

Jan 3, 1838

My dear Miss Edgeworth,

Though I write by this post to Mr. Butler, who is (I believe) at Edgeworthstown, I wish to add a few lines to you, on the subject of the Royal Irish Academy, of which I have lately been elected President, and of which Mr Edgeworth your father was one of the few original members. (This latter fact you probably were aware of; at all events, I have the evidence of it before me, in the original list, signed by Lord Charlemont.) You have therefore an hereditary connexion with the Academy; one of the objects of which body is, you know, the advancement of Polite Literature. Now, it is known to all the world that you are not only a lover of literature, but a successful pursuer and powerful promoter of it; and that on any point connected therewith, your opinion must be most valuable. I have some hope therefore that you may be induced, by regard for the Academy and for me, to favour me with some hints as to the best way in which our body may be made to assist in advancing the interests of polite literature. Should you so far indulge me as to write on this question immediately, your hints may assist me in the composition of my inaugural address, which is to be delivered to the Academy on the occasion of my taking the Chair, next Monday evening. But I need not say that they will be valued, whenever they may arrive; and indeed the best thing of all, for the Academy at least, would be, that you should be induced to draw up an essay, short or long, on the subject, for publication in our Transactions.

I have only time to add that I request you to accept the very kind regards of Lady Hamilton and myself, & to present them to all members of your family. My children and sisters are all well: Eliza has a volume of poems in the press.

I am, dear Miss Edgeworth,

Very Sincerely yours,

William R Hamilton.