James Edward (afr. Sir) Smith, Pres. Linnean Society

June 1 1811

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The Linnean Society, for the cultivation of Natural History in all its branches, was founded in 1788, & incorporated by Royal Charter in 1802. What particularly led to this establishment was the acquisition of the entire Museum, Library & Manuscripts of the celebrated Linnæus, purchased from Sweden by Dr. Smith at his own private expense, which was thought so valuable an acquisition to the country, that the British Government allowed it to pass without duty or examination.

The Society in question can, by the present Charter, consist of no ~~other~~ more than 4 Honorary Members, with an unlimited number of Fellows, Foreign Members, and Associates.— The present list embraces nearly all the names of any note in this study

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throughout Europe — All expenses are borne by the Fellows, who alone sign any obligation, or have any share in the government of the Society.—

One place of Honorary Member has been vacant ever since the death of the late Duke of Portland, the Society being under no obligation to fill up such vacancy till they find some "person of distinguished rank" worthy to be appointed to it.

It is much wished that His Royal Highness the Prince Regent would allow himself either to fill this place, under the title of Patron of the Society, or in any other manner most conformable to his exalted station, or that His Royal Highness would, by any alteration of, or addition to, the present Charter, be pleased to declare himself the Patron of the Society.— On this subject the President & Council of the Society cannot presume to dictate, only they believe that, as the Charter at present stands, His Royal Highness, by whatever other title distinguished, must come under the denomination of an Honorary Member — which indeed is exactly the place in which His Majesty & all other Royal personages stand in the Royal Society, whose laws ~~indeed~~ they are moreover required to subscribe.—

J E Smith. P.L.S.

London June 1st 1811.

1 June 1861

Dr Smith
&
Lord Stanley.