Ld. North

Ap. 18 1778

2926

Sir.

I was so hurried & teazed on Thursday that I found it absolutely necessary to go into the country in order to endeavour to collect my scattered thoughts, & to recover the use of my understanding, which had been thrown into the utmost confusion by the variety of business, importunities, & applications which drove me almost to distraction in the course of the last week.

I have, by one day's rest, recollected myself enough to be able to state to your Majesty the embarrassments of my present situation. They

Ld. Nor

arise almost entirely from that claim, which
Mr Wedderburn has set up, & in which, I am,
I have been forced in some degree to en-
= courage him, of being placed upon the Bench
in the House of Peers at the same
time with Mr Thurlow. If he could have
been certain to succeed in a regular
way to the Office of Attorney General
It would free your Majesty from much
uneasiness, & me from the most perplex-
= ing embarrassment. At the time when Ld
Suffolk, Mr Eden, & I had sketch'd out
that plan of a new Administration, which
I sent to your Majesty, I thought the
Solicitor's wishes might be gratified

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without much difficulty, as the World would not have been surprized at seeing Mr Wedderburn permanently & amply provided for at the time of making a great & extensive arrangement. In the present state of the business, these inconveniences will probably be the consequence;

1st L.d Ch: Justice De Grey expects an annual pension of £2500 nett, which is near £700 more than L.d Ch: J: Wilmott. But de Grey says that Mr Eden in my name, authorized him to offer a pension of that amount: I do not recollect having given any such authority; But this

is the demand of the Chief Justice which will from this time become the rate of the pension for every Chief Justice of the Common Pleas who shall retire from his Office.

2d. For Wedderburne's obtaining a Peerage, will induce every future Lord Ch. Justice of the Common Pleas to expect it which, perhaps, would not have been the case, if he had been advanced as part of the plan for forming a new administration in order to make way for Mr Dunning to succeed to the Post of Attorney General.

These two inconveniencies affect Govern=
=ment permanently, & are therefore of
great importance: The embarrassments
which affect me personally are less
material, because they only relate to me
but they will distress me beyond measure.
As it not been usual to give a Peerage
to the Chief Justice of the Common Pleas,
all those who have solicited for Peerages
will come upon me, & with some reason,
as many of them are as well entitled to
expect that honour as Lord Redesdale.
Whose merit with me is considerable
from the assistance he has given me, but

it is not known, & will not be allowed by the world especially by the other aspirers to the Peerage. This circum=stance makes me most earnestly wish that if your Majesty can release me at the end of the Session, Mr Wedderburn's mon=otion may not take place before, as I really shall not be able to stand the storm & violence which the Candidates for the Peerage will bring upon me; a New Man, who has never had any enemies, or received any application upon the subject, may be able to go through it, but I do not feel that it

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will be possible for me to do it.

It is much to be wished that during the present recess, some acquisition might be made from the opposition, & Mr Denning be persuaded to be Attorney General. It is equally to be wished that Wedderburn would be satisfied for a time at least to waive the Peerage.

These two points carried would relieve me from great difficulties, & give a real strength to Government. But as I doubt whether it will be possible to succeed in either, the next thing to be done is to persuade Mr Wedderburn to stay till the end of the Session, & to look out for as good an

Attorney & Solicitor General as we can get
Mr Wallace & Mr Mansfield, the
Gentlemen who stand the foremost, are
sensible men, & good Lawyers, but I
doubt whether in Parliament, we
shall draw from them all the assistance
we shall want. The immediate conse-
=quence of any step being taken, (even the
nomination of the New Chancellor) will be
much violence in the H.s of Commons for the three
weeks that remain of the Session, & I
have no doubt that I shall be left
to myself, as I have hitherto been.

Your Majesty sees, that I must have

a good deal of negociation with the Lord Chief Justice & Mr Wedderburn, before the change of their offices is ripe for execution & that the Attorney & Solicitor General ought to be fixed upon before the New Chief Justice kisses hands. Your Majesty must see likewise how much it is to be wish'd that this arrangement should be accompanied by some acquisition from our opponents. It will, otherwise leave in the most weak, embarrassed, unsupported situation possible.

If your Majesty continues in your kind intention of relieving me at the end of the Session, I submit that my successor ought to be informed of these places. Most

especially, he ought to be consulted upon the choice of an Attorney & Solicitor General. It would be better for us both: he would acquire some important friends, & I should be free from a great part of those complaints & reproaches to which I shall be liable from several quarters, if Mr Middlethorne's Peerage takes place while I remain in Office.

I write and immediately to the Attorney General to claim the pleasure of his company tomorrow at Windsor, & if your Majesty chuses that I should embark in any of the other negociations, I will em-

employ myself in them during the recess.

I beg leave to subscribe myself, with the utmost duty & veneration,

Sir

Your Majesty's

most obliged, most obedient & most devoted subject & servant

Pitt

Downing Street
April 18. 1798.

Ld North
Downing Street April 18th 177

Mr. Thurlow, Mr. Wedder
burne - Chief Just. De Grey &c
— Sends himself much
embarrassed.