towards the end of May (see following letter). There is no record of a visit to London in 1830.

5. Blackie published his "Anniversary Number" in two parts, on 15 and 22 May, 1830 (nos. 53 and 54). This "Number" can only, in this context and at this time, refer to the Edinburgh
Literary Gazette. Groves/3 (p.54, n.3) quotes from a letter, dated 26 March, 1830, by another Gazette contributor, which notes that Blackie had asked for "something for a grand No he is to publish". Perhaps De Quincey's letter was a response to a similar request. He was not, in the event, to write for the magazine again. His negative comment to Blackie about "crack Nos", though, seems to have nettled the publisher, who wrote hopefully to D. M. Moir, "two brilliant numbers following each other should strike at De Quincey's arguments somewhat" (11 May, 1830: NLS/Acc 9856, No.37).

101. TO DAVID BLACKIE
[6 Gloucester Place, Edinburgh]
Wednesday June 2, 1830.

My dear Sir,

I arrived in Edinburgh on Monday afternoon May 24; but since then, with the exception of one or two short airings of half an hour, have been confined to the house. The day before yesterday accidentally I heard that you are still in Windsor Street. There I shall have the pleasure of calling on you in a day or two: by Tuesday at furthest. Till then I am so occupied and hurried by disagreeable business that I am afraid I should have too little time to confer with you at length: so that my visit if made earlier, would be to little purpose. Meantime I write this note - to assure you that I am not forgetting your affairs: and beg you to believe that I am always

Most truly yours

Thos. De Quincey.

6 Gloucester Place (Prof. Wilson's)

Addr: David Blaikie [i.e. Blackie] Esqre./7 Windsor Street/Edinburgh.
PM: 3 Jun., 1830.
MS: Manchester Central Library. De Quincey Collection, Item 351.

1. De Quincey had once again abandoned his family in Westmorland, and was lodging with John Wilson. Although he had at least one article in Blackwood's between August and
December, 1830, he wrote nothing before that period, and doesn't seem to have circulated his work elsewhere during the year. He was obviously reluctant to re-enter the business of journey-writing.

2. It was to be just six weeks before Blackie was to write to D. M. Moir "you will regret I am sure to learn that the Edin. Lit. Gazette no longer exists" (14 July, 1830: NLS/Acc 9856, No.37). It appears from other letters (in the same collection) that contributors had been paid only irregularly for some time. It isn't clear when Blackie lost his other concern, the Edinburgh Evening Post, but De Quincey doesn't seem to have contributed to it for some time. Groves/1a offers the possibility that a review of a volume of poems, by "T.J.B.", which appeared in the Post for 16 January, 1830, was De Quincey's work. The attribution is tenuous, being based on the paper's claim, in the same issue, that De Quincey still wrote for it. Unlike a similar claim made for a continuing link with the Gazette (see previous letter), this one remains unsubstantiated, and Groves's methodology, which stems from the generalisation that De Quincey disliked Shelley and Keats, is flawed (De Quincey admired their work, at least in part - see, e.g., Jordan/1973, pp.463, and 470).

102. TO WILLIAM BLACKWOOD

Friday afternoon June 18, [1830]
6 Gloucester Place, [Edinburgh]

My dear Sir,

I inclose the Proof of my Article corrected, and with the addition of a close calculated to fill just one page and also to fill the place of about 27 lines struck out (in order to meet this alteration) at the end of p.23. This close was added at Professor Wilson's suggestion - both because it would make the end of my paper fall out more consistently with the usual arrangements for the commencement of the succeeding article, and also because both of us felt that something was wanting to
a proper termination, which seemed in the first form too abrupt.¹

The article is now just 24pp. long: a circumstance which I greatly regret, and had not at all anticipated.² I am now hard at work on Bentley,³ - then on Med. Jurisprudence,⁴ Whately,⁵ - Demosthenes,⁶ - and Sadler.⁷

Having received from you £10 for this paper, - I suppose that you will now be in my debt £5. 15. 0. - Professor Wilson assures me this morning that I shall not do anything offensive to you by mentioning this, - which else in a press of important business might for the moment escape your attention. - Pray excuse my circumstantiality in mentioning the shillings:- the fact is that, as I remit all paper by the post, - I rely upon any odd balance of this kind, in some instances, for my petty daily expenses of postage, washing &c.

Believe me, my dear Sir,

Very faithfully yours,

Thos. De Quincey.

Add: William Blackwood Esq. /[Edinburgh].

MS: NLS. MS 4717, ff21-22

1. The article under discussion here is "Kant in his Miscellaneous Essays", which appeared in the August, 1830 (Part I) number of Blackwood's (vol.XXVIII, pp.244-268; M/VIII, p.84ff). In substance the essay sounds like a refugee from De Quincey's London Magazine days, when he suggested to Taylor and Hessey that he prepare abstracts from Kant's miscellaneous essays. There is, in fact, a reference to his London translation of Kant's "Scheme of a Universal History", near the end of the Blackwood's paper (see 26 August, 1823, note 7, and 21 September, 1823, note 13 for details of the London references). Before Wilson made his suggestion, De Quincey had probably simply ended the paper with his brief selected translations from Kant's "Perpetual Peace". As it was printed, the article concluded with a hurried one-page summary of the rest of Kant's essay, and, of course, with a self-
conscious display of De Quincey's own knowledge of the subject.

2. The sentiment was echoed in the published paper: "I am really shocked, my dear friend, to find the length of my paper" (*Blackwood's*, p.267; *M/VIII*, p.125).

3. De Quincey's "Life of Richard Bentley, D.D. by J.H.Monk, D.D." appeared in *Blackwood's* in September and October, 1830 (vol. XXVIII). Goldman/1965 (p.29ff) has sought to show, at some length, how De Quincey is "slavishly dependent" (p.32), for the substance of his supposedly independently-acquired information about Bentley, on Monk's book which in his *Blackwood's* review he seeks to belittle. Whatever Goldman's unstated judgemental standards are, their critical products are worth setting against comments by a contemporary of De Quincey, D. M. Moir, who had read Monk's book. Moir concluded, in a letter to Blackwood, "compare what the other periodicals have said on Monk's book, and the eloquence and learning of Maga's critiques will shine more distinctly preeminent - Scholastic literature is evidently De Quincey's forte, and within that magic circle not one of his contemporaries [...] is fit to try a fall with him" (September, 1830: NLS/MS 4028, ff70-71).

On one level the context of the article was, of course, set by the loose, text-centred nature of contemporary reviewing, on another, by something much more personal. The phenomenological drive of De Quincey's critical method has been categorised as a figuration "of his own inner world" (Miller/1975, p.27, n.4). In the case of the Bentley review this seems to be a matter of desire for contemplative retreat, easily explained, at least from a pragmatic perspective, by the troubled state of both the country and De Quincey's private life (the following letter and notes illustrate this, if it needs further illustration). Part one of the article, which opened the magazine, commences with a passage which looks at how a "hidden paradise of the hills" turned out to be a place of "fierce dissention" (*Blackwood's*, vol.XXVIII,
p.437). De Quincey goes on in his review to explore, for one thing, the possible constituents of an ideal scholarly life. The life of Richard Bentley (1662-1742), a mixture of concentrated, withdrawn scholastic study and very public literary and theological wrangling, was ideally suited to an heuristic examination by De Quincey of the public/private axis of his own life. The collage he ends up with might, as Goldman/1965 writes, be a "hoax" (p.32), but it is at least a hoax with a psychodynamic ideological rationale.

The extrinsic structure of the article seems, in fact, to have been worked out with some care, and subsequently agreed with William Blackwood. De Quincey wrote to his publisher, sometime during the summer, to tell him that he was "now sensible that the Professor and I sketched the orig. plan of the Bentley on too long a scale". If the article was needed by the time set, he continued, "it will be somewhat shorter in that case than I believe you would choose, - and it would not run over the whole ground marked in my notes" (NLS/MS 4027, ff87-88).

4. For details of De Quincey's intention to review Robert Christison's *A Treatise on Poisons in Relation to Medical Jurisprudence...* (1829) see 19/26 March, 1831, note 2.

5. An article on Richard Whateley's *Elements of Logic* had been promised to Blackwood by De Quincey in the spring: see 3 March, 1830, note 12.

6. This represents another long-planned paper, contingently linked to other papers on classical subjects. De Quincey had originally asked William Blackwood if he "could lend [...] any good edition of Demosthenes of past or present days", along with a general study of Greek oratory, in February, 1829 (NLS/MS 4019, ff66-67). In May, 1833, the subject was still on the go: "I have been occupied for a fortnight, upon Demosthenes: and with this Art. finished I shall call myself upon you in the early part of coming week" (to William Blackwood: NLS/MS 4717, ff13-14). Although De Quincey had a high opinion of the great Athenian orator, which emerges on a
number of occasions in his writing (see, e.g., M/II, p.63), he never completed a self-contained article on the subject. An extended eulogy of Demosthenes did, however, appear in the second paper of his "A Brief Appraisal of the Greek Literature [...] No.II. - The Greek Orators": by a familiar process of growth, the original proposal was absorbed into a larger context, and ended up in Tait's rather than its original intended place (vol. VI, June, 1839, pp.374-80 - see 3 March, 1830, note 11 for the orators series).

7. Presumably Michael Thomas Sadler (1780-1835), social reformer, political economist, M.P., and prolific writer on social matters. Sadler had recently set out his ideas on a number of related social and religious topics in his Ireland: its Evils and their Remedies (1828), and The Law of Population (1830). De Quincey would undoubtedly have sympathised with many of his principles: Sadler was High Tory, a steadfast believer in protectionist economic policies (though, consequently, hostile to Ricardian doctrines), an anti-Malthusian, and an articulate critic of rampant industrialism (Thompson/1982, pp.371-3 and 377; Perkin/1981, pp.241-44). D. M. Moir readily confused the two men: "The Prospects of Britain [Blackwood's, April, 1832 - by De Quincey] is a noble article, and from evidence of style and manner, I would attribute it to Mr. Sadler" (letter to William Blackwood, 25 March, 1832: NLS/MS 4034, ff65-66). As it turned out there was to be no paper by De Quincey on this double, perhaps because Blackwood deemed that the article Wilson wrote on Sadler's Law of Population, for the July, 1830 number of the magazine, would be enough of the matter for the time being. (In the event Wilson himself returned to the topic again in 1831: two disparaging articles about Sadler, by T. B. Macaulay, in the Edinburgh Review, and a party-political controversy further on, the subject was still well and truly alive.)
TO [WILLIAM BLACKWOOD]

[Edinburgh]

Sat. morng. Nov 20. 5 o'clock [1830]

My dear Sir,

I am conscious that I do not stand in a very favorable position for any request of any kind - as the writer of an article still unfinished;¹ and I have but little time indeed to state the case, and lastly I am not sure that it will of be [sic] any use to me to succeed - under circumstances apparently so hopeless. But however, considering that any delay at this moment will bring two days more of delay (tomorrow being Sunday), and also having some wish to discharge to the letter a promise that I made some days ago - though holding out but little benefit to any body, - I shall explain my situation briefly before I go for a few hours to bed. - Some days ago, (and to that circumstance almost entirely, in a very small degree to the sudden derangement of my plan by the Resignation of Ministers,² you must ascribe my backwardness in my article) I received a letter from my wife threatening suicide in the case of my not being able speedily to release her from her present situation.³ It is shocking to mention such a thing, but almost necessary in my circumstances; and of course I do it in confidence. - Now, if you inquire what there is distressing in her situation, I answer not much beyond what is purely imaginary. The main grievance I suppose to be this: the person, at whose house she and her children have lodgings, - a woman, and apparently coarse minded and vulgar, has children of her own. Disputes, such as naturally arise between children, have occasionally, I suppose, arisen. The mistress of the house has taken part, as people of that rank (you know) always do, with her own children - wrong or right. My servants, on the other hand, have taken part with my children - no doubt also whether wrong or right. Hence ill-blood: and the woman, having no other means of expressing her spite, and no doubt suspecting that her arrear cannot be paid on demand (though in fact not much is due to her), has grown insolent -
and perhaps has said things which make it painful to continue in her house: and unfortunately there happens to be no other in that neighbourhood where lodgings can be obtained; yet the neighbourhood cannot be left until all bills are paid. Such, according to my impression collected from very incoherent and passionate letters of my wife, is the extent of the evil from which she would escape by committing suicide. - To combat these views and intentions in her, I have for the 3 last days - Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday - precisely the 3 days on which my polit. art. claimed my undivided attention - been obliged to diminish the remaining time, so precious as it had become, by writing long and elaborate letters - arguing (or suggesting remedies upon) each particular grievance which she stated, and endeavouring to tranquillize her mind. By this direct abstraction of time, I have been thrown back greatly in my art. - and still more by the anxious and corroding thoughts, and suffering state of mind, under which I have written. Hence I have still not arrived at the close of my paper. Now, under a full persuasion that I should have reached that point by Friday night at furthest, I assured her in my letter of Tuesday and Wednesday that early on Sat. morng. I should call upon you - and state so much of the case as would obtain from you whatever the paper might seem to warrant. Not that any sum, which in any reason you could give for a better paper than this, would meet the demands of the case; but I promised myself that it would enable her to fence a little until I could write to my mother - which I resolved to do without delay as soon as my Maga duty was over. Meantime, by last night's post, I received a more distressing letter than ever, which I have felt myself obliged to show to Prof. W. The threat of suicide is more determinately repeated, and she assures me peremptorily that, if I do not hold out some immediate prospect of relief in my promised letter of tomorrow night, her present application shall be the last letter she will ever write. In the frightful agitation of such an announcement, I would have written instantly to my mother: but
unfortunately no answer could be had from Bath until some days after the time she fixes: and, as it happens that I owe my mother £100 (borrowed a few months back) which was to have been repaid this very month, I could not apply at this particular moment for a new loan without explaining the nature of my necessity at length. This therefore I defer till Sunday: and meantime in my letter of to-morrow night I shall briefly mention my intention and my certainty of receiving as much as she wants from that quarter within a week: and it would have been very agreeable to me if I could so far have kept my former promise as to send at the same time some small sum to meet the most pressing of her immediate occasions, though I am aware how small a one it is that an article can really merit which has been written in so hurried and distracted a way. In this manner I shall at least know that I have omitted nothing in my power.

At the same time, as I know how dreadful must be the pressure upon your anxieties in what regards Maga at this advanced period of the month, allow me to say that nothing but the very extraordinary and afflicting circumstances I have mentioned could have retarded me so much; and that, so far from yielding to a causeless despondency, had I not exerted the very greatest fortitude and control over myself, I could not have written at all. - If you ask me - Do I then place confidence in the sincerity of the threats? I answer that I do not know what may be the extent of her firmness: but I do know that she is under a most unhappy dejection of mind; that she is in a state of great nervous irritability; and that in something of the condition of spirits at a very early period of her life she really did make an attempt of the kind she now threatens.

Believe me, my dear sir,

Very faithfully and sincerely yours

Thos. De Quincey

I have been obliged to detain part of my MS.: I hope to be at work at eleven; and, if at 3 or ½ past 3 some messenger
could come down, I will give him a part that at this moment, when it is on the point of striking 6, I really cannot properly express from mere exhaustion.

Publ: Eaton (1936), pp.335-37.
MS: NLS. MS 4027, ff82/83.

1. De Quincey was turning his journalistic skills to good use during this period; producing a series of highly topical articles on the political state of Britain. Correspondence in the Blackwood Papers (in the National Library of Scotland), shows the increasing tendency, from the late 1820's onward, of William Blackwood and his sons to "commission" specific political papers for their magazine, from their best commentators (see under Blackwood in the general correspondence, MS 4022 onwards; and the firm's letter books, MS 30310 onwards). De Quincey's work in this area seemed to be particularly sought after, and even in the days when he had managed to alienate himself from William Blackwood's sons, the publishers could report with some pride, "Lord Stuart of Rothesay [...] praises De Quincey's article on the Opium Question very much [Blackwood's, June, 1840] De Quincey has done a most capital note to [this] article" (NLS/MS 4050, ff135-36 and ff261-62). "I have written De Quincey", Robert Blackwood reported, unhesitatingly, "to keep his eye on the [Corn Law] debate and have a good article ready for the March No." (17 February, 1842: NLS 4060, ff25-26). There was also, though, to be the counter criticism that De Quincey's work generally was, "abstruse [...] meant only for a fraction of readers, and that a very small one" (D. M. Moir, 31 January, 1840: NLS/MS 4052, ff70-71). Accordingly, his papers could be seen as a "clog" upon the magazine and might "not be so much missed" (Alexander Blackwood, 1841: NLS/MS 4053, ff136-37 and ff110-111).

There were to be few such comments from William Blackwood, whose entrenched Tory opinions De Quincey would invariably flatter during the political instability of the
early 1830's. "I shall of course", De Quincey wrote to Blackwood, on 23 August, 1830, "immediately attend to your wishes"; and, on 11 September, 1830, "with respect to the suggestion as to the higher grounds of religious principle, - I assure you that I have of late years most sincerely held such views myself" (NLS/MS 4717, ff24-25, and ff26-27). What these principles and opinions revolved around, of course, was the protection of the established system from supposed outsiders. "The integrity, that belonged to our Ministers of State [...] is vanished [...] the honour and immaculate fidelity to engagements [has passed] into the realm of romance", he was to write in March, 1829, when Parliament was about to pass the Catholic Relief Bill ("The Duke of Wellington and Mr Peel", Blackwood's, vol.XXV, March, 1829, p.294).

Four variations by De Quincey, on a single theme, were to be published in Blackwood's, in 1830: "French Revolution", "France and England", Political Anticipations", and "The Late Cabinet" (vol.XXVIII, September, October, November, and December, respectively). The common trope in them concerns fragmentation and lack of cohesion at the parliamentary nucleus of the system; and the major threat is "morbid overbalance" (September, p.544). One can, in fact, follow what starts off as an optimistic conviction that Burkian organicism will neutralise subversive forces, through to a much more pessimistic position in December, where Cabinet decisions are "all tending, in the most headlong manner, to confirm and promote the wildest frenzy of the mob" (p.974). The predictive tone springs vehemently from a conviction that the public will is simply a matter of "prevailing passions" (September, p.558). Violation of the central political core (the establishment, as De Quincey sees it) is, correspondingly, the result of "profligacy" (ibid., p.557). Baxter/1990 (p.125) sums the matter up well: "the false step [towards predicted ruin] is not inevitably necessary, in that it always involves
a moral choice, [but it] constitutes a formal law which the inadequate leaders obey".

2. Enfeebled by years of internecine warring, and indecisive policy-making, the Tory party fell from power in November, 1830. The ostensible cause had been a vote lost on a minor parliamentary matter, but it was the inability of the Tories to deal with pressure for social, political, and religious reform, from many quarters, that had effectively led to their downfall. More locally, Wellington's problem-ridden leadership of the Tory party had been finally undermined by his infamous speech of 2 November, when he had recklessly declared that constitutional innovation was irrelevant to the good of the nation. The resignation of Wellington and his ministers took place on Tuesday 16 November.

From De Quincey's perspective there were indeed real fears. Earl Grey, leader of the Whigs (who formed the new administration until 1834), "was talking of 'a state of general distress such as never before pressed upon any country'" (Evans/1983, p.204). In addition, the eroded Whig/Tory balance seemed incapable of withstanding the impress of both radical and liberal reform pressure, and the new King, William IV, "was felt, however slender the evidence, to be 'a King of England and not the King of a faction'" (Briggs/1979, p.233 - quoting an 1830 source). On top of all this, the bloodless July Revolution, which had seen the overthrow of the Bourbons in France, threatened to stimulate political reformist sentiment at home and elsewhere. It was the stuff of De Quinceyan nightmares, and the fevered metaphoric overreaching it produced was intense. The representative status of De Quincey's papers, though, becomes obvious when one looks at other political articles on the same theme, by fellow writers for Blackwood's. Between November, 1830 and May, 1832, by which time the passing of the Reform Bill began to look like a fait accompli, the magazine ran eleven such pieces as lead articles (with many others elsewhere in the magazine), three of which leaders were De Quincey's. A number
of writers, like De Quincey, offered brief histories of colonial revolutions, not necessarily for the sake of drawing parallels between past and present (or even present and present), but because history promised at least the chance of metaphysical purgation, possibly more. Anti-monarchical sentiment, De Quincey, reasoned, "in every land in Christendom gravitates towards that centre [Paris]", where the material symbol could be attacked by force of arms (Blackwood's, vol.XXVIII, December, 1830, p.974 and pp.976-77 - see, e.g., Alison's article quoted below, for a comparison).

It appeared that the mania for writing overheated articles on reform was as rabid as the "Reform mania which now ravages the nation, and promises to inflict upon its inhabitants such a long series of disasters", to quote De Quincey's colleague, Archibald Alison, on the subject (Blackwood's, vol.XXXII, January, 1832, p.1). De Quincey had praised the restraint shown by other nations in the face of what appeared to be French preparations for war (Blackwood's, vol.XXVIII, December, 1830, p.976). It was peculiarly ironic, then, that he should attack Britain's alarmist "verbal denunciations" (ibid., p.977) of France, not just using the same sort of extremist language, but at the same time by suggesting that the threat to Britain from France was exactly the same as the threat to the British political system from radical politics.

The self-justifying immoderacy of William Blackwood sums up the position of Blackwood's: "The Magazine you will see is still continuing cutting up rats and Radicals. I have letters from all quarters and from every part approving in high terms the cause we are pursuing, among these are the Duke of Newcastle, the Earl of Winchelsea, Sir R. R. Vyvyan, Mr. Saddler [i.e., M. T. Sadler] etc." (to William Blackwood jnr., 27 June, 1829: NLS/MS 30475).

3. Eaton/1936 (p.335) conjectures that De Quincey's wife may have been staying with or near her sister, at Lingstubbs, just outside Penrith (see 29 April, 1822 - no.48 - note 4, 3rd
para. for details of the latter). This seems probable, though why she was living in lodgings isn't clear. Perhaps pressures at The Nab had become so intolerable that she decided to move away from the area completely. Her father's own financial position at Rydal was precarious, and De Quincey, as the major potential wage-earner, was perhaps having impossible expectations heaped on him, which Margaret had been forced to bear vicariously. If De Quincey was storing part of his book collection at Lingstubbs in 1830 (as the note just mentioned shows he was in 1838), he would certainly have had worries about its unauthorised sale to clear Margaret's debts.

4. As the following letter shows, Blackwood responded generously to De Quincey's request, even if he had been given little scope to turn it down.

104. TO WILLIAM BLACKWOOD

[Edinburgh]
Sat. morn. Decr. 4. - 1830

My dear Sir,

First let me go back to your note of Novr. 23. I have to thank you greatly for the very liberal manner in which you thought proper to over-pay my exertions on that occasion, and for the allowance which you made for the agitated state of feeling in which I was placed by sudden circumstances; more especially as you made this allowance at the very moment when you were suffering from the heavy anxieties and the pressure of extra expenses which my delay, however involuntary on my part, had caused. Such a state of things, it is satisfactory to know, never can recur; since by the 19th. or 20th of December my family will be on the road to Edinburgh: and unless at a distance from Mrs. De Q. (as was the case at that time), I could not by possibility (even under the same circumstances in all other respects) be liable to the same shape of anxiety - the only shape which could materially impede my progress.¹ And, by the way, let me add to the
account of my tremendous hindrances in these moments - that, over and above the suspense and agitation such as I have already described them to you, on every night of that important week I had to write a very long letter equal to 24pp. of Maga: so that the mere drain of time, had everything else been favorable, was *singly* sufficient to have half-ruined my progress. However this I need not dwell on. Such a case cannot recur: and against any lighter case of distress I am sufficiently secured by fortitude. You have a right to expect that the whole undivided time - energy - and attention of one who undertakes an article for you...should be given to the subject and to the timely completion of it: and in future, when all recurrence of such unlooked-for explosions will be obviated, I can depend upon myself to say - that no irregularity as to time can or shall occur. As a lawyer provides for a fixed and immutable day in court-business, so I - once knowing the day from you - shall in future make a systematical provision to meet it.

Secondly, - in answer to your note of two days back, - I undertake to have one article delivered on the 8th and 10th of this month;² and a Political article on the 16th and 18th.³

Thirdly, - as I must now make no delay in taking steps for securing a house, - would you, if it lies in your way to push an inquiry of that sort, do me the favor to obtain some information about the furnished houses at Portobello?⁴

Your messenger, I find, is waiting - and impatient: so I close abruptly; and will write a few lines more in a day or two.

[T. De Q. - Signature removed]

Addr: William Blackwood Esq./45 George Street/[Edinburgh].
MS: NLS. MS 4027, f84.

1. By early 1831, De Quincey, Margaret and their seven children were installed at number 7 Great King Street, an expensive address in Edinburgh's New Town. Unsurprisingly, the family were soon to find themselves beset by another, more
familiar anxiety: debt. Some years later, De Quincey, with whatever conviction, blamed his wife for the new slide into poverty. She "had already", he was to say to his legal agent, in 1838 or 1839, "by 1831 brought me into heavy difficulties; not that she had any expensive habits in her own person, but she was incapacitated by temper from controlling a household of vicious servants such as we found requisite in Great King St.; and she was preyed upon both openly and secretly by grasping relatives" (Dove Cottage MS/161:59 - Eaton/1936, p.370, where the passage appears in an altered form). It looks as if De Quincey may have taken the house at about £200 a year rent. Forward/1939 (p.519) prints a document showing a payment by De Quincey of £100 to cover rent between mid-May and "Martinmas 1831" (11 November). In his legal Condescendence of 1832/33, De Quincey noted of the Great King Street address that "he proposed to keep Boarders and took a House for the purpose" (Forward/1939, p.517). The scheme was never carried out.

2. This is probably a section of De Quincey's four-part paper, "Dr Parr and his Contemporaries". The series appeared in Blackwood's in January, February (Part II), May and June, 1831 (vol.XXIX, p.61ff, p.376ff, p.763ff, and p.901ff). Little objectivity could be expected on the subject from De Quincey, when he had already written of Samuel Parr (1747-1825), a respected, if vain and bombastic Latin scholar, as a man whose "opinion was of little value on any subject" (1827: Tave/1966, p.238). There appears to be limited structural focus at the opening of the piece: three recent works on Parr are listed in a footnote, but the relationship between text and context isn't overtly stated. As with the two-part Bentley essay (18 June, 1830, note 3), though, this one too makes parasitic use of its root texts, quoting from and alluding to them as necessary. There is a sense too in which the Parr series is an ironic counterpart to the Bentley diptych. When De Quincey was revising his works in the 1850's he wrote to his daughter,
Emily, "Richard Bentley [...] was all which Parr pretended to be; the very Prince of scholars" (Japp/1890, p.408).

How firmly located in contemporary matters the basic strategy of "Dr Parr" is, despite De Quincey's ambiguous denial of such towards the end of the following letter, might be seen from a comment he makes in the first part of his essay: "Whigs are not the kind of people to be trusted with improper concessions [...] Had Dr Parr [a Whig] been alive at this hour, he would have stood fair for the first archbishopric vacant" (Blackwood's, vol.XXIX, p.73). The object of the Parr series, it quickly emerges, is to offer an emblem of the type of ideological construct valued by the new, apparently liberal, Whig government. Dr Parr accordingly has to be shown up as a man of second-rate attainments. De Quincey's line, then, becomes predictable, if amusing: as an author Parr is "ridiculous " (ibid., p.377), "Latin composition, in fact, if we except bell-ringing, was" his sole accomplishment (p.385); though even here Parr's competence is later to be shown, in part three, to be more a matter of mechanics than of cultural empathy. His judgement also is shown to be hopelessly shallow and flawed, and his political stance courageous but on the wrong side of Jacobinism (pp.906-7). When De Quincey came to revise his Parr text in the 1850's, he underscored how time-and-place specific the original work had been: "Twenty-five years ago, I felt strong scruples in approaching the subject of Dr. Parr, so much had a partisan interest invested the Doctor" (M/V, p.10). It was thus as a Whig polemicist that Parr had then had to be dealt with, in 1830.

3. The next political paper by De Quincey to appear in the magazine was "The Present Cabinet in Relation to the Times" (vol.XXIX, February, 1831, Part I, p.143ff).

One other piece of De Quincey's writing has survived from 1830: a carefully-written two-page disquisition on novels, or, rather, on the usefulness of novels as a medium for dealing with the subject of "the uncertainties of earthly love"
(Archivist/1888; Hogg/1890, vol.I, pp.354-56). How it came to be composed is uncertain; it is dated 3 December, 1830 and written in an album belonging to a woman whom, De Quincey notes, "perhaps I have never seen - whom perhaps I never shall see".

4. Conceivably De Quincey was considering moving to Portobello, a coastal town just outside the city limits, on the eastern side of Edinburgh, because there he would have had the debtors' sanctuary of Holyrood between himself and the central part of the city. He did, in fact, move to a house at Duddingston, immediately west of Portobello, and comfortably close to Holyrood, in 1833.

105. TO [WILLIAM BLACKWOOD]

[Edinburgh]

Thursday night, December 16., [1830]

My dear Sir,

It is not with the slightest view to interfere with your new arrangements, which perhaps are now irrevocable, but simply to explain my part in the case that I detain your messenger for the purpose of writing a note long enough to answer that end. - Nothing could more surprize me than your note: to me of course, under the kind arrangements which you make for the future, it does not produce any inconvenience. But I am exceedingly anxious to explain how the matter stands as regards your reliance upon me. - An accidental blunder of Prof. Wilson's cook had inflicted upon me a colic which lasted throughout the whole of last night. This however did not hinder my writing: and at 5 o'clock this morng. I had done what I intended to send. At that time however, considering that by yesterday's information (received through Prof. W.) instead of 16 or even 18 pages (to which I apprehended originally that an article on such momentous topics might extend) 11 or 12 at most were as much as you could admit - I imagined that such a difference of quantity might make a few
hours' difference in time. And therefore (distrusting the entire correctness of what I had written under so much pain) I thought it well to revise it after a few hours' sleep. Accordingly I left a note to Prof. W. explaining as much of the case as he did not know already and begging him to desire the messenger to come down at 4 or 5 o'clock this evening. By accident (from your absence, I believe, in the Council) he did not see you, it seems, and had no opportunity of making the explanation. - I went upon the notion, possibly an erroneous one, that the small extent of the article would allow a latitude of a few hours for the first portion: as to the second, I meant rigidly to have adhered to the letter of the engagement - and to have had it ready by 7 o'clock on the morning of the 18th.

All this explanation, with which I now trouble you, is not at all prospective, or with any view to any second change in your arrangements, for I am fully aware that that may be perhaps quite out of the question now; but simply retrospective, in order to make it understood that I was not designing to take one hour or more for the total article than had been agreed upon; and that in this acknowledged departure from the letter of the engagement for the first portion (for your note certainly says very distinctly - "on the morning of the 16th"), I was merely wishing to revise with the benefit of morning coolness and freedom from pain: even which I would not have done, but from the notion I had got that possibly a paper reduced in its dimensions beyond my first calculations might bring with it some latitude as to the time (i.e. for the first portion only). In that I now take it for granted that I was mistaken; and perhaps you did not understand the delay in that light, but supposed that I should go beyond the limit fixed for the final delivery: whereas I assure you - that I should not: never was I more certain of being ready in time with the final part.

I have not sent any part of my MS by the Bearer conceiving that it could now be of no use. If any part of it
should suit for the next month, perhaps it would require some alterations to adjust it to its new situation:—4 On the other hand, if you should think no part suitable, I cannot have the slightest cause to complain — but on the consideration of your most liberal dealing which well entitles you to expect people to abide by accidents of this sort, and also on the particular consideration that — if lost — it is lost entirely by my own fault. — On the whole, I shall this night, pass to Dr Parr; whose article I shall make as complete as intense study of the works and my utmost deliberation can make it: for certainly, as it is not specially called for by any occasional circumstances, it ought to be burnished with unusual care —

By the way, I promised a second paper on Parr, in that one already printed, without writing specially to apply for your permission; merely, as of course you would understand it, because I was too much pressed for time and knew that I wrote everything under your daily revision — so that, if you objected, you would immediately set me right.5

Yours ever, my dear Sir,
Very truly.
Thos. De Quincey

MS: NLS. MS 4027, ff85-86.

1. What this agreement was, and how De Quincey was disregarding it even as he was accepting it, is shown by an irritable letter William Blackwood wrote to him in January, 1831. The publisher had paid De Quincey £47 in December, a large sum at this time, in loans and advance payments for articles, on the understanding that the writer would make up the £20 loan component with papers, and then be allowed to borrow another £10. The consequence was that De Quincey's "political article ['The Present Cabinet...'] , February, 1831] which ought to have appeared in the Jany. No. was paid for before insertion [...] I allow for articles in the ordinary way, adding as I have done and will do, at my own discretion, when articles are sent me seasonably so as to be more valuable
and useful to me" (26 January, 1831: NLS/MS 30004). For "The Present Cabinet", which ran to about fourteen pages, De Quincey had been paid according to Blackwood's modest rate of ten guineas per sheet of sixteen printed pages. Part two of his Parr article (second February number), "came several days too late, and put me to both inconvenience and expense. It is just a sheet and I have therefore credited you with ten guineas [...] the moment you send me so much of the article on Parr as will settle this balance [of £9] I will have great pleasure in sending you the £10" (ibid.). De Quincey's second article on Parr came to one sheet, to the word, a rare thing in the magazine. It was an achievement of no small mechanical skill, and a petty move probably intended to annoy Blackwood in its mathematical exactitude.

2. De Quincey's bizarre eating requirements in the Wilson household had become a matter of wide interest. Wilson's daughter recalled his request that, to avoid "any additional disarrangement of the stomach taking place [the cook must] remember to cut the mutton in a diagonal rather than in a longitudinal form" (Gordon/1862, vol.II, p.157). Wilson perhaps exorcised the nuisance by allowing his characterised mediator to interrupt the English Opium-Eater when the latter is about to deliver a Noctes lecture on the subject: "I shall dine to-day entirely on soup, - for your Edinburgh beef and mutton, however long kept, are difficult of mastication, - the sinews seeming to me all to go transversely, thus, - and not longitudinally, - so - ", "[North:] Hark! my gold repeater is smiting seven." (Blackwood's, vol.XXVII, April, 1830, p.667). Plotz/1988 offers the idea that De Quincey "consciously or unconsciously - seems to have willed himself miserable [...] weak [and] small [...] by restricting his food. He is a rare instance [...] of male anorexia" (p.85). While it is just possible that in early life semi-starvation may have been a form of self-punishment for sexual indulgence, in later life it was almost certainly the product of poverty and a stomach damaged by opium indulgence. De Quincey did, though, draw a
link between diet and writing. In a letter dated 13 December, 1839, for example, he offered the excuse to Robert Blackwood, that, "being unable at the moment to command animal diet, the only diet which supports the vis vitæ, […] I lose the energy of attention [and] in that way can I account for the unfinished state of that paper" (NLS/MS 4048, ff.240-41).

3. William Blackwood was very active politically in Edinburgh. He became a Bailie of the city in 1820, "a position which he would use to enhance his prestige as one of the leading spokesmen for the Tory cause in Scotland" (De Montluzin/1987, p.164). Accordingly, he diligently attended meetings of the City Council.

4. This is the article on "The Present Cabinet in Relation to the Times". Political events were moving so rapidly at this time, that the paper would need to be brought up to date before it could be published in the February number of Blackwood's.

5. The first part of "Dr Parr and his Contemporaries" appeared neither with "Part I" in the title, nor with "To be continued" at the end; one or other designation which would normally be used to indicate that more instalments were to come. Since De Quincey promised at least one further paper on Parr in his text (January, 1831, p.73), his publisher had either not read the paper carefully or, more likely, didn't trust in De Quincey's textual pledges.

106. TO WILLIAM BLACKWOOD

[Edinburgh]

Wed. mornng. (I know not the date). [Late January, 1831]¹

My dear Sir,

By the terms of our agreement I believe you were to advance me £10 on the second paper on Parr:² could you oblige me by sending it to-day? I have delayed writing or speaking about it, partly under a notion you would be occupied with
your last arrangements until it has become important to me to lose no time in my application.

You misapprehended me in what I said of notes. I never could have any reason to complain of any neglect on your part:— what I meant was — that I understood you to have complained so heavily of my writing notes at all, that at last it becomes painful [for] me to write even on the most pressing occasions.

My closing art. on Parr is now far advanced: and certainly in some part of next week you shall have it. — Except for the purpose of keeping an engagement, I really must have deferred my last art.; so continued was my suffering from Diarrhoea — arising out of too large a use of opium for the last 5 weeks. And, as it was, I miscalculated length: for the pages turned out not equal to their usual length.

But in future the following fact will make delay impossible:— I have recovered my old system of opium &c., my old health since Saturday; and I am going to do this:— for the next 9 or 10 weeks I am going to write articles without stopping — except just to communicate with you about the subject. I calculate on delivering a sheet every Saturday — 1st delivery on some day next week. And, if I err by a day or so, still at the worst in 5 weeks you will have 4 articles of a sheet each.⁴

Could you send me some newspapers, going as far back as possible?

Yours ever, my dear Sir,

T. De Quincey.

P. S. I know not what your rule is about sending out the Maga: but as yet I have seen no copy — and am very anxious to see one.

Addr: Wm. Blackwood Esq./45 George St./[Edinburgh].

MS: NLS. MS 4029, ff152-153.

1. This letter must predate William Blackwood's note of 26
January, 1831 by just a few days (see previous letter, note 1).

2. Blackwood's version of this arrangement ran, "Our agreement was, when I lent you £20 - contrary to my general rule, that when you had furnished me with articles to this amount I was to lend you £10 more" (see Blackwood's letter of 26 January, 1831 in previous letter, note 1 for context).

3. De Quincey's convoluted production of copy for the Parr series suggests that although he had marked his theme out fairly well - indeed, he had probably sketched out a convincing plan for Blackwood, as with the Bentley papers (see 18 June, 1830, note 3, para 3) - he had little real idea about how he would develop it, as with the Bentley papers, again. The following letters and notes show that he perhaps had problems knowing when to put a stop to "Dr Parr". His "closing" paper of the series couldn't, anyway, have been as advanced as he was making out here.

4. Apart from the unfinished "Dr Parr and his Contemporaries", De Quincey appears to have written just two more articles for insertion in Blackwood's in 1831. These were two parts of a single piece, "On the Approaching Revolution in Great Britain, and its Proximate Consequences/In a Letter to a Friend", and "On Reform as affecting the habits of Private Life/In a Second Letter to a Friend". Only the first part reached publication (Blackwood's, vol.XXX, August, 1831, Part II, pp.313-29). The manuscript of the unpublished second part is held by the National Library of Scotland (NLS/MS 4789, ff37-55 - see also Byrns/1956b, pp.992-93). The unified theme of the papers - predictions of catastrophe for Britain in the event of the extending of the franchise - also connects with that of the Parr series, and tangentially with the Bentley papers. All debate the nature of cultural life within different political systems. To De Quincey, Samuel Parr represented degraded intellect, which was the corollary of degraded political beliefs; liberal attempts to filter political involvement "downwards" from a propertied elite would, he argued in the
second Reform paper, merely serve to create a brutalising "atmosphere of plebian sentiment and plebian maxims" (Byrns/1956b, p.992).

107. TO WILLIAM BLACKWOOD

[Edinburgh]
Monday mornng. Jan. 31 [1831]

My dear Sir,

1. I was not aware that our contract was in the terms you mention, or I should not have applied in that manner. 1

2. I object not, if such is your view of the case, to the estimate you put upon those 2 articles. 2

3. But perhaps you would yourself have viewed it as too harsh a proceeding - not so to rate them - but make that rate the bar to my immediate receipt of so small a sum of money, - and thus to lay me at the mercy of those creditors in particular who for the very reason that they are trifling can hardly be delayed without signal loss of credit - This I say that perhaps you would yourself consider too harsh, had you been aware that 10 days ago I stood in this dilemma - Shall I write to Bath for money; 3 or shall I write for Mr Blackwood? - I determined for the last; (I could not then do both): I delayed my letter to Bath till your note arrived: and thus, by writing for you, not only in any case did I delay a large sum of money; - but in this particular case I lost an immediate one.

Had you been aware of this, I allow myself to think that your course would have been different.

However

4. I have not demurred to your stipulation. I now send what I calculate at between 13 and 14pp. of the Mag. And, as I presume from your note that I have now fulfilled your condition, - and as it is of the very greatest importance to me to receive the £10 by or before 4, if possible,
perhaps you will do me the kindness to send it by the Bearer, or at the time I have stated as being so important. 4

I remain, dear Sir,

Ever yours

Thos De Quincey

Addr: Wm Blackwood Esq./[Edinburgh].

MS: NLS. MS 4029, ff148-149.

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1. See note 1 to 16 December, 1830 for details of the letter from William Blackwood, dated 26 January, 1831, to which De Quincey is responding here.

2. That is, ten guineas each for "The Present Cabinet", published in the first February number of the magazine, and the second part of "Dr Parr", which appeared in the second February number.

3. To Mrs Quincey, whose quarterly payments of £50 (from herself and her brother) to her son, ran from January every year. De Quincey must have been in considerable financial trouble, if he had already got through Blackwood's advances and his allowance.

4. De Quincey managed to liberate the ten pounds retained by Blackwood after he had sent the second paper on Parr, with these hastily-finished pages of part three of the article (16 December, 1830, note 1). His dealings with Blackwood were now beginning to resemble those that eventually held with Taylor and Hessey: in each case a literary, politico-economic, or political context had provided overt support for an essentially personal financial dynamic. The Edinburgh publisher did, though, send the requested money by return, even if he took time off to write a long note to De Quincey, expressing his frustration and exasperation. "With respect to the allusion in your note to harshness on my part", he rejoined, "I beg leave to say that nothing was farther from my thoughts. I simply adhered to a written agreement, which I concluded you should have been as much aware of as I was [...] I do not expect blame to be thrown upon me if I adhere to my

Again, Blackwood, treated the whole matter as a commodity exchange: "in cases where I need excellent articles as yours always are in such time as to enable me to get my Magazine printed off and my other arrangements comfortably & successfully carried on, I have always had pleasure in adding to my ordinary rate" (ibid.). The pragmatic context probably suited De Quincey, who, by this stage, was much happier to talk economics than aesthetics with his publishers. His self-reflexive debate, however, continued in the writings themselves. In the essentially ad hoc portion of the third part of "Dr. Parr", which he sent with the current letter to fulfil Blackwood's "condition", he examines lines of retreat from the "custom [that most effectively] cramps and masters a man's freedom"; namely "the household diction which he hears from all around him" (Blackwood's, vol.XXIX, p.765). The essay effectively becomes an examination of Latin as a metalanguage, "the one sole Lingua Franca, that is, in a catholic sense, such for the whole humanized earth" (ibid., p.769). As an enabling devise for "extensive and indifferent" communication, however, Latin represented, to De Quincey, a language which rose above temporal signification, to have "the same extensive and indifferent relation to our planet, which the moon has amongst the heavenly bodies" (ibid., p.769). It illuminated and influenced without reference to the mechanics of human demand, in other words. A commodity text couldn't try to remove its subject further from the principle of commodification.

108. TO WILLIAM BLACKWOOD

7 Gt King St.
[Edinburgh]
[19 or 26 March, 1831]¹

My dear Sir,
It happens by a kind of fatality that, when you are going from home, I am usually just on the point of making communication to you.

My Parr article is nearly finished: on Tuesday morng. at furthest I shall send the conclusion. And at the latter end of the week I shall have ready an art. of a sheet and a half on Medical Jurisprudence: Prof. Christison's book the text [sic];² but I have bought some other books - for the sake of hints. This subject I undertook about 7 months ago - on hearing through Prof. W. that you would not dislike some art. on Prof. Christison - provided it were amusing.

I have also advancing to completion - my novel: and what I wish to know is - Does our former contract hold? - if so, I shall present it to you in all April as the ship language has it: most probably between the 15th and 20th.³

For this last perhaps you will be in home in time: but, for the Parr and the Christison, has your son authority to make any payments? Or what must I do in these cases? Perhaps you will do me the favor to let me know to-night or to-morrow.

Yours, my dear Sir, ever.

Thos. De Quincey

3 o'clock Sat. afternoon

Addr: William Blackwood Esq./45 George Street/[Edinburgh].

MS: NLS. MS 4717, ff66-67.

1. Date: De Quincey thought his letter would be read by William Blackwood, who was about to spend a short time in London, inspecting the firm's branch there (he had, in fact, already left Edinburgh). De Quincey's next letter, dated 4 April, confirms that he knew of Blackwood's absence by then. William Blackwood's eldest son, Alexander, responded directly to De Quincey's first letter some time after 18 March (NLS/MS 30312, f166 - the letter is undated but follows one dated 18 March, 1831 in a pre-bound [tissue] draft letter book). Since Alexander could refer to the current letter when he wrote to his father on 30 March (MS 4029, ff65-66), and since De
Quincey's letter is dated Saturday, it must, therefore, have been written on 19 or 26 March, 1831.

2. Robert Christison, *A Treatise on Poisons, In Relation to Medical Jurisprudence, Physiology, and the Practice of Physic* (Black, Edinburgh; Longman, London - 1829). De Quincey's promised review of Christison had a gestation (and non-appearance) period which was protracted even by his own standards. He first mentioned it in his letter of 18 June, 1830, also alluded to it in 4 April, 1831 (next letter), promised it again on 23 July, 1832 (below), and finally recorded on the 24 July, 1832 (below), that it had been "laid aside".

It is easy to see the attraction of the book to De Quincey. Robert Christison (1797-1882), "the greatest authority on poisons in the 1820's and 1830's" (Berridge/1987, p.65), was Professor of Medical Jurisprudence at Edinburgh University. His work in the field of forensic pathology was years ahead of its time, and the evidence he provided at criminal trials a decisive factor on a number of occasions (as his *Treatise* shows). The book itself was based on observations Christison had made in Edinburgh. As well as classifying poisons, it had lengthy sections on narcotics, and included a chapter (Twenty-five) on opium, with references to De Quincey, in his textual guise of The Opium-eater: "A very poetical, but I believe also a very faithful, picture of the phenomena now alluded to [i.e., "brilliantly rendered" imaginative experience] is given in the Confessions of an English Opium-eater, - a work published not long ago by a gentleman who writes from personal experience" (Christison/1829, p.528). Such a comment would locate that potentially alien "opium" element in De Quincey's persona just where he wanted it: as a subject of textual study. It also, of course, served to reinstate what one critic has called the author's "status as the reference of a text", mediating devices included, and offered a restoration of "the text's representational fidelity" (Wilner/1981, p.498). What, on the other hand, De
Quincey thought of the textual company he was keeping - the most eminent poisoners of the age - isn't recorded. The question of whether or not he occupied the position of victim or criminal in the *Treatise*, might have been a perplexing one for him. Many of the substances De Quincey was to take during his lifetime were listed in the book; including arsenic and hemlock, the latter of which could, in small doses, have effects "purely soporific like those of opium" (Christison, p.620). The blur between various shades of oblivion, which some of these drugs represent in Christison, would have been a matter of no small significance to De Quincey, always interested in inducing states which connect with "the shadowy and the dark" (M/V, p.211).

That *Blackwood's* expected to carry a review of Christison's book, is shown by a comment John Wilson made in the magazine: "Of Dr Christison's great work on poisons, by far the best on medical jurisprudence in our language [...] we shall speak fully in an early number" (*Blackwood's*, vol.XXVIII, August, 1830, Part II, pp.372-73). It may not be De Quincey's review which is being written about here, however. An unsigned, unpublished manuscript, not in De Quincey's hand, has survived from the period: it bears the simple heading, "Review - Christison on Poisons" (*Blackwood Papers*, NLS/MS 4890, f76 onwards). The magazine was not, in the event, to publish a review of the *Treatise*.

3. This further comment on De Quincey's novel must now refer to *Klosterheim*, a full-length fiction which was to form a separate publication, by Blackwood, in the spring of 1832. Lindop/1981 (p.295) suggests, probably correctly, that the 1832 novel may have been "built up from one of the proposed [New Canterbury] 'Tales'", which De Quincey first mentioned in 1830 (see 14 January, 1830, note 2). The relative silence on the articles front for large parts of 1831, along with De Quincey's pressing need for money, suggest that his energies might have been sporadically concentrated on a major financial effort, in the shape of *Klosterheim*.
Alexander Blackwood, acting in his father's absence, responded to De Quincey's letter with true Blackwoodian caution: "It gives me great pleasure to learn that you have so nearly completed your articles on Dr. Parr and also an article on Medl. Jurisprudence which I have no doubt will be most acceptable to the Magazine. I shall be most happy to make payments on anything from you in the same way as my father would do [...] the agreement respecting your novel I take upon me to say still holds good and I hope you will have it finished by the time you supposed" (NLS/MS 30312, f166). When the novel is next mentioned, in August, it looks as if it might have existed as something resembling a complete preliminary draft, with much revising to do to make it acceptable to the publisher. "I beg also to remind you of your Tale", William Blackwood wrote, "which ought to have been returned me some weeks ago. I intreat of you as much for your own sake as mine to go over the MS. carefully without loss of [...] and I do hope you will finish it entirely to your own satisfaction" (6 August, 1831: NLS/MS 30312, ff207–8).

109. TO [ALEXANDER BLACKWOOD]¹

7 Gt. King Street
[Edinburgh]
[4 April, 1831]

My dear Sir,

It would be particularly convenient to me if you could send me this afternoon the amount of money which you may think yourself warranted in sending for the MS. I inclose of Dr Parr's art. - I believe it to be just one sheet. Another half-sheet, which closes the article, is written: but it will take me the whole of this eveng. to correct it - together with the proofs. All of these I will send to-morrow. - The whole MS, yet unprinted will be 1½ sheets.² Perhaps you will not think yourself warranted in going beyond your Father's minimum - viz. 10 guineas a sheet. - But in this case, possibly you may
think yourself authorized to send the whole this afternoon: receiving my assurance of the total MS. and Proofs to-morrow.
- Under any circumstances, I trust that you will find no difficulty in sendg. me at least the amount for one sheet, - if you think it requisite to retain the sum for the rest of the MS until you receive it.³

On Friday I shall send you the art. (I believe the whole, certainly 12pp.) on Med. Jurisprudence.⁴

I remain, my dear Sir,
Yours ever, very truly,

Monday April 4
Thos. De Quincey

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MS: NLS. MS 4029, f147

1. For details of addressee see previous letter, note 1.
2. The final two parts of "Dr Parr", which were published in Blackwood's for May and June, 1831, ran to a total of about thirty-two magazine pages, or two sheets. The four papers of the series had been printed in two pairs, separated by a two-month silence: a discontinuity which is mirrored in the disconnected structure of the papers themselves. The whole series terminates with a terse paragraph, beginning "Finally, and as the sum of our appreciation", followed by a long "Note", which, in turn, is footnoted (vol.XXIX, pp.911-12). William Blackwood's puzzlement on the subject of the Parr series had been great, as the letter he wrote to De Quincey on 31 January, 1831, shows: "Mr. Laing read the MS. you have now sent. I do not know if it is the whole of your article. If it is not finished I hope you will send me the remainder with as little delay as possible, as I can make little use of it till I have the whole in my hands" (NLS/MS 30312, ff127-30).

Laing is possibly somebody used by Blackwood to edit contributors' papers for the magazine. That the firm employed such individuals, and that they worked on De Quincey's articles, is shown a number of times in the latter's correspondence. "I feel very sensibly the kind and gentlemanly considerateness of those [...] who have undertaken a task so
toilsome as the compression and revisal of so long a paper", he wrote, on 21 June, 1838, to Robert Blackwood, probably about his story, "The Avenger" (August, 1838), the only piece published in Blackwood's for 1838 after "The Household Wreck" of January (NLS/MS 4046, ff142-43). Similar sentiments can be found in NLS/MS 4048, ff 232-33 (10 July, 1839), and NLS/MS 4048, f243 (19 December, 1839). There is no reason to think that De Quincey would not have agreed to such extra-authorial intrusions at an earlier stage; though there is no direct evidence of it with "Dr Parr".

In a reappraisal of the biographical writings of the period, Annette Cafarelli offers a sophisticated discussion of the Romantic biographic methodology (Cafarelli/1990). She uncovers a hermeneutic approach that has more to do with subjective evaluation, "symbolic narrative" as she terms it, than factual verification (ibid., Chapter I). De Quincey's Bentley and Parr papers, however, raise suspicions about the strength of his aesthetic convictions at this juncture. The context to the (auto)biographical papers that he wrote for the publisher William Tait in the 1830's, tends to confirm that while structuring principles were held by De Quincey, he didn't necessarily implement them consistently. Although the subject is beyond the scope of the present work, judging from De Quincey's and Tait's correspondence it looks as if a number of these Tait's papers were not only arranged in the magazine according to Tait's and not De Quincey's scheme, but that they were also internally edited by the publisher. (This seems to hold despite the fact that De Quincey had a vested interest in persuading other publishers that Tait and not he was finally "responsible" for the papers. The process that had distanced De Quincey from his Tait's articles had a strong connection with the way that the writer was - or wasn't - paid for his copy.) Certainly, as the letters show, the discontinuities and disconnections of the Parr series also seem to relate directly to the financial exigencies of De Quincey's life. Parr's life is a fragmentary, "unverified" collage, not just because of
the internal demands of the subject, but also because of the
external demands on the writer. There is then a peculiar irony
in the title that Cafarelli gives her chapter on De Quincey:
"The Allegory of Everyday Life". What is meant to apply to De
Quincey's presentation of the lives of Wordsworth, Coleridge,
his Lakes associates, and other figures, just as well
describes the process of production of his text as copy.
3. The firm's cash books show that Alexander Blackwood paid De
Quincey just £11, on 4 April, the amount for one sheet of the
article (NLS/MS, 30770).
4. See previous letter, note 2.

110. TO J. G. LOCKHART

7 Great King Street
[Edinburgh]
August 17, 1831

My dear Sir,

I dare say that you will recollect a proposal which I
made to you nearly two years ago for a History of the Roman
Empire from Constantine to its final extinction. What I
proposed - was in the way of a Digest of the Byzantine
Historians for the Family Library; and, as I have said, at
that time I confined myself to the period between the First
Constantine and the Last. At the present I am disposed to
commence at an earlier epoch - in fact at the extinction of
the Republic: for it seems to me that any narrowing of the
subject would tend to diminish its saleableness. 2

This plan remained at that time unfulfilled - simply
because other engagements for periodical works interfered from
time to time to call off my attention. However I never lost
sight of it; and have been continually reading and otherwise
preparing myself in that direction; so that, whenever I put my
materials together, they will make up a work in no respect
hasty. And I am now anxious to feel myself warranted by
yourself and Mr Murray in setting earnestly to work upon this
scheme. My anxiety indeed is so great — that, if I could at all pretend to a place amongst your confidential friends, I should explain myself with a frankness which would at once make known to you how very necessary on pecuniary considerations some such engagement has now become to save me from the direst embarrassments. I fear that the terms of our acquaintance hitherto have been too slight or too interrupted to warrant me in troubling you with any more circumstantial statement of my difficulties. It will be sufficient to say — that, from some unforeseen and most vexatious circumstances in my affairs through the last ten months, I am now standing on the very brink of ruin. 3 I have no friend upon earth, to whom in such a case, I could with propriety address myself for even a momentary assistance, excepting my mother: and upon her, in consideration of my children, I have already trespassed much more heavily than I ought to have done. In reality, I feel myself not only bound in duty, but also able, to extricate myself by my own exertions — if only I could from any quarter obtain an effectual encouragement to those exertions; by which words — effectual encouragement — I mean a positive assurance that on such a day, say October 25, on presenting the MS. complete of one volume, I might count on receiving in some shape or other the payment which circumstances should then appear to warrant. The amount of this payment is a matter of much less anxiety to me than the time. As to the amount, I am satisfied that, either with Mr Murray 4 or yourself, I could have nothing to expect but the most candid appreciation of my labors. But time is a momentous consideration of course with me as with everybody else in regulating promises and engagements of every sort with those who have demands upon one's purse. — Let not the earliness of the day startle you: I write 14 hours a day, when I once sit down to writing; and I may in fact say that much of my work is already done, though not exactly in a state for printing.

You will observe that I date from a house of that class which implies a scale of expenditure somewhat above the
necessities of a needy man of letters. That I am hampered with such a house is one part of my misfortunes; and that part which I bear with the least firmness, as it happens to be the one in which I am not wholly without reasons for self-blame. In some degree it arose out of my embarrassments, which would not suffer me to clear off my arrears of rent until I had already dipped into a new term: and it gives me a pang of remorse - whenever I think with myself that perhaps a little more energy, possibly even an earlier application of the kind I am now making to yourself, might have saved me from this evil. - But let me not trouble you with the details of my case: all I wished - was to protect myself from that interference which naturally arises out of such a date, unless otherwise explained. The sum of my case is this: - I am in a hideous dilemma; and on the brink of one much worse. But I can save myself by great exertion; and I wish to save myself only in that way. Everybody in these days, whether ranking with the rich or the poor, has in all probability his own difficulties: and in the uttermost extremities of mine I shall never think myself entitled to ask any friend to assist me further than by allowing to my own exertions the benefit of such an opening as he may have it in his power to offer. Even this species of assistance I know not that I am entitled to ask of you. But you are kind and indulgent in your constructions: you may have been used to consider me in the light of a friend: - and at all events I am disposed to believe that you will find a sufficient title to that particular kind of aid which I have requested of you - in the fact that you have it in your power to offer it, and that I on my part need it in the very highest degree. 5

Pray believe me ever, my dear Lockhart,

Most truly yours, - Thomas De Quincey

Addr: J. G. Lockhart Esqr./Chiefs Wood/Melrose.
PM: 17 Aug., 1831.
MS: NLS. MS 924, f63.

1. See 10 March, 1830 for De Quincey's previous letter to
Lockhart. He had travelled a considerable psychological distance in the intervening period. In the early months of 1830, his correspondence with Blackwood, Wilson and Lockhart shows that he was trying to fill a financial lacuna with projected money-earning literary schemes. His credit, in other words, was text-based and, as the impractical overreaching of the scope of the plans shows, was based on simultaneity, an attempt to satisfy psychological and ontological needs from "multiple sources" (Miller/1975, p.41 - see pp.37-43 for a discussion of De Quincey's use of tropes in a parallel context). Now, though, he seems to make little attempt to fill space with projected displays of his expertise, and the resurrection of one old scheme is, at the most, half-hearted: he has fallen back predominantly on himself as a worthy cause of reward rather than on his writings. The overt imbalance in favour of his own financial needs was to continue for some time. De Quincey seems, in fact, to have needed some sense of prospective security, however tenuous, before he could confidently recover the sort of text-based sufficiency that enabled him to bridge large financial gaps with promises rather than self-pity.

2. De Quincey may have changed his mind after discovering the wide scope of Niebuhr's work on the subject (see 10 March, 1830, note 13). In pushing his historical threshold back this way, De Quincey would have been able to explore the continuity, or otherwise, of the Greco-Roman tradition, through its years of eclipse after the destruction of the Roman Empire, and on to its resurrection under Constantine I. It is just this question of continuity, anyway, that he begins to examine in his 1832 Blackwood's review, "The Prospects of Britain" (see 21 February, 1832, note 2), and in the 1844 Blackwood's review, "Greece Under the Romans" (see 10 March, 1830, note 10, paragraph 2).

3. De Quincey's slide into debt in the early 1830's has been well documented (Eaton/1936, pp.339-45; Forward/1939; Lindop/1981, pp.301-3). When he eventually filed his Omnium
Bonorum to attempt to make a fresh financial start, in July, 1833, he listed fifty-one creditors, mostly dating from the past ten years, and in the case of the twenty-six Edinburgh creditors, of much more recent origin (Forward/1939, pp.522-23; and see also 6 May, 1824, note 3). Whilst Eaton's estimate of De Quincey's allowances, returns from property and earned income at this time is probably fairly accurate, the figure he arrives at, £310 a year, including a conjectured maximum of £100 from "literary labours" (p.340), takes no account of the large amounts of money that De Quincey was doubtlessly borrowing. The figure was anyway, as De Quincey's mother pointed out, an income that should have allowed him to live in some comfort (10 June, 1826, note 2, para.2). It might also be pointed out that, given the number of his creditors, which were soon to include the owner of the Great King Street house, he didn't seem to be paying for a great deal.

Notwithstanding this context, De Quincey was being pursued in the courts for money as early as May, 1831 (Eaton/1936, p.340). That it was a bookseller who was pressing him (for just under £38), shows where some of the money was going. In the Condescendence that De Quincey had to file in his Cessio Bonorum process, he records of this period that "He endeavoured to support himself and his family by his literary exertions. He however found that the remuneration received for these services was inadequate to support him in the situation to which he had been accustomed, and as he failed in obtaining boarders, the house [in Great King Street] which he had taken with that view became a source of embarrassment and loss" (Forward/1939, pp.517-8; see also 4 December, 1830, note 1).

De Quincey was also finding it difficult to maintain the slender connection he retained with Blackwood's. It had taken an ultimatum to lever his paper "On the Approaching Revolution" out of him for the August number: "tell [De Quincey] he must send the end of his article - a proper conclusion - by tomorrow at ten o clock morning, or it will not be used at all - this will I think make him finish it
tonight" (John Wilson to William Blackwood, 17 July, 1831: NLS/MS 4031, ff248-51 - and see late January, 1831, note 4 for details of the two Reform articles). Furthermore, in what is probably a reference to the pendant article to this one, the unpublished "On Reform as affecting the habits of Private Life", William Blackwood told De Quincey that "in my humble opinion you have not done yourself justice in this article, and that therefore I am very doubtful if I can make use of it" (6 August, 1831: NLS/MS 30312, ff207-8). Comments in the same letter make it clear that having already raised a loan by promising this article, De Quincey has submitted it with a request for a further advance. The final sentence of the paper, a hurried piece of writing, reads like an ironic cry from the heart: "And for us at home, who seek our happiness in private life, - we shall find no resting for the sole of our foot in a land given up to civil convulsions" (NLS/MS 4789, f55). It is no surprise to find that an article about political turmoil takes as its touchstone the symbolic connotations of an idealised "private life".

4. John Murray, the publisher, Lockhart's employer.

5. There is no record of how Lockhart responded to De Quincey's letter. A quick consultation with his old Blackwood's colleagues would soon have told him that De Quincey was unlikely to produce much in the way of writing at this juncture.

111. TO WILLIAM BLACKWOOD

7 Gt. King Street
[Edinburgh]
Monday night [?21 February, 1832]

My dear Sir,

I send you the first part of an Article on Mr. Douglas's last work.2 - I have taken much pains with it:- Yet I am very doubtful, after all, whether with any good result. I have long suffered from a nervous affliction, which makes me
unaffectedly incapable of judging of anything I do. - Should it have the good fortune to please you, - I will send up the last pages which at present I am partly recomposing. If otherwise, I will pass to something else: and, if you approve that subject (which Prof. Wilson suggested to me as one likely to suit both me and Maga), I will undertake a miscellaneous art on the Lakes of England. After which, I should be glad to complete the art. for which at one time I made so many notes - viz. The Greek Orators. But one of your servants took away fm. Prof. W's the Greek work on which I purposed to ground my art. And possibly it may be no longer recoverable.

I have to thank you much for your present of Maga during those months when my own contributions from absence and since fm. illness or nervousness have intermitted.

More I have to say: but my messenger happening to be in a hurry. - that I may not miss my opportunity of communicating this day with you, I defer it for the present: and am, my dear Sir. -


Addr: Wm Blackwood Esq./ Ainslie Place/[Edinburgh].

MS: NLS. MS 4029, ff150-151.

1. Date (day): It is probable that a letter by William Blackwood, which falls between 21 and 23 February, 1832 in the firm's letter book, is a response to De Quincey's note. This begins, "I have read the portion of the article, which you have been so good as to send over, with very great pleasure and I hope you have been going on with it and will finish it with that same spirit. I need not tell you how much will depend on the full and effective way in which [it] is wound up" (NLS/MS 30312, f344). See following note for details of the "article".

2. De Quincey's review, "The Prospects of Britain", of a book of the same title, by James Douglas (Edinburgh, A. Black, 1831), appeared in Blackwood's for April, 1832 (vol.XXI, pp.569-591). Douglas had tried to gauge the political state of Britain, as it then stood, by examining it within both an
historical continuum and an international context. De Quincey's analysis is not so much an evaluation of the review text, as of the position of contemporary British society, apparently cut off from any beneficially-evolving political development, but firmly rooted in a degenerating process of mismanaged social evolution, which was about to produce the Reform Act. "Agitation has run its course, and completed its work", he wrote in his review, "the apostles of insurrection and revolution have fulfilled their mission, and closed their labours: all now stands ready for the reaper's sickle" (p. 570). While Douglas looks for solutions in his text, De Quincey offers descriptions of failure; purposely misreading historical knowledge as it then stood, in the process. The historian and novelist, G. P. R. James (1799-1860), whose book on Charlemagne De Quincey was to review for the November number of Blackwood's, wrote to William Blackwood to complain that "I do not admire your opening paper [De Quincey's "Prospects"] which states, amongst other erroneous assertions, that all trace of Roman civil policy had disappeared" by the mid-seventh century in Europe, "I will never admit that such days as the writer anticipates can ever reach Britain if we do not court evils by fearing to resist them" (7 April, 1832: NLS/MS 4033, ff158-59). James could, perhaps, have offered a much more pointed criticism if he had quoted De Quincey's Blackwood's paper on "The French Revolution": "It is the hackneyed artifice of political writers, either out of party violence, as a trick of rhetoric, or by way of stimulating attention, to speak of the country as on the brink of ruin" (vol. XXVIII, September, 1830, p. 555).

3. After the torments that De Quincey's behaviour had inflicted on Blackwood in the winter of 1820-21, it is difficult to believe that the publisher would have treated a proposed "Lakes" article, a subject of much trouble then, with anything other than disdain on the present occasion. What had, in 1820, been called "The English Lakes" was now named the "Lakes of England" (see 3 December, 1820, note 1).
4. For the complex line of descent of this subject see 3 March, 1830, note 11.

5. De Quincey's situation was becoming more and more precarious. His idea of "buying [...] and yet not paying" for The Nab (23 July, 1829) was now beginning to turn on him. He seems to have spent much of January in London, and with his mother, near Bath, trying to raise a covering loan for the mortgage. On 9 January, 1832 his wife wrote to the Manchester solicitors who had arranged the original mortgage, to tell them that, "Mr. De Quincey is at this moment in the South of England [...] to obtain the money necessary for paying up everything due" (Armitt/1916, pp.699-701 - De Quincey confirms the visit in a Blackwood's article, written in 1840: "eight years ago" he wrote, he had taken lodgings in London "to the south of the Thames", M/X, p.150). His mother's concern, anyway, was moved, and she later sent £185 to help extinguish the debt, which by then amounted to "2 years interest in arrear besides upwards of £40 the expense of the security, Mr. Quincey having only paid for the stamps" (Duckworth, Denison & Humphrey, Solicitors, to Mrs. Quincey, 2 April, 1832: Armitt/1916, p.703). It was, of course, to be only a temporary respite, and in 1833 the mortgage lender foreclosed on the loan and The Nab was sold (Lindop/1981, pp.308-9).

Just one day after returning home on 31 January (Armitt/1916, p.700), De Quincey wrote to John Wilson's brother, Robert Sym Wilson, a banker. The letter shows that all had perhaps not gone as well as expected at Bath with Mrs. Quincey. "For the first time in her life", he wrote to Wilson, attempting to raise a £30 loan, she had broken her usual rule and postponed sending his allowance by over two months (1 February, 1832: MS in private collection - quoted in Eaton/1936, p.341). Whether Mrs. Quincey was already instituting her condition that any Nab loan must be paid out of the allowance (Eaton/1936, p.344), or whether she had temporarily abandoned De Quincey, isn't clear. "Utter ruin
falls on me", the latter wrote to Wilson, if money wasn't forthcoming.

The following four undated notes concern the final stages in the production of De Quincey's novel Klosterheim; or The Mask, published by Blackwood in May, 1832.¹

112. (a) TO WILLIAM BLACKWOOD

[Edinburgh]

4 o'clock Thursday, [March, 1832]

My dear Sir,

I return my Art. looked over 4 several times; so that I suppose it to be correct. -

- As to the lacuna in Klosterheim. - I do not particularly recollect it; but I presume that I must have supplied it: if not, the sheet had better be returned. - I sent back yesterday 4 sheets corrected (all I have received).²

Yours ever,

T. De Q.

Addr: Wm Blackwood Esq/[Edinburgh].

MS: NLS. MS 4032, f188.

112. (b) TO [BLACKWOOD]

[Edinburgh, March, 1832]

My dear Sir,

The Printers are right. The explanation in sum is this: Originally Klost. opened with a chapter describing the entrance of a body of travellers &c. after a battle.³ This arrangement was afterwards changed, and the opening chap. being very elaborately written was laid aside to be introduced wherever the case might prescribe. - I fully believed that this had been done. However the Chapter is certainly not in the MS. nor can it be found. I have therefore re-composed what
is required, repaged, and rechaptered, and revised the whole.
- All is now perfect in any sense in which I can make it so.

Professor W. informs me that on receiving the MS with
this assurance, you would remit me 15 guineas for the art. -
If so, - might I request - as I have a bill due this day, --
that you would favor me with the money this morng.4

I am, my dear Sir,
Yours very truly
T. De Q.

MS: NLS. MS 4717, f52.

112.(c) TO WILLIAM BLACKWOOD
[Edinburgh, March, 1832]

My dear Sir,

I wish to know whether you would wish to have Klosterheim
lengthened. To my great surprize, it makes only 299pp. But, if
you wish it, I can throw in a chapter of 8 - 10, or 12pp.
which would carry it so far beyond 300pp. if you think this of
importance.5

In great hurry,
[T. De Q.]

Addr: Wm Blackwood Esq./George Street/[Edinburgh].
MS: NLS. MS 4032, f191.

112.(d) TO ROBERT BLACKWOOD6
[Edinburgh, March, 1832]

My dear Sir,

I am much concerned to say - that not being at all aware
of any further use for the MS., I had before receiving your
note this morning burned (as I do all MSS. of articles) up to
p. 83 inclusive. All the rest, if you wish it, I will of
course preserve. But to prevent enormous accumulations of
papers, I have constantly been in the habit of destroying
every atom of MS.; and I had no suspicion that Klosterheim
could fall within any rule of exception. I shall be seriously vexed, if I find that you wanted it for any but an accidental or momentary purpose.

Yours ever, my dear Sir

T. De Q.

Addr: Robert Blackwood Esq./[Edinburgh].
MS: NLS. MS 4717 f57.

1. It is difficult to date these notes with precision; however, as notes 2 and 4 below show, (a) and (b) date from the first half of March, 1832. (c) and (d) were probably written before the end of March, and most likely belong to the same period as the other two. (See Eaton/1936, pp.347-48 for extracts from the notes.)

Klosterheim was published by Blackwood in a single volume duodecimo, in April, 1832. De Quincey appeared yet again solely under his "by-name" of The English Opium-Eater. In a preface he wrote for an 1855 edition of the novel, the Irish writer Shelton Mackenzie noted "'Klosterheim' is as essentially a German story, as if it had been translated" (Mackenzie/1855, p.22). If a German original does exist for the book, it has never emerged; though, as with De Quincey's other fictions, a slight suspicion must remain that an ur-text hovers somewhere in the background. On the other hand, Lindop/1981 (p.304) enumerates some of the "absurdly specific" parallels between the plot of the book and De Quincey's own past. Goldman/1965 (pp.155-57), usually thorough in his researches on sources and parallels for De Quincey's writings, comes up with nothing in the case of Klosterheim. (Goldman does, though, try to see a dubious motive in De Quincey writing to the American publisher of his collected works, in 1856, asking him not to publish Klosterheim. The simple fact is that De Quincey was probably trying to protect the edition of Shelton Mackenzie, who was by then a keen correspondent of De Quincey's. What the latter seemed to have forgotten was that Klosterheim had already been republished in the American
series in 1851, effectively as the second edition of the work.)

The novel is, as Goldman/1965 (p.156) says, a close relation of the earlier Ritter-Räuber-und-Schauerromane tradition, but, given a residual cultural interest in the form, there is nothing exceptional about its lateness. Links with Harriet Lee's "Kruitzner", from her Canterbury Tales, have already been mentioned (see 14 January, 1830, note 2). It is also worth pointing out that not only does Klosterheim inhabit the same political world as "Kruitzner", the Thirty Years' War, with its attendant context of social chaos, menace and confused allegiances, but it also opens similarly: De Quincey commences with a "winter [of] unusual severity" (M/XII, p.5), Lee with "a winter memorably severe" (Lee/1832, vol.II, p.134). One can readily see, anyway, how the anarchic moment of Klosterheim might provide a correlative for the anarchic confusion of the political state of pre-Reform Britain, in which, for De Quincey, treachery seemed to be the keynote.

Whatever the case with sources, the book had its admirers. Coleridge wrote of it that "in purity of style and idiom [...] it reaches an excellence to which Sir W. Scott [...] appears never to have aspired" (letter to William Blackwood, 26 May, 1832: Col/Let., vol.VI, p.911). Mackenzie/1855 (p.23) noted the overt dramatic character of the book, which he categorised as melodramatic, rather than, as is more conventional with commentators today (e.g., Snyder/1981b), Gothic. He also recorded that Klosterheim "was simultaneously dramatized for two of the London theatres, and performed, during the greater part of the season, with great success. [...] with the exception of introducing a slight underplot, no material alteration was made by the playwrights" (Mackenzie/1855, p.23). Extensive research has not uncovered any further details about the plays. (See also 19/26 March, 1831, note 3)
2. By 12 March, 1832 Klosterheim was at the proof stage. On this date William Blackwood wrote to De Quincey informing him that the printers had found that "there is something wanting" in the work. "There was a defect in the MS when you returned it for press", he pointed out, "and therefore I am obliged to conclude that you had not gone over the MS so carefully as you should have done else this lacuna would not have escaped you. I therefore send you back the whole and would beg of you most earnestly to devote a day or two to its careful Revision. The MS was awowedly imperfect when I paid you for it, but I trusted implicitly to you, as I do still, that you will make it as perfect as you can" (NLS/MS 30004). What Blackwood paid for the work isn't clear. The largest single payment recorded against De Quincey's name in the cash books, between 1830 (when the New Canterbury Tales was first proposed) and 1833, stands at £40: perhaps this represents the £100 spoken about for the Tales, less what De Quincey owed Blackwood in articles against advance payments (NLS/MS 30770). It may also be, of course, that Blackwood recorded the payment for the novel somewhere other than in the cash books, which were more usually used to note magazine expenditure.

3. The entry of the battle-scarred travellers into Klosterheim occurs towards the end of Chapter VI, about one-third of the way through the novel. If the lost chapter was originally as "elaborately written" as De Quincey protested, and if it did indeed just concern the entry of the cavalcade into the city, then the page or so which he wrote to replace it can only really be called a perfunctory surrogate. Conversely, by locating the scene this far in the novel, he does manage to develop a prolonged sense of tension, and gives himself the opportunity to introduce scenic and narrative detail into the book which might otherwise have seemed contrived.

4. The "art." De Quincey alludes to here, and in the first sentence of 112 (a), was probably the finished version of "The Prospects of Britain" (see 21 February, 1832, notes 1 and 2).
Blackwood's cash book records that De Quincey was paid £15 on 16 March, 1832 (NLS/MS 30770).

5. The first edition of the novel is paged from 3 to 305.

6. William Blackwood's eldest sons, Alexander and Robert, were both being slowly integrated into the firm's governing structure. When the publisher died in 1834, Alexander was to deal with the "more literary" side of things, while Robert concentrated on business and financial matters (Oliphant/1897, vol.II, pp.138-40). It isn't surprising to find that Robert Blackwood was to get a disproportionate number of De Quincey's letters as time wore on.

113. TO [WILLIAM BLACKWOOD]

[Edinburgh]

Monday Morning July 23. [1832]

My dear Sir,

When Prof. W. called upon me to state his and your views about Maga - previously to his marine excursion, - we talked over the following subjects -

1. Review of Mr Christison's Medic Jurisprudence¹
2. ------ of Goethe's works and Pretensions generally,²
3. ------ of Dr Chalmers's Polit. Economy;³
4. ------ of the Greek Orators⁴
5. Miscellaneous collection of literary articles - of the nature of some which I once wrote for the Lond. Journal of Messrs Taylor and Hessey under the name of Memoranda fm. my pocket-book.⁵

The 3 first of these, Prof. W. said, he knew from different conversation with you, would be articles that you would like. As to the 4th, it was an old subject of your proposing and would have been executed long ago, but that one of your servants carried away the book fm. Prof. W.'s (amongst them, by the way, he carried away a copy of Thiersch's Greek Gram. given to me by yourself).⁶
The three first, and the 5th I have been occupied upon for several weeks - 2 of them having been indeed undertaken by me before this conversation: and you would before now have received them - had it not been for the continual interruptions by creditors and the various business thence arising, and latterly by a bilious complaint which has attacked all the 12 members of my family, and obliged a very useful servant absolutely to leave her place and return home to Dalkeith. - I myself, though much debilitated by this complaint, have never wholly given up writing; and in the course of the next fortnight you will certainly have more than one of these articles perfectly finished. Meantime I have thought it as well to mention the subject for fear lest you might in any instance have seen reason to change your mind, or lest some other writer should have undertaken the same subject. Goethe is the one in which I have made least progress.

Next let me request of you that you will not mention to any inquirer where you suppose me to be at this moment. And if your Sons would do me the same favor, I should feel much indebted to them. This is of much importance to me just now. Since I saw you last, I have managed to extinguish about £128 of my debts in this place. This sum I have distributed so carefully - that my annoyance from the remainder is far less hitherto than could have been imagined possible considering that 3 months ago my debts were about £290 and all urgent! - Of course I am still dunned at times furiously: and at times I have been at my wits' end - what course to take. But, since with all additions made to my debts up to this time, they are now under two hundred - whereas 3 months ago they were little under three. It is evident that I am gradually crawling out. This reference to my own affairs I make - by way of introducing what follows: Every sum however trifling is naturally important to me now: and continually more so. I do not scruple therefore to recal to your remembrance the following little statement:- Whether in quality, the articles
were such as would suit you - I do not know (except indeed that, for the first, Prof. W. mentioned that you and he were pleased with it): but, supposing the quality right then in point of quantity the 2 articles on the Caesars &c.⁸ make jointly 3 sheets. Now on the 1st of these I received at my own request £13; on the 2nd £5; making jointly eighteen pounds. So that, on the supposition of the papers being otherwise satisfactory, - at the rate of 10 guineas you would be in my debt by a sum that would at this moment do me infinite service by enabling me to evade a legal process. - In fact, I have hitherto continued in some way or other to avoid troubling you on the subject, knowing that whenever a fresh body of articles called your attention to it, you would rectify any deficiency which might appear. - Mere extremity of the case, and finding myself absolutely driven into a corner have urged me to forestall the mention of this matter before the time I had purposed. - You will, as usual, do what is just: and I, as usual, shall be satisfied - whatever that may be. Since, if you dislike my article, - no matter what may be my extremity, - of course I am always ready to bow to that decision.⁹

Finally, may I ask you - What is the purpose of the Tory Party at the next election? I observe your name amongst the signatures to the call on Mr. Forbes Blair: is it the intention to give a plumper to that gentleman - or is it the policy to support either of the 2 Whig Candidates?¹⁰

Could you conveniently favor me with a line in answer to the money application on this day? Addressed to No. 1 Forres Street, it will be forwarded to me without delay.

Yours ever, my dear Sir,

T. De Q.

Burke,¹¹ accordg to your suggestion, I shd. much like to begin upon next week. As to the Caesars, - the 2 concluding Papers will involve much very curious research, in a track but little explored.
I am sorry that people trouble you by sendg. books for me through your hands. - I have never authorized in one instance any person to do so.

MS: NLS. MS 4032, ff179-180.

1. For details of this proposed review see 19/26 March, 1831, note 2. Christison's book went into a second edition in 1832, so De Quincey's article would not have been inopportune.

2. After his febrile attack on Goethe's work in 1824, and his subsequent friendship with Thomas Carlyle, whose translation from Goethe had been the spur to the offensive, De Quincey was now probably ready to offer a reassessment of the German writer (see 4 November, 1824, note 2). His motives, though, weren't completely artistic: Goethe's death in March had increased public interest in both his life and work. Morgan/1949 (p.341) shows a doubling of articles on him in British magazines between 1831 and 1832, with around twenty-six appearing during the later date. De Quincey was never slow to offer memorial notices of eminent figures, as his reaction to the deaths of David Ricardo, Hannah More and Walter Scott shows (see 23 December, 1823, note 4, and late September, 1832). In the event his next piece on Goethe wasn't to appear until 1835, in the seventh edition of the Encyclopaedia Britannica. The augurs were not good, anyway, that Blackwood's would have been the place for a reasoned review of Goethe's achievements. Only in April, 1832 had the Noctes composite reached agreement that the magazine was better off without articles on German literature, "the drivel of German dotage" generally, and without "the fountain-head, gabble about Goethe" in particular (vol.XXXI, pp.693-94). Carlyle was excused: "He is entitled to be crazy - being a man of genius" (ibid.). (Morgan/1949, p.115 shows only a gradual reduction in references to German literature in Blackwood's between 1817 and 1860: these totalled ninety-eight in the first nineteen years, and seventy-six in the next twenty-five years. The magazine was, however, as one of the few periodicals featuring
foreign culture on a regular basis, something of an exception in not publishing a serious piece on Goethe in 1832 [ibid., p.341].)

3. Dr Thomas Chalmers (1780-1847), who held the theology chair at Edinburgh University, published his On Political Economy in connexion with the Moral State and Moral Prospects of Society in 1832 (Glasgow). De Quincey never reviewed the book, although in the 1850's a friend remarked that in conversation with him, "Dr. Chalmers came in for a word of admiration, on the score of his broad spirit of liberality, and his tolerance of that German theology which, said Mr. de Quincey, 'I studied at my peril thirty or forty years ago'" (Hogg/1895, p.224).

4. An article most recently mentioned in 21 February, 1832. See 3 March, 1830, note 11 for further details.

5. The "Memoranda" appeared in the London Magazine in 1823 and 1824, and are frequently mentioned in De Quincey's letters of the period. For more recent plans for a miscellany see 3 March, 1830 (letter and note 10). The miscellany form was a favoured device of De Quincey's which he was also to propose on a number of subsequent occasions. The open-ended Tait's serials, "Sketches of Life and Manners" and "Lake Reminiscences" of the 1830's (and 1841), perhaps show his most extended development of the form; and the 1845 Blackwood's Suspiria also have an air of miscellaneous variations on an autobiographical theme about them.

6. Friedrich Wilhelm von Thiersch, Griechische Grammatik, vorzüglich des Homerischen Dielects (Liepzig, 1818). De Quincey refers here to D. K. Sandford's translation, The Greek Grammar of F. Thiersch (1830), which had been a "valuable present" from William Blackwood in 1830 (NLS/MS 4717, ff26-27).

7. De Quincey had moved to 1 Forres Street, on the western fringe of the Georgian New Town, still a relatively expensive address for him, on 15 May, 1832. Pressure from creditors was now reaching its peak, and he had been forced to go into hiding (see Eaton/1936, pp.343-44; Lindop/1981, p.302).
8. As well as producing Klosterheim and three extended book reviews, "The Prospects of Britain", "M'Gregor's British America", and "James's History of Charlemagne" (Blackwood's, April, June, and November respectively), De Quincey also began to publish his series on "The Caesars" in Blackwood's in 1832. The latter appeared in the magazine for October (Part II) and December, 1832; January, 1833; and June, July and August, 1834. As the irregularity of its publication suggests, copy for "The Caesars" was to prove as difficult to extract from De Quincey as it had been for the novel, and "Dr Parr", to name but two recent works. Its initial conception too seems not to have been very well focused. On February 16, 1833, with the series well underway, William Blackwood could write to De Quincey, "I have no room in this No. for the Caesars and therefore if you were wishing to give fuller accounts of the late Caesars so as to make the whole history more complete, I could send you the MS back again" (NLS/MS 30313, ff86-87). Eighteen months were to pass before the next instalment appeared. David Masson's puzzlement over why Tiberius does not appear in the series (M/VI, p.283), can be explained by the context of Blackwood's invitation. It seems that late in 1832 De Quincey had considered writing a review of a recent work which had raised a "paradoxical view" of Tiberius (early 1833: NLS/MS 4035, f180). Following the unsurprising non-emergence of the review, De Quincey contemplated throwing his ideas on the subject into a long footnote to one of the Caesars' papers, probably, to judge from his letters, to the fourth instalment, even though it would have been out of sequence with the linear chronology of the series (ibid., and NLS/MS 4035, ff176-77 - 13 February, 1833). If it was ever written it didn't survive the one year gap in the series. See following letter, note 2 for more information about the context to "The Caesars".

9. William Blackwood was unimpressed by De Quincey's humility. He replied with unusual harshness, "When you applied to me before I did not hesitate to make the advances you asked upon
your article, but as it has not yet been in my powers to make use of it, and as I would wish to have the whole series complete, so that I may be able to judge better with regard to it, I am sorry I cannot comply with your present request, as I am besides not a little pressed for money myself. / What I hope you will do as speedily as possible is to complete in the first place the Caesars - / 2. Goethe's works. / 3. The Greek Orators. / 4. Miscellaneous Articles. / The time I fear is now gone by for Dr Christison's Work, and as to Dr Chalmers Political Economy you had better delay it till Prof Wilson's return" (NLS/MS 30312, f475). The publisher's brusqueness can probably be explained by the departure from Edinburgh of his mainstay, John Wilson, who was to spend two months away with the British Navy (Swann/1934, pp.204-5 - this is the "marine excursion" mentioned by De Quincey in the first sentence of his letter).

10. Another General Election had become necessary with the passing of the Reform Act, and voting took place in Edinburgh on 21 December, 1832. William Blackwood's letters for the period mirror how hopeless the Tory cause was in the Scottish city (NLS/MS 30004, various). The Tories were, in fact, finding it difficult even to select a suitable candidate to challenge the distinguished Whig nominees, Francis Jeffrey and James Abercromby. Forbes Hunter Blair was eventually chosen, and Blackwood informed De Quincey that "We are very busy canvassing for [him] and using all our powers to give him plumpers" (that is, to get electors to cast a single vote only out of the two available to them to elect two M.P.'s) (NLS/MS 30312, f475). The Edinburgh poll book for the election shows that Blackwood did indeed cast only one of his votes, for Blair, who lost heavily. De Quincey could have voted in Westmorland, since he was a property owner there, but the county poll book shows that he didn't.

Blackwood was to vaunt the active political status of his magazine during this period: "This cursed Reform mania which has put a stop to every thing else has not injured Maga, but
rather given her a stimulus as the great organ of the Conservative party" (to William Blackwood jnr, 30 April, 1832: NLS/MS 30004 - Oliphant/1879, vol.II, p.109 misdates and misquotes this letter, but see pp.102-4 for context). In the same paragraph that he linked his magazine with the Tory cause, he was to identify as their extreme opposite the very magazine De Quincey was next to write for: "Tait a Bookseller here has attempted a Magazine, by way of rival to mine and of course it is as much Radical as we are Tory [...] so far from doing us the least harm it has done us a great deal of good" (ibid.). De Quincey was to commence writing for Tait's Edinburgh Magazine late in 1833, and in 1834 was to start publishing in it his "Sketches of Life and Manners". Blackwood was to lose out yet again on some of De Quincey's best writing.

11. Although De Quincey mentions Edmund Burke a number of times in his writings, he never published a full article on him.

114. TO [WILLIAM BLACKWOOD]

[Edinburgh]

Tuesday evening. [24 July, 1832]

My dear Sir,

It would be idle to deny that your note gave me great pain:¹ much from the immediate disappointment; but more by a good deal from the alarming prospect opened to me in two expressions - supposing that I understood them rightly. But it is very possible that I may not do so. And at any rate I am sure you will be glad, by a word or two of explanation, to prevent any future misapprehensions on points of so much importance at this moment:-

1. From one expression, if I do not take it in a wider meaning than you designed, I collect - that the payment of articles is to be contingent (as regards the time) upon the time of publication: for you say, as a reason (if I understand
you) for delaying payment, - "it has not been in my power to make use of any portion of it". - Now the rule hitherto laid down (and acted upon) by yourself has been - that this non-use was not to affect the payment, unless it arose by some neglect of mine in putting the article into a state for publication. And formerly, as well in conversations as in letters, both yourself and Prof. Wilson have been used to complain of my inquiring about the time of publication - as a matter in which I could have no personal interest. - Am I to understand that this rule is changed?

2. You speak of yourself as being "not a little pressed for money". - Now of course it is not my purpose to inquire in the remotest way into your affairs:- but do you wish me to understand that, for the present, other demands upon yourself make it needless for me to exert myself in writing? And, if so, for how long a time do you wish me to understand that restriction as operating?

I need scarcely say to anybody, acquainted in the most general way with my situation that - any prospects, which are remote ones, are really quoad me none at all. For about a period of 3 months, two accidents have occurred to prevent my pressing much upon you. These were 1st. that the Caesars required so much previous reading (40 pages to ascertain that there was not anything to notice for 1 that produced what was) - that these 3 sheets occupied me at least 7 weeks; 2 and the rest of my time till lately was pretty fully taken up with correspondence or in other modes of fencing with creditors.

2dly. That I was fortunate enough to obtain about a hundred and ten pounds from my sister.

Hence it has happened - that out of £130 or thereabouts which I have found requisite to meet my creditors since coming hither - May 15 - (that is those who were most clamorous, and such only in part) - for £18 only I have trespassed upon yourself.

Such has been the case since May 15. And I was felicitating myself, until I received your note, that I had
been able to trespass so little upon you. Naturally then I am alarmed with the tenor of your expressions, when I consider the character of the 2 coming periods of the same duration. Those creditors, who have hitherto been delayed, will now be coming upon me: and the rest for their balances. How are they to be met? - Aid from any quarter, except only from my pen, for the next 5 months is quite hopeless. Consequently for that I was preparing: and in the proportion of 5 sheets per month. With what I have already done in part, so much will not be difficult to me: and less would be unavailing. One hundred guineas for each period of nine weeks, I am satisfied, is the least sum that will avail to keep down past debts, allowing the most trifling reserve for some few parts of my slender current expenditure. - It could answer no purpose for me to deceive myself: others will compel me to face the emergency. Nor will it be any longer in my power to make delays.

- This being the case, I ask myself - can I hope, consistently with the expressions I have noticed in your note, that you will be willing to keep up (in your receipt of articles) with the meritable demands of my creditors? - If I understand you rightly in that part which alludes to pressure after so very inconsiderable a call as mine has been for the last 9 or 10 weeks, dare I venture to anticipate that a body of MS. six times as great could be welcome - no matter how unobjectionable its quality?

But I will put the case even yet more pointedly, and as it really is at this moment:- Nearly 2 months ago I gave a bill at 6 weeks to a lawyer in this place for £9. 9. 3. To meet this I had reserved £10 from a sum received about 14 days ago. - The Bill was not presented in due course for payment: and whilst the money was thus lying idle, in comes another urgent creditor for £5. In my absence this was paid: and soon after, being a week after the time, the lawyer's Bill is presented for payment. £5 only was now disposable for this: - so much he took: but is clamorous and menacing for the balance. The prospect for me as respects this case is of
course that I shall be put to the horn.⁵ - Next comes a man for Water Duty (£2. 1. 8): and there the penalty is of course to lose this sine-qua-non of life.

These cases I mention merely to illustrate the nature of the necessities pressing me down, and the absolute impossibility of my evading the demand, or of continuing to write under any uncertainty about the times of payment: and upon these cases as sufficiently explaining the necessity, I found this question - May I count upon the money for a sheet, or even for ³⁄₄ of a sheet, on Monday the 30th, if I put a 3rd paper of the 'Caesars' into your hands on Sunday?⁶

And upon the general case I have stated I found also a general question - Whether, with my necessities as I have stated them, it will be of any use for me to stay in Edinburgh? - You will very much misunderstand me, if you should suppose that I shall complain if you answer - No: or that I write in any spirit of complaint. I can readily believe that the demands upon you are enormous and incessant. Nor shall I feel the least vexation on being told that no more of my articles are or will be wanted. I shall regret only that I had not earlier known of this and in time to have reserved, from the last remittance I had, so much as would suffice to place me in London. - Perhaps however you may be willing to receive my MS. up to a certain quantity. - At any rate in a matter of so much urgency and peril I am sure that you, on your part, will not complain that I seek for certainty: nor, if such a result [as] that should happen, that I have then first listened to old and repeated offers from London - when it became certain that my articles cd. not be taken by yourself in that extent required by my debts.⁷

I remain, my dear Sir, yours

[T. De Q.]

P.S. Dr. Chalmers fortunately I have not yet spent much time or labor of thought upon. And I have heard that the W.minster has squeezed that orange.⁸ But as to Dr. Christison,⁹ misled by Professor W. who assured me positively that you wanted a
paper on that subject; - I have investigated the subject at
length: in fact I had formerly bought 2 or 3 guineas' worth of
foreign books on this matter; and have very recently spent a
fortnight in reading and writing on it. - However I have laid
aside my lucubrations since your note arrived. - Goethe
unfortunately I have not.10

From the urgency of the case, I am persuaded you will
favor me with an answer as soon as your convenience will
allow. - Meantime I shall be workg. on the Caesars - in the
hope that it will avail for the time and purpose mentioned.

MS: NLS. MS 4717, ff38-39.

1. See previous letter, note 9 for Blackwood's letter.
2. See previous letter, note 8 for "The Caesars". It is clear
that these 3 sheets, or forty-eight magazine pages, which the
previous letter shows comprise the first two "Caesars"
articles, don't match in quantity what was actually published.
The first two instalments were to take up only twenty-eight
pages of the magazine, twenty-one for the first and just seven
for the second (with seventeen for the third). This suggests
that what was printed as the third instalment in January,
1833, might have been too flawed to go into the previous
number. (The October instalment is actually mispaged in the
magazine, just to confuse things further. The paper, which
leads the second October number, is seventy-two pages long
according to the index, but, as stated, only extends to
twenty-one pages in text, being mispaged in two places.
Blackwood's occasionally lapses into aberrance with its
pagination - the end of the previous issue is mispaged - so
there may be a perfectly simple explanation for this. On the
other hand it may be a sign that De Quincey's copy had yet
again proved imperfect.)

Apart from following the natural divisions provided by
the individual Caesars, there is little attempt by De Quincey
to connect or balance the various narratives; a fact which
isn't necessarily a sign of failure, since anecdotal incident
rather than historical development is the basis of the series. Even given this, though, it is evident that something had not worked out as planned in balancing the various parts overall.

De Quincey had, in fact, set out his plan for the series in an earlier note to William Blackwood: "I am preparing 2 papers entitled The Caesars - I. on the first 12 Caesars: II. on those who follow. It goes over the spirit of the Anecdotes relating to them in Suetonius, the Augustan History, &c" (undated, but spring/summer, 1832: NLS/MS 4032, f193). Goldman/1965 (pp.52-57) has looked briefly at De Quincey's sources in Suetonius's Lives of the Caesars, and the Scriptores Augustanae Historiae (De Quincey would probably have had access to both Isaac Casaubon's and Salmasius's editions of the latter work - M/VI, pp.240-41, editor's footnote, gives further details). Goldman points out that "The Caesars", like many of De Quincey's articles, was dependent for its substance on the writer's ability to collate notes that were probably taken on a number of separate occasions. Subsequent letters show just how much of a problem this might have been in the case of the Caesars (see October, 1832, below; a note dated 6 March, 1833 runs, "I am writing like a fiend to secure the élite of the notes in the Augustan Hist. - which book I have twice been obliged to return to the Adv[ocates] Lib. with little hope of getting it again" [NLS/MS 4717, ff7-8]). It is hardly surprising that such piecemeal research produced such fragmented writing. It is similarly unsurprising that De Quincey was only able to offer an unrelated selection from Suetonius and the Augustan History, and not the full complement of emperors as promised.

("quoad me" - as for me.)

3. Jane Quincey, who lived with her mother near Bath. Jane was not to be De Quincey's greatest admirer. When the Wordsworths visited the family in 1839, she was highly critical of her brother to Mary Wordsworth (Jordan/1962, p.302).

4. This would be the equivalent to eighty pages or two-thirds of the magazine. As a way of filling a financial vacuum with
impracticable promises, the offer very much resembles some of those that he made to Taylor and Hessey in the 1820's.

5. See Eaton/1936, who quotes an official source on the legal process of "horning" a creditor (pp.341-42). At the time debtors could only be arrested in Scotland on the "legal fiction" that their failure to obey a court order also constituted "an act of rebellion against the Crown". The offence would be publicly announced by a messenger-at-arms, who would blow three blasts on a horn, at the market-place in Edinburgh, and denounce the "rebel" by name. De Quincey was to suffer this most public of indignities on a number of occasions. Subsequent detection would result in imprisonment, but, as Eaton (p.342-43) points out, the debtors' sanctuary at Holyrood provided a secure area - for debtors who could get there rapidly enough - within which some freedom of movement could be obtained, along with absolute freedom of movement around Edinburgh on Sundays. It was to be a location that De Quincey was to move in and out of for the next seven or eight years. Eaton/1936 (p.519ff) gives a rough breakdown of De Quincey's legal entanglements for the period, establishing that his first horning took place on 20 September, 1832. Forward/1939 provides the most detailed account of De Quincey's legal problems in 1832.

The strange world of secrecy and deceit that De Quincey was to live in during the 1830's is fixed for view in an official document held by the National Library of Scotland (MS 1670, ff35-36). It is dated May-August, 1838, and shows a sheriff's officer, or catchpoll, trying to track down and arrest De Quincey after a horning. Multiple addresses are checked, De Quincey is followed and lost, an innocent person is pursued by mistake and traps are set, until the real quarry is eventually "apprehended [and taken] towards the Jail". On this occasion he was to be "liberated" only after the publisher Adam Black came forward as a guarantor. It seems a miracle that anything could be written under these
circumstances, let alone the substantial body of significant work that De Quincey managed to execute throughout the 1830's.

6. Blackwood was unmoved by these pleas, and his cash book shows no payment to De Quincey for this period. When he replied, he complained of the "most unnecessary" length of De Quincey's letter, and reiterated that he wanted "The Caesars" completed to fulfil the terms of the advance he had made on it. "As to any other articles", his letter went on, "I have simply to say that I will always be most happy to receive them from you, of course completed" (25 July, 1832: NLS/MS 30312, ff47-49).

7. See following letter for details of one of De Quincey's probable contacts in London. It is more than likely that he also discussed his writing plans with Charles Knight, when he visited London earlier in the year (see 4 November, 1824, note 1 for Knight). His "Milton" was, anyway, soon to appear in Knight's Gallery of Portraits (see 19 November, 1823, note 3).

8. T. P. Thompson had written at length on Chalmers's book in the Westminster Review for July, 1832 (vol.XVII, pp.1-33). See previous letter, note 3 for Chalmers. The book was to be reviewed by most periodicals, with Blackwood's as one of the few exceptions.

9. See previous letter for a mention of Christison, and 19/26 March, 1831, note 2 for details of the proposed review.

10. See previous letter, note 2 for details of De Quincey's latest interest in Goethe.

115. TO [A MAGAZINE PROPRIETOR - ?JAMES FRASER]

Edinburgh - 1 Forres Street, Moray Place

       Wednesday July 25, 1832.

Sir,

Sometime during the summer of last year I was informed by Mr. David Blaikie W. S. (at that time resident in this place) that, in a conversation with him, you had expressed a wish for a few contributions to your Magazine from myself -
particularly for a few papers on the Kantian Philosophy.³ - Coming to me in this indirect way, and especially as I was not then at leisure to act upon it, this proposal did not seem to require any immediate answer. Now however, when I am quite ready to undertake such a series of papers (which might perhaps extend from two to five sheets of your Journal), I should be glad to hear from yourself - whether you continue to wish for articles of that nature. The honorarium mentioned by Mr. Blaikie was, I think, the usual one of ten guineas a sheet.⁴ Be that as it may, whatever it is that other contributors receive will satisfy me. A more important stipulation, as respects money, is this - that, writing for the purpose of clearing off a specific debt, I am under the necessity of asking for the money as soon as the MS. of each separate sheet is delivered in a state perfectly fit for the press: always supposing that in quality it is such as satisfies your expectations. This stipulation I have been obliged to make hitherto; and shall be obliged to continue it for about 3 months: and I have thought it best frankly to say so at first. - One essay of Kant's, which I translated and published in the Lond. Mag. of Messrs. Taylor and Hessey some years ago, drew a great deal of attention: and by the remarks attached to an extract from it in Mr. Southey's Sir Thomas More you will see that it was this paper which first impressed that gentleman, who hates all Metaphysics and all Metaphysicians, with feelings of reverence for Kant.⁵ Several others of his miscellaneous essays are well fitted to sustain that impression, and to compose a volume which, with suitable notes and illustrations, might become even a popular work at this time.⁶ - As to the philosophy, peculiarly called [?his],[ naturally it would be difficult to treat that (as it would be to treat any other severe and systematic body of thinking on the same themes) in a way sufficiently attractive to aspire at anything which could be properly termed popularity. That is to say, with every possible advantage from the mode and style of delivery, I suppose that it would attract only those readers
who are already interested generally in studies of that nature: and they are usually not thought to be many in this country of business and action. Perhaps however they are more than is imagined: and sometimes they are to be sought amongst those who have led the busiest lives: in particular I happen to know that, amongst those who have inquired with most anxiety for information about Kant's Philosophy, are Lord Grenville and Mr. Wilberforce. But, if it would attract no students to Kant beyond those who are already students of Philosophy, at least it might be so treated as to command the praise of having repelled none amongst so small a body: which is more by a good deal than can be said of the English expounders of Kant - (Messrs. Nitsch and Willich of times past, and the present Mr. Wirgman) - or indeed of the German expounders taken as a body. These gentlemen, by putting too prominently forward the obscurities of the system and by parading before the unprepared reader what in this country is likely to be felt as the barbarous part of Kant's terminology, have undoubtedly had the effect of making the Philosophy repulsive in the very highest degree. At the same time it is certain that they have not understood it: and those, who have had it most by heart (Mellin for instance amongst the German's, Wirgman of the Encycl. Lond. amongst the few English) have understood him least: a conclusion which I found upon this fact - that they never travel out of Kant's words in delivering a doctrine, nor venture upon any illustration of their own in a single instance, but everywhere confine themselves to the few and meagre attempts at illustration by Kant himself - the very worst expounder of difficulties that I am acquainted with in any language.

A good deal therefore remains to be done, (or rather I should say - everything is yet to be done) for Kant's Philosophy by delivering it in English words and in an intelligible form. But, as a still better way of preparing the nation to study Kant by forcing them to respect him, I wish that you could see reason for offering me a reasonable
consideration for a volume of "Essays Miscellaneous and Philosophical by Imman. Kant. With an Introduction and copious Notes." An account of his Life, especially of his latter life when he had partially outlived his intellectual faculties, which I once digested from a number of German authorities, and which Mr. Blackwood (who published it) did not like, but which many others did, might be prefixed with propriety.¹¹

I remain, Sir,

Your obedient humble servant,

Thos. De Quincey

Publ: Axon/1906, p.14, col.3.
MS: British Library. Add. 37021, f62.

1. Beyond the obvious fact that De Quincey is writing to a publisher or an editor, some uncertainty surrounds the identity of this letter's addressee. Lindop/1981 (p.304) gives it to William Tait, the Edinburgh publisher, as does Axon/1906; Eaton/1936 (p.356), on the other hand, assigns it to "an unknown London editor". There is a presumption in favour of a London publisher or editor for the following reasons. In the previous letter, De Quincey offers a London publisher as a possible alternative source of income. October, 1832 below shows that some sort of offer had been made by a London publisher for articles on Kant's work "about 8 weeks ago", and at the rate of pay mentioned in the current letter. William Tait seems an unlikely publisher for De Quincey to have contemplated writing for in 1831 or 1832, textual turncoat though the latter was. Tait's Edinburgh Magazine didn't appear until March, 1832, although Tait was planning it in 1831, and its context at this time was much more political than literary (see Wellesley, vol.4, p.475). William Tait had been very active in Edinburgh in the cause of political reform. His liberal/radical principles, which put him in the vanguard of the reform movement, would have been anathema to De Quincey during the pre-Reform agitation, which had generated violent riots in Edinburgh. It would probably have
needed a good few months of post-Reform calm to put De Quincey in the mood to write for *Tait's*. In an unpublished open letter to the magazine, dated 16 May, 1838, he notes that he didn't meet the publisher until 1833 (Cornell MS 2805).

A London-based recipient could well be James Fraser, proprietor of *Fraser's Magazine*. One unlikely aspect to the possibility lies in the fact that the magazine was edited by William Maginn, who, unless he had managed to sink his differences with him, loathed De Quincey (see, e.g., 16 June, 1824, note 2, para.3). On the other hand, we have a letter from Fraser to Thomas Carlyle which runs, "As you are in Edin, If you know De Quinc[e]y may I ask a favour of you? Sometime (full 6 months) he wrote to me offering his assistance[..] I instantly accepted of it & agreed to his terms – since then – tho' I have written to him once or twice I have not heard from him [...] there must be some cause for this strange conduct" (13 February, 1833: CL/vol.6, p.339).

Although there are gaps in the Wellesley contributors' guide to *Fraser's* for this period (vol.2, p.333ff), there remains nothing that could be De Quincey's work, and if Carlyle did manage to speak to him on the subject he hasn't recorded the fact. By November, 1833 the coat had indeed been turned, and De Quincey's "Age of the Earth", an introduced translation from Kant, appeared in *Tait's*.

2. Blaikie - David Blackie - was now living in London where he was shortly to die in the cholera epidemic sweeping Britain (see 6 May, 1829, note, 1 for details of Blackie).

3. Thrall/1934 (p.88) holds that *Fraser's* "greatest service" was to bring forward German "transcendental ethics or metaphysics". If some of it was, as Thrall goes on to suggest, "distorted", then this was certainly not the whole story: the magazine numbered Thomas Carlyle amongst its contributors, and would have made a superb location for De Quincey's work. Only in 1834, when Christian Johnstone took over the editorship of *Tait's*, did the literary and cultural identity of the
Edinburgh magazine really begin to emerge (Wellesley, vol.4, pp.478-80).

4. De Quincey's letter of October, 1832 records an offer from London of "50 guineas" for three articles on Kant.

5. The London Magazine article was De Quincey's "Idea of a Universal History on a Cosmo-Political Plan, by Immanuel Kant" (vol.X, October, 1824, pp.385-93). Southey had written of the paper in Sir Thomas More (1829): "that Kant is as profound a philosopher as his disciples have proclaimed him to be, this little treatise would fully convince me, if I had not already believed it" (Southey/1829, vol.II, p.408-9). This was not, of course, saying, as De Quincey claimed, that it was the paper which had turned him into a fellow-travelling Kantian; such, Sir Thomas More implies, was Coleridge's doing. He follows up what still, however, remains a eulogy of De Quincey, with a summary of the translation and a discussion of its implications. Throughout the passage De Quincey's identity and the periodical emplacement of his paper, both of which Southey would have known, remain undisclosed.

De Quincey showed considerable vanity over Southey's compliment, a feeling which appeared as pride or irritation by turns. In his "Kant in his Miscellaneous Essays" of 1830, he quotes it in full to bolster the status of his work (Blackwood's, vol.XXVIII, August, 1830, Part I, pp.267-68; M/VIII, p.126). That he had articulated his feeling more sharply to John Wilson, however, is evident from an episode that the professor introduced into a Noctes sketch. Here the English Opium-Eater is allowed to catalogue his grievances at some length: "In the first place, Mr Southey ought to have given the name of the pamphlet - that is, the Magazine [...]

Secondly, he ought to have printed that extract as an extract [...] and not to have attempted - rather unsuccessfully - to incorporate its substance with his own work [...]

Thirdly, he ought to have given the name of the translator" etc., etc. (Blackwood's, vol.XXVII, April, 1830, p.681 - see also 3 March, 1830, note 18).
One of the ironies of the whole matter is that Southey had placed the discussion of De Quincey's translation immediately after a plea that authors be given, "that perpetuity in the property of their works, of which the law has deprived them, [after which] the reward of literary labour will ultimately be in just proportion to its deserts" (Southey/1829, vol.II, p.406). Inherent contradictions between the two passages could only serve as a case in point for Southey's view on the copyright question. It seems fitting, accordingly, that having lost an expression of his identity one way, De Quincey should have his irritation voiced by a Noctes mouthpiece which was also somebody else's invention.

6. De Quincey had expressed similar hopes in his "Kant in his Miscellaneous Essays": "supposing that I were treating the same subject in a separate book [...] I should be disposed to lengthen it by five entire essays" (Blackwood's, vol.XXVIII, p.267; M/VIII, p.125). Separation from a magazine context was something that De Quincey achieved only sporadically: with the Confessions, Walladmor and Klosterheim so far. It was, however, as his letters repeatedly show, something he frequently strove for, in idea if not in deed. The arrangements he made of his own works by volume in the 1850's, in the Selections Grave and Gay, have generally been viewed as aberrantly-conceived, "an obvious salmagundi" according to one critic (Jordan/1973, p.32). While there is more than an element of cookery in the edition, particularly with the later volumes, a closer look also shows the existence of an impulse both to dilute the individual periodical backgrounds to the separate papers as far as possible by a mixing process, and to give the papers maximum individuation as individual achievements by isolating them within diffuse contexts.

7. This was not the first time that Grenville and Wilberforce had acted as unwitting referees for De Quincey's Kant-related writings (see 21 September, 1823, note 12). Wellek/1931 (Introduction), confirms De Quincey's suspicion that British interest in Kant at this time was moderate, despite the
availability of a number of translations. Frequency of appearance in the magazines, a sure index of public curiosity in a subject, also suggests a slow take up of Kant's ideas amongst the educated reading public (Morgan/1949, p.345, and pp.56-64).

8. F. A. Nitsch, *A General and Introductory view of Professor Kant's Principles* (London, 1796; see Wellek/1931, pp.7-9); A. F. M. Willich, *Elements of the Critical Philosophy [...] a view of all the works published by its founder, Professor Immanuel Kant* (London, 1798). Willich settled in Edinburgh for some years in the early 1790's, where he taught German and the philosophy of Kant, to Walter Scott amongst others (Wellek/1931, pp.11-13). In the fifth of his "Letters to a Young Man", "On the English Notices of Kant", De Quincey includes these two writers in a general review of Kant's expounders in Britain (*London Magazine*, Vol.VIII, July, 1823, pp.87-95; M/X, pp.64-80). He reaches the same conclusion there that he does in his letter; labelling both men "eminent blockheads" and criticising Nitsch particularly for remaining too firmly in the ambit of Kant's own terminology.

9. Thomas Wirgman is also mentioned in the 1823 London article (see previous note), at which stage De Quincey hadn't seen his work; and, more recently, in the *Edinburgh Saturday Post*, where De Quincey calls his writings "a heap of stupidities" (Tave/1966, p.336 - Wellek/1931, pp.211-42, offers an account of Wirgman which suggests that De Quincey's evaluation might have had some truth in it). Wirgman's essays on Kant, which had appeared in the *Encyclopaedia Londinensis* from 1812 onwards (Wellek/1931, p.214ff) are again referred to by De Quincey, without enthusiasm, in "Kant in his Miscellaneous Essays" (*Blackwood's*, vol.XXVIII, 1830, p.245-46; M/VIII, pp.87-88).

It is revealing that De Quincey suppresses any knowledge that he must have possessed about the Scot, John Richardson, who had published his *Essays and Treatises on moral, political and various philosophical subjects by E. Kant [sic]* in 1798-99.
The work had contained most of Kant's minor essays, including those that De Quincey was later to publish (Wellek/1931, pp.17-18).

10. Georg Samuel Albert Mellin (1755-1825) was the supposed author of a biography of Kant, published in 1804 (Leipzig), as well as the writer of a number of works expounding Kant's philosophy. These included the Marginalien und Register zu Kant's Critik... (Züllichau, 1794-95), and the Encyclopädisches wörterbuch der kritischen philosophie; oder...Kant's Kritischen... (Leipzig, 1797-1804 – Mellin is not mentioned in Wellek/1831 as being an expounder of Kant in English).

11. De Quincey's account of Kant, which went under the running title "The Last Days of Kant", had appeared in Blackwood's in February, 1827 (vol.XXI, pp.133-58). What is presented both there and in this letter as a digest from multiple sources, "From the German of Wasianski, Jachmann, Borowski, and Others", according to the magazine (p.135), has been shown by Goldman/1965 (pp.68-74) to be an edited translation from Wasianski only. The idea of offering this paper as a preface to a serious book of philosophy is a grotesque one. Its accumulation of curious anecdotal detail about the neurotic rhythms of Kant's domestic life, couldn't be more unsuited to such a book. One assumes that De Quincey either had a death-wish for his project, or that he was hoping the reader of his letter hadn't read the article.

(William Blackwood's antipathy to Kant is well shown by the dearth of articles on the philosopher, to date, in his magazine: they numbered just two, both of which were by De Quincey.)

116. TO [WILLIAM BLACKWOOD]

[Edinburgh]

Thursday [i.e. Tuesday] Sept. 11. [1832]

My dear Sir, —
You naturally concluded from the long time compared with
the short one originally fixed by me - that some obstacle had
arisen to the completion of the Charlemagne.¹ You are right.
But that obstacle is not, as you suppose may possibly be the
case, any indisposition to the subject:- on the contrary, I
like it. The obstacle was this: I think it was somewhere about
the 6th of August or 8th of August when I received the book;
and I then calculated on finishing the article, if I recollect
rightly, about the 11th or 12th. And this I should have done,
but for an unpleasant law affair - which, from miserable
ignorance on the part of my lawyer, advanced upon me by such
rapid strides that on Tuesday morning August 14 I left home
suddenly in expectation of a process of arrest - and did not
return until Sunday September 2. During this interval, from
the suddenness and non-preparation of my departure (at 5
o'clock A.M.) I had no means of taking off books or papers.
And hence my delay. - A better lawyer has now put my affairs
into better train: and already he has forced my then enemy
(who did not by the bye make his attempt until 10 days after
the time I had expected) to go to the right about.² - Meantime
other Philistines oblige me for the present to deny my being
in Edinburgh. Which I mention for this reason:- During the 18
days when I really was from home, a gentleman fm. Engld.
meeting one of my family said that he knew fm. the Hamiltons
(Manor Place) that I was at home. Now, on consideration, it
seems to me - that perhaps T. Ham. might casually hear fm.
some of your people, who spoke upon a vague general belief and
who knew of no reason for concealment, that I was in
Edinburgh.³ As this however wd. seriously injure me for the
next month, I am sure you will do me the favor not expressly
to authorize the notion, if any person should happen to
inquire of you, that I am here. The fact is - such a notion
has been really unfounded for the latter half of August; and
very likely will be so again: as either London or Glasgow will
probably be my abode (if I should again find myself pressed)
for some weeks. -
Meanwhile the Charlemagne is all but ready: and this week to a certainty, whether I am again obliged to beat a march or not, will be in your hands as also must part of the Caesars: and the rest on Monday.¹

Yours ever.-
[T. De Q.]

MS: NLS. MS 4032, ff181-182.

1. This was "James's History of Charlemagne", a review of G. P. R. James's France in the Lives of her Great Men, Vol.1, The History of Charlemagne (London, Longman, 1832). The article was published in the November number of the magazine (Blackwood's, vol.XXXII, pp.786-802; M/V, pp.352-383). By the standards of the age it represented a fairly typical performance for a review. Starting with a dissertation on the philosophy of history, it spends most of its time comparing Napoleon's shortcomings with Charlemagne's accomplishments, proving that France, like Britain, was a degraded nation. James and his book are rarely mentioned, and only then so that the factual basis of the latter can be called into question. Perhaps word of James's private criticism to William Blackwood of De Quincey's view of historical evolution, had been passed to the latter, who was now retaliating (see 21 February, 1832, note 2). It is a little odd, anyway, that such a negative review of a man who was himself a Blackwood's contributor should appear in the magazine. The lectures on the Napoleonic campaigns that De Quincey introduced into the paper were just a little superfluous in the circumstances: James, an indefatigable writer of historical romances, had fought in the Napoleonic wars and had acquired the status of being a Blackwood's authority on the subject.

James had gone to the length of sending in to William Blackwood a review of Charlemagne, written by the "landlord of my present dwelling, who wishes much as I wish myself, that it could find a place in Blackwood's Magazine. It is very favourable [...] but you will find it very easy to infuse any
portion of gall and wormwood into it, that you may find necessary; in which pleasant distillation of bitters, no doubt your excellent friend Mr de Quincey will help" (9 August, 1832: NLS/MS 4033, ff161-62). One month later, his favourable review rejected, James wrote again to Blackwood to declare "I have directed a copy of Charlemagne to be sent to your care for Mr de Quincey" (3 September, 1832: NLS/MS 4033, ff163-64).

2. The "miserably ignorant" lawyer may well have been either John Livingston or William Allan, both of whom were members of Edinburgh's legal establishment, and both of whom appeared as creditors in De Quincey's Omnium Bonorum of 1833 (Forward/1939, p.522). Whichever one it was, the replacement De Quincey found was not to prove any more reliable. His letters of 1833 chart his growing suspicions about William Duguid, the new solicitor, which eventually bore fruit with the solicitor's "embezzlement" of money De Quincey had deposited with him (25 December, 1833: Pierpont Morgan/MA 1836; see also Moore/1933, and Forward/1939, p.521). De Quincey was obviously as good at choosing legal agents as his landlords were at choosing tenants: in the mid-1830's another agent, James Smith, absconded to America, taking with him, amongst other things, part of a loan De Quincey had raised on his uncle's annuity (Harvard MSS, 6 and 11 January, 1836, 6 June, 1837; British Library MS/Ashley B. 627; Dove Cottage MS/161.59; Eaton/1936, pp.367-69).

The "enemy" mentioned in the letter is probably John Cathcart Porteous, a merchant and creditor of De Quincey, and also briefly his landlord in 1829. Porteous had recently protested an unpaid bill, an action that was to result in De Quincey being "put to the horn" on September 20 and subsequently arrested on 2 October (Forward/1939, p.515 - and see late September, 1832). It must be said, though, that there were plenty of "enemies" to choose from at this stage, as De Quincey's Omnium Bonorum was to show. He was even forced to sell the books he had recently bought in Edinburgh; one of the few sure indications of desperation with De Quincey
(Forward/1939, p.519). Although he doesn't seem to have been paying rent regularly, he does appear to have kept up repayments on the recent loan of £185 towards the Nab mortgage from his mother: "never did any payment cost us more suffering. For 17 months, Margaret has denied herself and her children every comfort of life to enable me to make up this sum" (to John Simpson, 27 September, 1833: Berg Collection—see 21 February, 1832, note 5 for details of the loan).

3. Forres Street, De Quincey's current Edinburgh address, when he wasn't in hiding, lay midway between the homes of the brothers Sir William Hamilton, in Manor Place, and Thomas Hamilton (the writer "Cyril Thornton"), in Great King Street.

4. De Quincey is perhaps referring to the final proofs of "The Caesars/Part I", which was to appear in the October number of Blackwood's; or he was possibly attempting to fulfil Blackwood's demand that he complete the whole series (see 23 July, 1832, note 9).

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117. TO SIR WILLIAM HAMILTON¹

1 Forres Street
[Edinburgh]

Monday afternoon [September, 1832]²

My dear Sir William,

We have had the misfortune, which to us is a very heavy one, of losing our youngest child—a boy of rather more than 3 years old.³ From his age, he was naturally the play-thing and darling of the whole house: and being of unusually sweet disposition and temper, he was beloved amongst us even beyond the privileges of his infancy. So that no affliction could have fallen more heavily upon us. On Thursday last he was running about the house as usual, having only a very trifling cold. At 4 o'clock on Friday morning he was attacked by an oppression on his breathing—not very great (as indeed it never afterwards became), but enough to induce us to send for medical advice. At a little before 3 on Saturday morning he
died in his mother's arms. - His complaint appears to have been a slight attack of Croup, perhaps no ways formidable in itself, connected with an Inflammation of the Lungs. - One melancholy aggravation of the shock to his mother was - that, never having been informed of his danger by the Surgeons, and having without my knowledge risen at midnight to resume her charge of him, she mistook the extreme tranquility of his death for sure indications of his recovery; and was not undeceived until within one half minute before he expired.

This mistake has made the shock almost insupportable to her: and in this excess of her grief I am anxious to obtain any consolation for her which the case admits. Now she is desirous that this little child should be removed to Grasmere. But in the meantime, until that can be accomplished, we have been informed that the proper course - is to ask permission of some friend, who may happen to have a vault or a piece of burying ground in Edinburgh: for depositing the coffin there during the next 9 or at the utmost 12 months. It occurs to me in this difficulty - that probably your Family vault may be in the country, but that you may also have one in Edinburgh, in which latter case, would it be possible or convenient for you to grant us the permission we are seeking?  

Believe me ever
Very faithfully yours,
Thos. De Quincey.

P.S. I had almost forgotten to say - that in consequence of some Embarrassments not yet settled, though on the point of being so perhaps, I am not known to be in Edinburgh; and have to request of you earnestly - not to mention that I am so, if by accident any person should make an inquiry on that point in your presence.  

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1. See 9 January, 1827, note 7 for details of Sir William Hamilton.
2. Eaton/1936 (p.346) and Lindop/1981 (p.307) place the death of Julius De Quincey, the subject of this letter, in 1833. It is evident from the content of the following letter, however, that it must have occurred in September, 1832.

3. Julius De Quincey's precise birth-date isn't recorded, though we do know that he was baptised in Westmorland on 14 November, 1829 (Armitt/1916, p.686). The couple's last child, Emily Jane, was born on 27 February, 1833 (ibid.).

4. The Hamilton family had an Edinburgh vault at St John's Church, in Princes Street. How William Hamilton responded to De Quincey's strange request isn't clear. St John's have no record of a temporary interment (there would be no obligation to record such an event, or, indeed, even the death of the child), and there is, similarly, no trace of Julius's grave in the Grasmere area. It is, as Eaton/1936 (p.346) suggests, most likely that the multiple pressures on the family in the 1830's meant that Edinburgh was to be Julius's permanent resting place.

5. These embarassments were of course financial ones, and far from being settled they were shortly to lead to De Quincey's arrest (see following letter, note 2).

118. TO [WILLIAM BLACKWOOD]

[Edinburgh]

[Late September, 1832]

My dear Sir,

I was compelled to leave home soon after my last note was written under a renewed and sudden expectation of arrest: the party having somehow ascertained from some person employed about my little boy's funeral that I was at home. - I am however taking steps to settle this affair. - Meantime I fear that these papers, (which under these awkward circumstances I made up as I could) come too late. - Be that as it may, - my family know where I am: and should you have occasion for any autoschediastic notice of Sir W. Scott's death, or any other
extempore paper, one of my sons will communicate with me in 18 minutes, and I shall be happy to render any assistance this day or to-morrow – supposing you have any need or any time or any room for such a notice. – It wd. be dangerous to me, that any servant should know where I am: but my second Son will bring any communication of this nature, left at Forres Street, in 15 or 18 minutes at farthest. He has full and special instructions in such a case.

Ever yours
very truly
[T. De Q.]

MS: NLS. MS 4032, f192.

1. Date: see note 3.
2. See 11 September, 1832, note 2. The unpaid, protested bill of John Porteous eventually led to De Quincey's imprisonment, on two occasions, in Edinburgh's Canongate Tolbooth. In each instance it was for a single day; the first, on 2 October, the second, 14 December, 1832. De Quincey was able to negotiate his release on the grounds of ill health in the first case; in the second it was probably the good nature of his creditor, who was owed only £5, that secured his liberation (Forward/1939, pp.514-16, examines the matter in some detail). It was now that De Quincey began to make a concerted attempt to proceed with his cessio bonorum, the action that would give him a brief respite from creditors (ibid.).
3. Walter Scott died at Abbotsford on 21 September, 1832. Blackwood's only notice of the event was a muted reference in a Noctes sketch (vol.XXXII, November, 1832, p.856).

119. TO [WILLIAM BLACKWOOD]

[Edinburgh]
[October, 1832]

My dear Sir,

In your last letter to me on the subject of pecuniary
settlements, you expressed a wish to have 2 days' notice of any intention which I might have of sending in any finished article which might enable me to call for money. Accordingly I now beg to apprize you, (and hope that it may suit your other arrangements to let me have one half of the money on Saturday and one on Monday), that on Sat Oct. 20 from 2 to 3 in the afternoon I shall send you the Caesars thoroughly complete.¹

My present account, I believe, will be found to stand thus:— Since coming from King St. to Forres Street, that is since May 15. I have drawn 1. £13, (thirteen pounds); — 2. £5 (Five Pounds); — 3. £5 (Five Pounds); — this last £5 from Mr Robert Blackwood. Total £23 (Twenty-Three Pounds). — Now, according to my recollection, the joint number of pp resulting from the Charlemagne art and the 1st art. of the Caesars (already printed) is 38 or 39:— Thirty-two, or two sheets, amount (I presume) to 20 guineas, or £21:— 3 more pages about will be required to make up the odd £2: So that 35pp. will just about balance my receipts — leaving me creditor, upon the parts already printed, for 4pp. or thereabouts (subject to the doubts I have expressed as to the exact quantity; for, not having the mag. at hand, I speak by recollection).²

— Well: on the footing of this calculation, I shall be your creditor, as respects the articles in print, to the small extent of 4pp. or ¼ of a sheet. That, I suppose, will be 2½ guineas. — Then there remains a 2nd part of the Caesars, in your hands; the exact length of this I do not remember; but, if I have computed rightly as to the length of that which I am now finishing, — they will jointly make 3 sheets at the most — 2½ or 2 at the least.

The difficulties and very extraordinary embarrassment of my situation, and for a long time the impossibility of procuring any good edition of the Augustan History,³ have compelled me to forbear troubling you for a much longer period than I had ever supposed it possible that I could by any conceivable contrivances keep myself above water. Nor in fact without other resources could I have accomplished such a feat;
as you may well suppose when I state this one fact to you—that simply the loss of my youngest child, by the funeral and other contingencies of mourning etc (more than 3 quarters of which, it was necessary to pay on the spot) has swallowed up more than the total sum which I have made by my pen since coming to this house. Meantime at one time, from mere impossibility of obtaining the books, and since then for 6 or 8 weeks, from the interruptions to my use of them, I really thought that it would be out of my power to finish the Caesars: without which it would have been impossible for me to apply further to you.

That is now over, and my reason for noticing it—is to shew in what way it has happened that the usual pressure upon myself (and which is likely to continue during the lives of certain parties) is just now at high pressure mark—a furnace 7 times heated—

Also I notice it for the following reason:—It is, and always has been, a feeling of mine—that, without being positively dishonourable, it is not handsome or in the spirit of a gentleman—whilst maintaining a connexion with one journal—to correspond with a hostile one; so long at least as the first does not decline to receive one's contributions.

Now, through a friend in London I have received (about 8 weeks ago) an offer to pay me 50 guineas on receipt of 3 articles on the Kantean Philosophy. I am far from meaning to use this offer (which is express, formal, and in the most business-like style) as any ground for expecting higher rates from you. Nor again do I wish to force upon you a class of articles which I know that you abominate. All I mean to found upon the offer—is this:—supposing that I produce 5 articles of a sheet each, on subjects and in execution agreeable to you within the next 30 or 35 days—will it suit you to pay for each on delivery?

Cobbett's Grammar, filled (as I remember) with atrocious blunders of every class, is now used to give him currency and
acceptation as a man of talent generally. What would you think of an article on English Grammar?

[T. De Q.]
little doubt of) you will receive payments" (undated -
October, 1832: NLS/MS 30004).
7. The Grammar of the English Language/In a Series of Letters,
by William Cobbett (1763-1835), was first published in 1818.
Green/1985 (pp.418-19) notes the popularity of the text, which
"remained in print for most of the next hundred years".
Cobbett's anti-intellectualism and expressive simplicity are
distant from De Quincey's textual landscape. Whereas De
Quincey would offer Latin as a language whose organic
continuity could be freed from the taint of political
radicalism (see 31 January, 1831, note 4, para.2), Cobbett
would offer it in his Grammar as the language of confusion and
political oppression. Both notions, of course, had their
origins in the politicised debates on language that took place
in the 1790's (see Butler/1984, "Introductory essay", for a
discussion of the subject). Interestingly enough these debates
also provided the source for the epistolary form that was so
much favoured by both men, and which was even to be used for
Cobbett's Grammar (see Favret/1993, Chapters 1 and 2). De
Quincey didn't cover the subject of English language until
April, 1839, when Blackwood's carried his brief paper titled
"The English Language". Here it is not Cobbett who comes under
attack but Henry Brougham, now Lord Brougham, whose "great
error" it was "to direct the student in his choice of words
towards the Saxon part of the language [...] Nothing can be
more unphilosophic" (M/XIV, p.157).

120. TO WILLIAM BLACKWOOD

[Edinburgh]
Monday morning Oct. 29 [1832]
½ past 12.
My dear Sir,

I will undertake the review of Captn. Gordon's Greek
Revolution very willingly: - I shall like it. - And you shall
have it by the 8th. November at the furthest, if that will answer.

I received the 20 guineas (£21) safely. — I believe that on examination you will find that I have still a claim upon you to the amount of from 5 guineas to 7½. If so, I should feel greatly obliged by your letting me have £5. This I should not have alluded to — had it not happened that on a day of last week I was arrested; and, in order to purchase my release — by a composition, I was obliged to pay away so much as left me open to much of this pressure from which I was then preparing to free myself.²

Yours ever very truly
T. De Quincey

Addr: William Blackwood Esq./[Edinburgh].
MS: NLS. MS 4032, ff183-184.

1. This was Thomas Gordon's History of the Greek Revolution (2 vols, London, 1832, and Edinburgh, 1833). Published by William Blackwood himself, the work was sent to De Quincey for review at the end of October, 1832, prior to its official publication. The process of turning book into copy proceeded as raggedly as ever with De Quincey. The series of letters which flowed between publisher and reviewer in the early months of 1833, chart a familiar-sounding course. What was originally a brief review, "length about [... ] 12 pp", eventually turned into a paper which "will thus extend to 3 distinct articles" (to Blackwood, mid-January, 1833, and 16 February, 1833: NLS/MS 4717, f54, and ff49-50). This metamorphosis of a supposedly unidirectional review into a diffuse theme and variations is redolent of a similar process of development which has already been seen in the earlier articles on Bentley and Parr, and which was even now occurring with "The Caesars".

De Quincey's final text sounds pronouncedly distant from the objective focus of the in-house book review: "having totally forgotten the Art., and reading it therefore entirely
as a new and unknown tale", De Quincey wrote to William Blackwood, "I was more deeply interested in the whole succession of events than ever I was in any war whatsoever [on account of] their romantic and scenical character, [which offered] the interest of a novel" (16 February, 1833: NLS/MS 4717, ff49-50). Given that Gordon's book was a detailed historical account of the events surrounding the Greek revolution of the early 1820's, this could not exactly have been what William Blackwood was expecting to hear. The publisher eventually lost patience with De Quincey after the latter began to supplement what he saw as "a great defect" in Gordon's work with an article-length footnote (De Quincey to Blackwood: 8 February, 1833: NLS/MS 4035, ff174-75). "So anxious was I that you should write as much as possible for my Magazine", Blackwood responded, "that I gave you Gordon's Book to review in preference to some of my other Contributors who would have done it at once for me. To my great loss I have waited now three months [when a quick response had] not only been an urgency to the sale of the Book, [to] which a good article in Maga would have added so much, but it makes the article itself not so striking" (13 February, 1833: NLS/MS 30313, ff84-85). Ultimately, only "The Revolution of Greece/Part I", about one-third of De Quincey's copy, appeared in Blackwood's (vol.XXXXIII, April, 1833, Part I, pp.476-502) (the final parts exist in manuscript in the National Library of Scotland, as MS 4789, ff63-100).

Apart from the ongoing series, "The Caesars", this was to be De Quincey's last Blackwood's article until he recommenced writing for the magazine in 1837, with his "Revolt of the Tartars". It was also to represent his last sustained skirmish with the resiliently forgiving William Blackwood, who died in September, 1834.

2. This arrest is not mentioned in Forward/1939. It was either an intermediary stage in De Quincey's ongoing struggle with John Porteous (see late September, 1832, note 2), or an
indication that yet another creditor had taken legal action against him.

THE END
The Stranger's Grave: Laying a De Quinceyan Ghost

By BARRY SYMONDS

FOR OVER A CENTURY now The Stranger's Grave, a novel published anonymously by Longman in 1823, has, with varying degrees of credibility, been attributed to Thomas De Quincey. From a tentative beginning, founded largely on anecdote, critical attention has focussed itself more and more sharply on the De Quinceyan elements in the story. Mortimer Collins first assigned the work to De Quincey in 1870. De Quincey, Collins observes, was in Wetheral, the setting for much of the novel, 'for a while, and wrote a weird wild story, The Stranger's Grave, which is not to be found in his collected works'.

W. E. A. Axon picked up the thread earlier this century. Writing in The Nation in 1907, he set out his rather slender anecdotal evidence, recording in the process the fact that a search of Longman's archives had proved inconclusive. Axon subsequently pressed James Hogg, publisher of the first British collected edition of De Quincey's works, on the subject. Hogg was 'altogether negative' about the attribution: 'In all our intercourse De Quincey never referred in any way to Edensor [the general setting of the novel] or this story - while he talked freely on the various "periods" of his life . . . there are no De Quincey fangs in this story'. He had originally, however, hesitated over pronouncing judgement: 'something haunts me about "The Stranger's Grave". I am pondering'. Whether or not Hogg's ghost was eventually exorcised, Axon assigned the work firmly to De Quincey in an extended article of 1914.

One point of evidence offered in both of Axon's pieces was later to be confirmed by documentary evidence. This related to the tenancy of a house in Wetheral by De Quincey's brother Richard. The latter, it was now shown, had indeed rented a house in the village of Wetheral, in Cumberland, between 1814 and 1816, during which period residents 'actually saw Thomas De Quincey in the village'.

De Quincey's own letters of the early 1820s contain enough general references to money paid for 'a novel', 'a considerable work' etc., for there to be at least a context to a possible financial gestation period for the (resurrected?) novel. In 1985 a detailed case for attributing the novel to De Quincey was made out by Grevel Lindop, who based his argument partly on stylistic similarities between the novel and De Quincey's known works, and partly on parallels between the hero's career and De Quincey's early life. The argument, though not altogether conclusive, established a presumption in favour of De Quincey's authorship. Since the appearance of the essay, discussion of The Stranger's Grave has been fully integrated into a number of critical studies; the most recent being John Barrell's The Infection of Thomas De Quincey (1991).

However, it has recently become clear that the novel is not in fact De Quincey's work. Longman's archive has yielded another writer: George Robert Gleig. The patient research

2 Correspondence section, The Nation (New York) 85, No. 2217 (26 Dec. 1907) 586.
3 Manchester Central Library, MS item 994 in the De Quincey Collection: Hogg to Axon, 5 August 1908.
4 As fn3: Hogg to Axon, 16 May 1908.
5 'The Canon of De Quincey's Writings . . . ' Transactions of the Royal Society of Literature of the United Kingdom 2nd series, 32 (1914) 1-46.
6 J. Scott Duckers, 'The De Quincey Family', TLS (21 October 1920) 684.
The Stranger's Grave: Laying a De Quinceyan Ghost

of Michael Bott, archivist at Reading University Library, where the papers are now held, has uncovered two letters relating to The Stranger's Grave, hitherto unexamined because legible only with the aid of ultraviolet light. The first is dated 21 August 1823 and runs: 'Your MS reached us yesterday quite safe. We are willing to undertake the publication of the work...We propose printing the Tale in a handsome Duodecimo Volume & risking a Thousand copies. The "Stranger's Grave" with the motto of "I saw a tale unfold" &c - will make an attractive title.' It is addressed from Longman to 'The Revd. G. Gleig - Ash near Wingham - Kent'. Another letter from Longman, dated 6 January 1827, informs Gleig that of the original print run of 1,000 'there remain 397 copies; & if you wish to clear that account we will discount your half of the books'.

Born in Stirling in 1796 and ordained by the Archbishop of Canterbury in 1820, Gleig was a prolific writer in that peculiarly nineteenth-century way. Following the success in 1826 of The Subaltern, a piece of 'faction' based in part on his own experiences in Wellington's Peninsular campaigns, Gleig published a stream of miscellaneous works. Novels, biographies, military histories, world histories, theological texts and manifold articles, appeared in quick succession. Some prospered: the novel Allan Breck (1834), for example, was a best seller for the publisher Richard Bentley, as too was Gleig's The Life of Major-General Sir Thomas Munro (1830). Others, like The Life of Warren Hastings (1841) proved dire-failures. Gleig's biggest literary opportunity also proved something of a public catastrophe. Bentley appointed Gleig general editor of his new National Library series. Just twelve months after its launch in 1830, the series ground to an embarrassed halt. From the supposed improprieties in its first volume, Galt's Life of Byron, to the actual inaccuracies of Gleig's own History of the Bible, the Library was, to say the least, an ill-judged venture.

Similarities between De Quincey's and Gleig's writing careers are obvious. Both were Ultra Tories of an unusual shade, who wrote for the Tory and, in some instances, for the so-called liberal-radical press...as Tories in each case. Both, one hardly need point out, were also polymaths who could write in about as many departments as the periodicals of the age could offer. And, even leaving aside an apparently similar penchant for self-destruction, both shared similar formative childhood experiences. Anyone aware of De Quincey's lifelong autobiographical obsession with his sister Elizabeth's death, will see something more than familiar in the following comment on Gleig: 'One of his earliest impressions was a feeling of extreme attachment to an elder sister, who died of a decline when he was five years old. He remembers going into her room the morning of her death, and finding her, as he thought, in a deep sleep, and being greatly horrified when her cheek, which he kissed, felt so cold. The funeral likewise he can call to mind at the moment...'

As members of the original Blackwood's team it is more than likely that the two writers met, though there is no record of it. Beyond having been offered as the writer of Gleig's first novel for 120 years or so, De Quincey provides just one brief review of The Subaltern to link himself and Gleig: 'A Subaltern in America we read with less pleasure than usual; which we

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8 University of Reading Library, Archives and Manuscripts, Longman Archive, letters for 1823 and 1827.
9 For details of Gleig's writing career see particularly Royal A. Gettmann's A Victorian Publisher (Cambridge, 1960), pp. 33-38.
attribute in part to the disgust impressed upon us by the never-ending series of blunders which he records'.

Gleig was never happy with *The Stranger's Grave*. Perhaps the theme of incest, from which develop some of the major strands of the work, proved ultimately to be a little close to home: Gleig had married his father's ward in 1819. Perhaps also his conflating of fact and fiction in setting the novel in the same valley as the township of Rockliffe, where he spent the first year of his marriage, proved an additional strain. It was anyway a daring book for the curate of Ash to be publishing. *The Stranger's Grave* was written after the failure in 1822 of what Gleig called his 'injudicious' pamphlet on the contemporary controversy between church conservatives and Evangelicals: 'My next produce was a novel in one small volume, called "The Stranger's Grave". The plot of the story was a repulsive one which would probably have found admirers in these days of sensational writing - for the style was good and the incidents natural; the public taste was not then so far advanced as it is now and "The Stranger's Grave" failed to serve the purpose for which it was intended'. One can only wonder what now will become of the re-attributed work in its new context.

*University of Manchester*


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