

Thos. B. Clarke to H. R. H.

19245 - 6

Private

Greenwich 16 February 1812

Sir

I should not presume to intrude on your Royal Highness's attention were it not for the best, & I trust one of the most pardonable of motives, the desire of doing good. Feeling a sound conviction in my own mind that I possessed clear & incontrovertible means for such an effect, without the possibility of doing harm, I resolved to put my opinion to the severest test of its fallacy or its force. The late discussions in public & private on your Royal Highness's Claims afforded me ample opportunity. I waited therefore on a man of sound principles & strong intellect, but who, through motives of justice as he conceived, opposed your claims; because he imagined they were lost in the magnitude of your Accents & of the expence incurred for your Royal Highness's support by the Nation. I requested, he would cede two things to me; first, to hear me without interruption for ten minutes; & next, to promise that he would never quote me for the facts which I should communicate to him. Some of these facts were once submitted by me to your Royal Highness in a paper, which was drawn up without the means that have now enabled me to render it as perfect as I should wish to make it.

Thos. B. Clarke to H. P. A.

When I had finished the perusal of it, he observed, "I am not ashamed to acknowledge my errors, & I candidly confess you have made a convert of me. My opinions have been erroneous: but I had not means of getting at these Financial Statements, nor did I know where to look for these Historical facts. And I do not hesitate to say, that considering how general the misconception is on the Public mind, I think it would be but an act of common justice to the Prince's character, to make that paper as public as the day." Having thus changed the sentiments of a man who had been a foe on this point, I waited on a friend of your Royal Highness's, Lord Moira. He immediately permitted me to read the paper over with him, & his observation was, "This paper ought to be published, the facts are important & well put, and I have no doubt of its utility & good. But before it be published, it will be right, through delicacy to Mr Adam, to shew it to him. Go to him & use my name for the purpose." I waited on Mr Adam yesterday & communicated to him the subject of the paper by reading the original of the Inclosure marked N^o 1: next the manner in which the subject was treated, as stated in N^o 2: & the general conclusion resulting from the whole, as in N^o 3. The last paper is still in his possession, as I left it by omission on his table. On seeing the conclusion he expressed great surprise, & asked me if I meant that your Royal Highness had cost the Nation so much less than each of your Indecessors? I replied in the affirmative; that it was the amount on each, not on

19246

both. He expressed a desire to peruse the paper: & I agreed to read it with him instantly. After the perusal he said the facts were strong, that I viewed the subject in a totally different manner from him, & my conclusion was most important. He remarked that the State of the Nation at present differed from what it was, when I dated the Statements on this point. But it did not occur to Mr Adam that it would not be fair to bring forward the present State of the Nation, when I had for my object the Establishments formed at anterior periods for your Royal Highness & the former Princess of Wales, with a view of pointing out the immense comparative saving of above three millions in your Royal Highness's case: & in order to do this with truth & more efficacy, thought it right & judicious to shew the Faculty or State of the Nation at these precise periods when those respective Establishments were arranged by Parliament. Besides if I were to estimate the Faculty of the Nation by the Annual Supplies at present, the balance would preponderate infinitely more in our favor. But my object is an upright exposition of the subject, founded on fair authentic Documents & incontrovertible facts. Mr Adam said that the right manner to treat the subject was certainly, as I had done, without any view either to the assertion or abandonment of the Claims, & that he would speak to Lord Moira on the subject. And as he also said that he would communicate it to your Royal Highness, I feel on reflection that it is my duty to beg permission to lay this ettel before

you with profound humility. I confess however, that I wished
through motives of delicacy not to have it mentioned to your Royal
Highness. And I expressed an opinion to Mr Adam, that however
strong this paper was, I conceived its effect would be heightened still
more, if every circumstance were avoided which might seem
to give it the air of an authorised paper.

May I again by leave, Sir, to plead my motives on this occa-
sion in hope of pardon. My sole object is to do public good.
And whatever my past efforts or present views might contribute
to this purpose, my great anxiety is to evince a prompt obedi-
ence to the superior wisdom & commands of your Royal Highness.

Then the honor to be
with duty & unfeigned attachment

In your Royal Highness's
faithful devoted and
humble servant

To your Royal Highness
The Prince Regent

J. H. Clarke

MS. A. 1. 16. 1012
Clarke