

Sir Ralph Payne to H.R.H.

(q.No. 38109) July 16 1786

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Sir:

I trust that your Royal Highness's Persuasion of my respectful Attachment to your Person, and of my sincere Devotion to your Service, will prevail on your Goodness to forgive the Liberty which I take in troubling your Royal Highness with these Lines.

The Subject of them is to apprize your Royal Highness of a Visit which I have just receiv'd from a Gentleman of considerable Note in the City of London, who was pleas'd to say, that I ow'd it to the great Goodness & Condescension with which it was suppos'd that your Royal Highness was pleas'd to honour me, & which had induc'd him, & some others of his Friends to put into my Hands a Communication to your Royal Highness of certain Steps, which were actually at this Moment in Agitation by a Body of most respectable Persons in the City, whom he was not yet at Liberty to declare, & which when laid in Form before

Sir R. Payne's Letter
to the Prince of the
Subject of his Debt

July 16th 1786.

before your Royal Highness, would bear the most unequivocal
Testimony of their unbounded Affection for your Royal Highness's
Person, & of their Zeal & Sollicitude to remove from your
Mind every possible Circumstance that could in the slightest
Degree contribute to embitter the Peace of it. Conjectures,
he said, had prevail'd in the City, that the Humanity &
Excellence of your Royal Highness's Heart, might have
induc'd ^{you} to take under your Consideration the Means of
raising Money for the Purpose of discharging your Royal
Highness's Debts, independantly of the generous Sacrifices
which your Royal Highness had already publickly made
in the voluntary Resignation even of your most reasonable
Pleasures & Comforts, as well as of all those Circumstances
of Splendour & Magnificence, which are due to your high
Birth, and exalted Rank. He was unable, he said, to express
the Admiration which the City as well as the Rest of the
World entertain'd of your Royal Highness's Virtue and
Magnanimity upon this Occasion; but that the Body of
Gentlemen, to whom he had before alluded, were in
particular most anxious that your Royal Highness
would

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would be pleas'd to take no Step, at least for a few Days,
which might eventually embarrass your Royal Highness,
or think of immediately relieving the Wants of your Creditors
at the Expence of any Part of your future Ease & Comfort.
These Gentlemen & himself, he said, were at this
Time concerting a Plan, which when brought to
Perfection would enable them to lay at your Royal
Highness's Feet, a Sum not only competent to the
Liquidation of every Incumbrance which oppress'd your
Royal Highness's Finances, but likewise to the Completion
of the noble Design which your Royal Highness had laid
for rendering Carlton House, a Palace deserving of your
Royal Residence, and of Course an Object of national
Credit & Magnificence. The Scheme, he added, was not
yet quite sufficiently advanc'd to qualify or authorize
him to impart to me the Particulars of it; but he
beg'd that I would endeavour to devise some Means of
making known to your Royal Highness the Substance
of this Mark of the affectionate Attachment of the
City

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City to your royal Highness, and of their high Admiration
and Applause of your Royal Highness's Conduct, as well
their humble Wishes that you would be pleas'd to
condescend, for the Space of a few Days, to suspend any
Project or Resolution which your Royal Highness might
meditate for a Purpose, which they had themselves
most solicitously at Heart. Before I engag'd to venture
on the Liberty, for which I must now rely on your
Royal Highness's Indulgence, I stated to my Visitor
my Opinion of the Impossibility, that your royal
Highness, though feeling the warmest Gratitude
for so mark'd a Proof of the Love & Attachment
of any respectable Body of Men, could express your
Sense of it in Reply to any indirect Information, or
Proposal short of a clear & decided Offer made with
proper Respect & Formality; and on his expressing
himself aware of this Circumstance, & actuated
by the Anxiety which he & his Friends felt that
your Royal Highness should determine on no Means
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for a few Days, before they had an Opportunity of submitting to your Royal Highness the Testimony which they had in Contemplation of their Duty & Affection for you, in a due & becoming Form, I consented to convey his Intelligence to your Royal Highness's private Ear, for your Forgiveness of which I depend, Sir! on your experienc'd Goodness & Indulgence.

But, Sir! after having thus laid before you, the Purport of this Conference, I trust that I shall stand acquitted in your Royal Highness's Opinion of any presumptuous Meaning to suggest to you the Degree in which my Visitor's Intelligence ought to convey Pleasure & Satisfaction to your Royal Highness, & to merit your Countenance & Approbation. Your Royal Highness views your present Situation in a light so perfectly true & clear, and entertains so just a Conception of the System necessary for your future Conduct, that, on my Conscience, Sir! I believe, & am persuaded that

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that it is beyond the Power of the wisest, & most considerate
Heads among your many Friends, to assist your Royal
Highness with any discreeter Advice or more useful
Council, than what arises from your own Judgment.
I cannot at the same Time restrain the Vanity which
I feel, in finding my own Sentiments upon this Business,
corroborated by the Opinion of Lord Loughborough, who
dropp'd in upon me immediately on the Departure of
my Visitor. Feeling the most solicitous Interest for
the Promotion of every Circumstance & Event which
can contribute to your Royal Highness's Honour &
Happiness, we could not but derive a sensible Pleasure
from the Idea which had just been suggested to me;
but our Satisfaction arose rather from the Proof which
such an Offer would exhibit in the Eyes of all Europe,
how highly your Royal Highness's amiable Character
stands in the public Opinion, & how precious your Peace
& Happiness are already become in the Hearts of a
People, over whom you are; one Day, to reign, than
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from any Opinion, that the Proposal, when submitted to your
 Royal Highness in due Form, is seriously deserving of
 Acceptance, or at all Events, of too precipitate an Adoption.
 Lord Loughborough unappriz'd that any Part of our
 Conversation would ever reach your Royal Highness's
 Ear, appear'd confident that though your Royal Highness
 would receive & reply to the Offer when made to you, with
 the kindest Countenance, & in the most flattering Terms,
 you would nevertheless indicate no small Proportion of
 Reserve upon the Occasion, & would express the firmest
 & most invariable Determination to persevere in that
 independant Plan, which your Royal Highness has
 already digested & declar'd for the Discharge of your
 Incumbrances, & which has excited a Degree of
 Admiration through the Nation, amounting to
 Enthusiasm: And under this Persuasion he foresaw
 numberless political as well as personal Advantages
 resulting to your Royal Highness & the public, of a
 Magnitude

Magnitude which reduc'd the meer Liquidation of your Debt, to an Object of very inconsiderable Size indeed. He added likewise that the Years which he had pass'd, & the Experience which he had acquir'd in the World, had taught him to view, with Caution, Ideas which bore the fairest Appearance of Liberality, and to consider it possible (as human Nature is constructed) that the sincerest Sentiments of Affection & Attachment, might be liable to a certain Proportion & Mixture of Self-Interest, which your Royal Highness's Wisdom & Discernment might be very warrantably led to suspect, however kindly & graciously your Goodness & Affability might induce you ^{to acknowledge} the ostensible Motives. I cannot, I own suppress the Effusion of Joy which I myself feel at the Step which is in the Contemplation ^{of the City}, whatever may be your Royal Highness's Resolution upon it. So voluntary, & zealous an Offer will convince every Branch of Government of the Abundance of your Resources in
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the Hearts of the People, & that you were induc'd to prefer your Application for the Payment of your Debts to the most sacred of Characters, not because your Royal Highness was destitute of Friends to your Cause, but because it was unquestionably the Fountain through which you might on every Principle of Honour, Delicacy, & Propriety, expect to draw a Supply from the Treasure of a Nation, which evinces it's Approbation of your Conduct, by it's ready Zeal to support it. My Heart glows with Pleasure at the Prospect, of that Admiration which cannot but attend your royal Highness's noble & generous Conduct upon this Occasion, & of the Contention which must prevail among all Ranks of People in this Kingdom (& not improbably in it's Sister one) who shall be forwardest in testifying their Resolution to support a Prince who has display'd a Judgment & Magnanimity without Example in the Annals of great Britain. But I fear, Sir! that
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my Feelings are leading me into Tedioufness & Impertinence
and I will only beseech your Royal Highness to forgive
my Zeal, if it betrays me into Presumption, & to condone
to receive these Lines, which I have the Honour of
conveying express to your Royal Highness by a private
Hand, as a Testimony of that profound Respect, &
Attachment, with which I am, Sir!

Your Royal Highness's
most dutiful, and
most faithful Servant

Grafton Street

Ralph Payne.

Sunday Morning, July 16th 1786.

The above was began last Night, & finish'd this
Morning, when I rec^d the Letter from Lord Carlisle
which, by Advice of Lord Loughborough who has just
call'd upon me, I take the Liberty to inclose to your
Royal Highness.