A. M. to Hd. Chancellor

16462

Private

Windsor Augt. 31st 1784.

My Lord, It is with the greatest reluctance as well as sorrow that I find myself obliged to communicate to You as my first Law Counsellor an affair of the most delicate kind wherein not only my feelings as a Father are concerned but the Duty I owe to my Country, from knowing more than I should think advisable to state on paper which I shall have no scruple personally to communicate to You on Wednesday.

The Prince of Wales has early harboured romantic ideas of going abroad which I very fairly shewed him were improper; but as He never chuses to give up any opinion however hastily formed, whilst agreable to the inclination of the moment, He again attacked Me on the subject in the spring, when I very calmly explained to Him that no Prince of Wales had ever taken but King Charles I. and the disapprobation it had met with in the Nation that I had also many private considerations that must ever make me object to such a scheme, He seemed to acquiesce but I had soon reason to know that He held a language to the foreign Ministers intimating an intention of going to France with the addition that it would be in defiance of my opinion; therefore when Lord Southampton brought the annexed letter on Wednesday from Him I instantly said I could guess at its contents. Though seeing all the Evils of the proposed measure, yet I could not help observing it was communicated in a most unpleasing manner by the whole tenour of the letter, yet postponed till Friday sending an answer that I might write with temper. I then wrote the letter ~~of which~~ the enclosed is a Copy, wherein You may find however inconvenient, I shewed an inclination of contributing towards the discharge of His Debts, if He would give up the idea of a plan so highly improper. I also entrusted Lord Southampton with the contents of it, that He might

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speak

speak to Him and engage those persons in the P. of Wales's family who from old habitudes could speak freely to Him, to assist in putting the whole fairly before Him. I yesterday received the second letter through the same Channel when I found all had spoken in the fullest manner but without the smallest effect, as indeed this flimsy letter too clearly shews. I have reason to know that at least the principal leader of Opposition is in his councils and that Mr. Erskine encourages the idea He cannot be prevented going abroad if He chuses it; now this is so different from the Doctrines I learnt in my Youth and which I think Judge Blackstone affirms that the Successor to the Crown cannot quit the Realm without the Permission of the Sovereign. His Plan is to go without any of His Gentlemen, accompanied by a French Catholic Officer having concerted his scheme with the Duc de Chartres, who has found him a credit on Paris; though in the letter Brunswick is mentioned that is only a blind the other being the object.

If there is no power of detaining Him I have reason to know no arguments will avail and every mischief that can in future disturb the quiet of this Kingdom as well as of my family may with reason be apprehended; indeed His principal Attendants have given Me this notice when I see You I shall mention circumstances that will cause surprize, but if a Young Man sets out with a determination to hear no advice but the dictates of his unruly Passions, that the Authority of Parents, the opinion of the World and every kind of decency is set at nought, every absurdity and impropriety may be expected, and the machinations of France know well how to take advantage of such a disposition.

H. M. to Ld. Chancellor

Copy
Letter to the Lord Chancellor
Windsor Oct. 31st 1804.