Landerdale Park Dec. 9, 1823

My very dear Joseph,

All my endeavors to persuade your Dear Father to permit you to pursue your studies for another twelvemonth, I now begin to fear, will be unavailing; therefore you will be under the necessity of applying yourself very diligently, when you can gain a leisure hour from business. How much do I lament your great deficiency, and I fear from the want of practice you will entirely lose the little you may have obtained; you must never waste one moment of your precious time; how would your Dear Grand Father lament who was so slow with us. Many, very many prayers were offered to Heaven, that you boys, as your years increased, might grow in all knowledge, both Human and Divine, if you accustom yourself to read and write a little every day, you will gradually feel no inclination or relish at all for reading, and that will lead you to neglect it altogether; now, it could but withstand the stopping up so late at night—yes, you might rise at five the light mornings, and one hour in the morning is worth three at night; when I was about your age, I well remember rising very early to pray as well as to read.
and these were some of the pleasantest hours of my life, and that time I can now reflect on with much pleasure; most of Mr. W's, and some of Mr. E's works were read when my dear Father and Mother thought I was in my bed, and frequently had I feared lest my father should hear me, and come and I send me to bed again, for he was most tenderly kind to his children. Beloved Joseph, remember though you are yet very young, your life is passing imperceptibly away; in the morning of life, be sure you spend every moment of yours in improving your mind; you can never recall a lost day, hour, or moment; be ambitious to gain that knowledge by which you will become a blessing to your friends, to society, and the world at large; by that means you will ensure your own peace and stern al happiness. Be dutiful and obedient to your Father, and remember his interest is your own; let your integrity in business be always evident; never forget to commune with your own heart, that is always ask yourself, what are your motives, if you act from pure motives or sincere intentions your conduct will never be very far wrong: you have very many advantages, others of your age are deprived, be sure you do your utmost to improve them. Your very affectionate Mother from Mother.
Give my love to your brother. I shall be pleased to see them down here, being confident their behaviour will at all times merit my approbation.