

Mauchline 8th March 1788

My Dear Sir,

My life, since I saw you last has been one continued hurry. - That savage hospitality which knocks a man down with strong liquors is the devil and all. - I have a sore warfare in this world! The Devil, the World and the Flesh, are three formidable foes. The first I generally try to fly from; the second, Alas! generally flies from me but the third is my plague, worse than the ten plagues of Egypt.

I have been looking over several farms in the Country: one in particular in Nithsdale pleased me so well, that if my offer to the Proprietor is accepted, I shall commence Farmer at Whitsunday, if farming do not appear eligible I shall have recourse to my other shift – but this to a friend.

I set out for Edin[bu]r[gh], Monday morning. How long I stay there, is uncertain; but you will know so soon as I can inform you myself. However I determine, Poesy must be laid aside for some time: my mind has been vitiated with Idleness, and it will take a good deal of effort to to [sic] habituate it to the routine of business.

I am ever, My Dear Sir,
yours sincerely
Rob[er]t Burns