

dead. It will be seen that both poets regarded with much alarm the symptoms of popular discontent which appeared in various districts, particularly among the *Luddites*, as they were called, of Yorkshire, during the uncertain condition of public affairs consequent on the assassination of the Prime Minister, Mr. Percival, by Bellingham, in the lobby of the House of Commons, on the 11th of May, 1812; and that Scott had, in his capacity of Sheriff, had his own share in suppressing the tumults of the only manufacturing town of Selkirkshire. The last sentence of the letter alludes to a hint dropped in the *Edinburgh Review*, that the author of the historical department of the *Edinburgh Annual Register* ought to be called to the bar of the House of Commons, in consequence of the bold language in which he had criticised the parliamentary hostility of the Whigs to the cause of Spain.

TO ROBERT SOUTHEY, ESQ., KESWICK.

EDINBURGH, 4th June, 1812.

MY DEAR SOUTHEY, — It is scarcely necessary to say that the instant I had your letter I wrote to the only friend I have in power, Lord Melville (if indeed he be now in power), begging him for the sake of his own character, for the remembrance of his father who wished you sincerely well, and by every other ohjuration I could think of, to hack your application. All I fear, if the Administration remain, is the influence of the clergy, who have a strange disposition to jeh away among themselves the rewards of literature. But I fear they are all to pieces above stairs, and much owing to rashness and mismanagement; for if they could not go on without Canning and Wellesley, they certainly should from the beginning have invited them in as companions, and not mere retainers. On the whole, that cursed compound of madness and villainy has contrived to do his country more mischief at one blow than all her sages and statesmen will be able to repair perhaps in our day. You are quite right in apprehending a *Jacquerie*; the country is mined below our feet.