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Mrs Mercer
No 6 Minchmill Street
Edinburgh



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London 25 July 1843

Dear Miss Martin

Your letter of yesterday to Eliza has accidentally fallen into my hands. I will not at present attempt to remove the (unjust) suspicion you will no doubt have of my being guilty of breaking the seal of her letter, but shall content myself with being under that suspicion until I have an opportunity of verbally explaining how it came into my possession before any one had time to peruse its contents.

I permit me now briefly to explain the cause of my writing you in the manner I did last - You are aware it was in answer to yours which I had that morning received - On its receipt I was busily engaged with some matters that had given me much annoyance & distraction in the midst of these it was unsealed & hastily

perused, upon reading over & over again the concluding
part I could put no other construction than this upon
it viz "that as any further correspondence with me
would be unnecessary. I beg you to condemn you therefore
demanded a discontinuance of it" With feelings
therefore of the bitterest regret that I should have
expressed myself thus to be (as I thought) unjustly
censured I without the least consideration to me
the heat of the moment flung the letter in the
fire & without further deliberation wrote a
reply to it, being much irritated with other matters
I at the time knew not & cared not what I wrote,
altho I was after a little reflection convinced I had
acted very improperly & would have made a thousand
apologies, but pride prevented it, I now however desire
to do so & hope you will accept it, altho I dare
not ask you to forget or forgive the impertinent
manner in which I fear I occasionally wrote you

I am
Yours very respectfully
Alex. Hewitt

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Might I beg of you to destroy my last letter, as
also the present after perusal, and as Cteja is
ignorant of what has passed, I hope you will not
take notice of it in any communication you
may have with her. - If however your
letter of yesterday to be delivered to her, I will do so
& explain how it came into my hands -

M. J.