

Leonard Smelt

Mar. 31 1777

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The loss you are pleased Sir to make me acquainted with, hath very sincerely affected me - The many marks of gracious attention with which you Sir and you Madam were pleased to favour Mad. <sup>elle</sup> Groom, make me well know that Her memory hath been honoured with the most benevolent and the most distinguished tear that could fall from human eyes. - Her constitution was undoubtedly not a good one, & her zeal was incompatible with her strength, but her surviving friends have the comfort to think that the perfect innocence of her mind and her excellent intentions must make this change most advantageous to her. - This reflection will I trust comfort Lady Holderness, that truly noble-minded Woman, who I fear hath been tryed to the top of her powers - I bleed for that respectable Couple - Their spirits and even lives depend  
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more upon each other than they themselves are perhaps aware of - It is impossible to know them intimately and not to love them as well as respect them - How gracious is it in You, Sir, to give me the happiness of knowing that He is better, & that the friend to whom I owe the greatest honours of my life, & the Man I so much admire & love may possibly live to receive my latest expressions of gratitude - To Him I owe all the honours You Sir, have been pleased to confer upon me, To Him I owe the conviction that the highest Station with all its innumerable temptations may yet be filled with a union of every publick and private virtue - To Him I owe the satisfaction that I have not been visionary in my Ideas of human perfection, since I have seen proofs of intentions as pure as my imagination ever imputed to the human mind. -

I beg leave to assure You, Sir, that no Subject can more rejoice in the happy prospect this Country hath for the improving virtues of its Sovereigns Children than I do - May I presume to add that even their Parents can not do more so, for I will dare to confess to You, Sir, that all my respect for the Station could not keep down my affection as a Parent, and if I can judge of my self there is no length I could have gone for my own Child that I should not most willingly have gone for them - I can

not describe to you, Sir, the complication of my sensations towards them - My first object was their real good, & because I did not think my self equal to it, I was unhappy till I made place for one more so, but could I have seen any more effectual way, tho' it had been at the expence of the loss of all my limbs I think I should have pursued it - That Heaven may prosper the Hands they are in, and make them as virtuous as their Parents and give them a bright and lasting Noon after so cloudy a Dawn is the most ardent prayer of L. S.

Hutton Bonville. 31<sup>st</sup> March 1777.

Mr. Bull

March 31. 1899