

Leonard Smelt

Aug. 2 1776

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It is impossible for a mind strongly
impressed with duty, gratitude, respect, and (if I may be
allowed so familiar an expression), with the warmest personal
attachment, to forget a moment what it owes it. Then
on the contrary, distance seems rather to strengthen the
chain in proportion as it lengthens it; but it is a chain
worn with the highest sensation of pleasure and gilded
with what must make it the most excellent of ornaments
the intrinsic one of virtue. If the wearers had powers equal
to their ardency & be useful, their unbounded zeal would
be read by the public as it is felt by the wiser, but
some are made to admire only, others of a happier mold
to serve. Take then Sir, take then Madam, the humble
offering of the most grateful and most attached minds which
ever inhabited the human form, & be pleased to remember that
things greatly inferior have no other offering to make.

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I beg leave to offer my humble congratulations upon the good News from Suebee and hope that it is a prelude to still greater from New York & that every thing that can give real happiness and permanent advantage will flow in from all parts with uninterrupted current, that at length those who so much deserve it, may be as distinguished examples of success and happiness as they have been of every virtue -

Happy as Mrs. Smelt is amidst her family, she is more at New than at Hutton. Her attentions there seem to have mingled themselves with every thing that is most valuable in her and there is scarce a moment when the tears of gratitude is not ready to burst forth - After we look at the inestimable Pictures and at the remains of the Rosegay we brought with us they yet seem unable to add one mite to the sum of gratitude we constantly feel - I am obliged to pass most of the day at my infant Cottage, as I have no architect and only Country Workmen, but the thoughts of New so intermix themselves with what I should attend to, that I prove but a very confused director - The Situation we have fixed upon grows upon me as the

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Magnificence of the Thames disappears before me, & the narrow
irregular and rapid Swale seems to approach towards beauty, but
of a very inferior kind to the banks I have left. In other respects
the views are pleasing and sufficiently varied with Lawns, Wood
& Mountains, & the little flat about the Cottage will not occasion
much expense to form it into a tolerable prospect and in
future time may rise into some degree of beauty if the turbulent
Swale doth not sweep the Hill upon which it stands away -
Our Weather is now that of the best Italian Climate, but our
Sunshine is not perfect, No Labriole visits our Lanes, & they remind
us too much of what we have lost to restore their verdure pleasing
to us - The last accounts from Whetby were favorable & M^{rs} Smelt
intends a visit there after she hath been at Hornby Castle -
is it presumption thus to detail what is so graciously enquired
after? I may trust my pen since a heart directs it which is
impressed with the highest sense of respect and veneration, a
heart that in its last moments will acknowledge the infinite
obligations conferred upon

L. Smelt

Hutton Rowville 2^d August 1776

Mr Smith

August 2. 1798