

Col.
Geo.
Hotham
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To His Royal Highness The Prince of Wales.

27th Oct^r 1784.

Sir,

This is the first Day on which I am enabled to have the Honour of transmitting to Your Royal Highness, in obedience to the Commands I some time ago received, an Estimate of your Debts, which I do herewith enclosed.

It was my earnest Wish to have stated to Your Royal Highness the exact State of every Part of your Debts with Precision; but I soon found that was impossible; every Day brought on some Charge in every Department which I could neither account for nor control; All I could do, therefore, after much Delay, has been to collect what can only be called an Estimate of your Royal Highness's present Debts, & those ostensibly contracted by your Orders, which must be calculated as such, though they do not yet appear. — I should be glad to see you more than an Estimate, because I know how very fallacious all Estimates are whatever; & I should have done so, had not the greatest Part of it come under other Regulation than mine. But your Royal Highness must be sensible how little I have been communicated with in matters of your Expence by those whose Duty it was to have constantly communicated with me. — Your Tables is the only Article in the Account I have now the Honour of presenting to Your Royal Highness, which comes properly from me. I give that, & can give it, on a rough Calculation only, for the Christmas Quarter; for in this, as in every other Department, such fresh Expence arises from one Quarter to another, from Quarters in which it is so little to be expected, that it is utterly impossible for me to give more than a Random Guess for a Week forward; a Circumstance which, as your Treasurer, I should be truly ashamed of, had I either the Confidence, or the Power, which every Treasurer of your Royal Highness's, ought, for your own Security, to be vested with. — As I have unfortunately enjoyed neither, my Feelings are not those of Shame, but of Grief; which will never prevent my doing the utmost in my Power to retrieve your Royal Highness's Finances from the Wretched & the Disgraceful State in which they stand at present. —

Having transmitted to Your Royal Highness the enclosed Paper,

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My Duty, in strictness, ought to cease; but I was so long, formerly, in the Habit of pointing out Dangers to You, that I cannot, in my own Conscience, & for my own ease of Mind, forbear it now.

It is with equal Grief & Vexation, that I now see Your Royal Highness (in Matters of Expence I mean,) totally in the Hands, & at the Mercy of Your Builder, Your Upholsterer, Your Jeweller, & Your Taylor. — I say totally, because these People act from Your Royal Highness's pretended Commands, & from their Charges there is no Appeal. I leave Mr. Lyte to account to Your Royal Highness concerning his own Feelings about the Two latter. — The Two former have neither of them been employed with any previous Consultation with me. They have undertaken, & are carrying Works through, to an enormous Amount, without a single Care or Enquiry from whence Money was to arise for their Discharge; neither my Advice, my Expostulations, nor my Representation of there being no Fund whatever for this Purpose, has been regarded. — They have thus plunged Your Royal Highness into Difficulties so great, that it has long been out of the Power of Your own Treasury to extricate You from them; & You are now driven from Necessity, & painful Necessity, to trust to Events for other means of being so. — My own Correspondence with Mr. Holland may sufficiently shew what my uniform Opinion has been on that Subject; & demonstrate, I hope to Your Royal Highness's Satisfaction, that I at least have done my Duty.

Mr. Holland's Estimate of Future Works amounted, some little time ago to £18000, which was to cover the Purchase of all Houses, &c. &c. — What he gives in at present, as included in the Paper I have now the Honour to enclose, comes to £30.250. — The Increase is a rapid one; & though additional Orders from Your Royal Highness are pleaded in extenuation of it, it still may give You to judge how little an Estimate can be depended upon.

For my own Part, I deliver in Mr. Lambert's, amounting to £35000, merely because he sends it to me, & I have no Right, & still less Inclination, to make the smallest Addition; but from my own Experience of what has passed, I have little Doubt but that the Expence to You will, at last, be greatly beyond that Sum; & if Measures are not taken very different from what have hitherto been made Use of; if Mr. Lambert is allowed *Charte-Blanche*, as he has been, & if Your Royal Highness's Orders, so constantly acknowledged to be given to him, are to supercede every Direction & Care that those much higher in Office than himself might

proper to make use of for Your Interest & Service, Your Royal Highness will find Yourself involved in fresh Distresses, the very moment after You are extricated from the present ones.

I have repeatedly had the Honour of representing the amazing Expence of Your Stables. — The last quarterly Account will show Your Royal Highness clearly, that it amounted to the quarterly Proportion of above £31,000 of Annam; double what Col. Lake thought would be sufficient sixteen Months ago. — Your Royal Highness has been pleased to express Yourself sensible of their Exorbitancy; but instead of finding (as I had found for supposing I should,) a Contraction in that Article, I discover, to my great Mortification, that the Keeping Running Horses is to enhance it beyond all kind of Calculation whatever!

I will not, Sir, conceal from You, that Your last Order, brought me by Colonel Lake, gave me equal Surprise & Concern. — I paid Obedience to them with much greater Reluctance than I ever did to any Commands of Your Royal Highness's, because I know it cannot be for Your Credit & Your Honour, that so many People should be left unpaid, as there must be by these means. Were I inclined to interest Your Royal Highness's Passions on this Subject, I could easily point to You the Distress this must occasion to Numbers. But I need only address myself to Your Justice, not to Your Compassion.

Your Royal Highness knows the whole of Your Income. — £12500 each Quarter is what You receive from Government. — That, & the precarious Supply Your Duchy of Cornwall can afford You Half yearly, is All You have to answer the Demands of Your Household for Salaries & Wages; Your Table & Living; Your Stables of each kind, with all their Expences; Your Privy Purse; Your Buildings of every sort; Your Furniture for those Buildings; All Your Trappings; & All Allowances, & Acts of Charity and Beneficence that Your very elevated Situation calls upon You to make.

How inadequate these Two Streams are to furnish so many Torrents of Expence, Your Royal Highness cannot but be as good a Judge as myself.

I humbly beg Pardon for having taken up so much of Your Time; but the Station I have the Honour of holding in Your Royal Highness's Household requires me to conceal nothing from

If I did, I should be most highly Culpable. — It is painful to
me to make a Representation to you of your Distress; it is equally
Painful to your Royal Highness to make your own Reflections
in consequence; but there is a Duty incumbent on us Both. —

I have the Honour to be with the utmost Respect.

dc. ^{er} dc. ^{er} —

Edw.

Colonel Baltham to
His Royal Highness, The
Prince of Wales. —
27th Oct. 1784.

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