Sir Robert Murray Keith to Ld Suffolk

Private

Zell November 2d 1772.

My Lord,

I arrived here on the 31st October late in the Evening, & next Day had the Honour of delivering the Kings Letter to Her Danish Majesty, whom I found in perfect Health, & without any Remains of Pain from Her late Accident.

In two very long Audiences which Her Majesty was pleased to grant me I endeavoured to execute with the utmost punctuality His Majestys Commands, & shall now lay before Your Lordship all the Lights these Audiences afforded me relative to the Queens Wishes & Intentions. I cannot enter into that detail without previously assuring Your Lordship that the Queen received the repeated Proofs of His Majesty's fraternal Affection & friendship, with the warmest Expressions of Gratitude & Sensibility, & that nothing could be more frank, nor more explicit than Her Answers to a great Number of Questions which She permitted me to ask upon every Subject that arose.

In regard to Denmark, the Queen declares, that in the present Situation of that Court She has not a Wish for any Correspondence or Connection there, beyond what immediately concerns the Welfare & Education of Her Children. That She never has written a single Letter to Denmark since She left it, nor received one

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from thence. That the only Person belonging to that Kingdom from whom She receives any Letters lives in Holstein, & is not connected with the Court. That Madame de Holstein (the Lady who came to State with Her Majesty) writes sometimes to Madame de Plessen, but with an affected & unnecessary Air of Mystery, as the Subjects She writes upon, are by no means interesting, and that Lady's Husband being actually Grand Maitre of the King of Denmark's Household, her Byas cannot be doubtfull.

The Queen having express'd great Anxiety with Respect to the false Impressions which may be instilled into the Minds of Her Children, particularly regarding Herself, I thought it my Duty to Say, that such Impressions, however cruelly intended, could not at the tender Age of Her Majesty's Children, nor for some years to come, take so deep a Root, as not to be entirely effaced by more Candid Instructors, & the Dictates of filial Duty when Reason & Reflexion shall break in upon their Minds. The Queen seems willing to lay hold of that Hope, Yet could not help bursting into Tears when she mentiond the Danger of losing the Affections of Her Children.

Her Majesty appears very desirous to communicate directly to Her Royal Brother all her Views & Wishes in the most confidential Manner, hoping to obtain in the same manner His Majesty's advice & Direction, which She means to follow implicitly. She even said that in Matters of so private & domestick a Nature it would give Her much greater Pleasure to learn the Kings Intentions upon every Point from His own Pen than thro' the Channel of any of His Electoral Servants.

Mr Verschuer who had been thought of as a fit Person to be Grand Maitre of Her Household, has declared that His Health does not permit him to accept of that Employment. This Gentleman being out of the Question the Queen is much at a loss how to fill that Employment which is of so much importance in the Regulation of Her Court. Several Gentlemen have been mentiond to Her, & one in particular has been strongly recommended of late. This is General Monroi, who in the last War had a Hanoverian Regiment, & has now One of the Kings Balliages near this City. Genl Monroi has the Reputation of a distinguish'd Officer, & a well bred Man, but Her Majesty has never seen him, & knows nothing of him but by Hearsay, & from Persons who may be partial to him. She therefore wishes that the Permission She has given me to name him to the King may not be look'd upon as a Recommendation on Her Part, but only to point him out to the Kings Attention, in order to procure that Information which His Majesty can easily obtain, concerning his Character, as well as the other Qualities which may be necessary for the Superintendancy of Her Affairs.

Mr de Hohnhorst has likewise been recommended to the Queen, but it seems by what She has heard from Mr Lenthe, that Mr Hohnhorst's present Employment of Landrath is incompatible with the Post of Grand Maitre. The Queen is little more acquainted with this last mentiond Gentleman than with Genl Monroi

Monroi, & no mention has been hitherto made to either of them of this Business.

Her Majesty is very Sollicitous to have the Establishment of Her annual Income, & that of Her Household settled as soon as it can Conveniently be done, & wishes that the Money to be received from Denmark may be disposed of as The King shall think proper. Though somewhat averse to drawing Money from the Hanoverian Treasury, She will follow the Kings Directions upon that Head, till the final Arrangement of Her Affairs shall take Place. I assured Her Majesty that no Time will be lost in regulating those Matters to Her Satisfaction.

Madame de Weerpups, whose Service near Her Majesty has been expressive of the most respectfull Attachment is to take leave of the Queen on Friday, & return to Hanover.

Madame d'Ompteda has been declared Grande Maitresse, & Mademoiselle Lutzow, a young Lady who came with very good Recommendations from Mecklenburg, one of the Maids of Honour. The Queen has not yet appointed the Second Maid of Honour, but is inclined to prefer Mademoiselle Rixleben, who went with the late Princess of Wales from Saxe Gotha to England, & who by that Means may have had the Honor to be known to His Majesty.

Madame de Steinberg has spoken so strongly to the Queen in favour of Her Son in Law Mr Benigsen, that Her Majesty waits only for the Kings approbation to appoint him Gentilhomme de la Chambre. This Gentlemans Lady, Daughter to the late Baron Steinberg, is said to be a very amiable Woman, & will be a great acquisition to the Society at the Queen's Court, if her Husband should be placed there.

Besides the abovementiond Persons there will be only one Cammer Junker wanting to Her Majesty's Establishment, & that Rank may be fill'd with very little Difficulty.

The Queen never had any Intention of attaching to Her Person Madame de Bolen who was left here by the Hereditary Princess. That Lady goes back to Brunswick in a few Days.

I am sorry to find that Mr Hornbostel the Clergyman whom Her Majesty intended to appoint Her Lecteur has express'd some unwillingness to quit his present Living at Lühne. The Queen has shewn a particular Esteem for Mr Hornbostel, & would certainly be glad to have him fixed at Her Court.

It gave me great Satisfaction to find Her Majesty in very good Spirits, & much pleased with the Palace at Zell, the Appartments of which are very spacious, & handsomely furnish'd. She wishes to have an Appartment fitted up in the Palace for the Princess of Brunswick, as She thinks that the Etiquette of this Country does not permit that Princess in Her Visits to Zell to be lodged out of the Palace, without great Impropriety. Her Majesty said that She intended to write to the King upon this Head.

The Duke of Brunswick, (as I hear) took no Notice to the Hereditary Princess of Her first Visit to the Görde but

but upon Her Royal Highnesses return from the Second, the Duke mentioned the Queen of Denmark to Her for the first time, & said that when the Hereditary Princess lay in He would Himself inform Her Majesty of it.

The Queen told me that the Hereditary Prince of Brunswick assured Her at the Görde, that the very enterprizing & dan=gerous Part which Queen Juliana has acted in Denmark created greater Astonishment at Brunswick (where the Abilities & Character of that Princess are known) than perhaps in any other City of Europe.

The Queen talk'd to me of several late Incidents at the Court of Denmark, but without appearing take much Con=cern in them. She mentioned with a Smile the Strange mixture of Baggage sent to Her from Denmark, adding that this new Instance of their Meanness had not surprized Her: But the Princess of Brunswick, who happend to be present when the Baggage was opend, had expressd Her Indignation at that Treatment in such Strong Terms, that She (the Queen) could not help taking Notice of it in Her Letters to the King.

I find that a small Collection of English Books would be very agreeable to the Queen, leaving the Choice of them entirely to His Majesty.

Madame de Plesse has been but twice at Court since the Queens arrival here; Yet Her Majesty hinted to me that that Lady's affectation of Retirement has not pre=vented Her from taking an active Part in the little Solici=tations & Competitions which belong to every Court whether great or Small. I could easily See that the Queen has been a good deal disappointed by this Behaviour of Madame de Plesse.

Her Majesty more than once expressd how much She thought Herself obliged to the Kings Ministers for the Zeal they had Shewn in the whole of the late unhappy Transactions relating to Denmark & to Herself. She is particularly sensible of the Great Share your Ld Ship had in all those Affairs, & has commanded me to convey to your Lordship Her acknowledgement for that Con=stant Attention to Her Honour & Interests which She is persuaded the King will look upon as an additional Mark of Your Lordships dutifull Attachment to His Royal Person & Family.

It only remains that I should beg your Lordships Indulgence for the great Bulk to which I have swelled this Letter. The only Excuse I can offer arises from my ardent Desire to execute the kings Orders with the greatest Precision, & to give the best Information in my power of the exact State of Affairs here.

I have the honor to be with great Respect
My Lord
Your Lordships
most obedient
& most humble Servant
Robert Murray Keith

P. S. I have inclosed in this Packet Her Danish Majesty's Letter to the King & one from Prince Ernest of Mecklenburg for the Queen.

I shall set out for Dresden in a few Hours.