

R. B. Sheridan to H.R.H.

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Barnet-Green
Dec^r 9th 1810

Sir

Allow me to express the infinite satisfaction I felt when I was apprized that your Royal Highness had been far from disapproving the line of conduct I had presumed to pursue on the last question of adjournment in the House of Commons. Indeed, Sir, I never had a moment's doubt but that your Royal Highness would graciously give me credit that I could upon that as I shall upon every other occasion while I exist, be actuated by no possible

TRADE

motive but the most sincere & unmix'd
 desire to look to your Royal Highness;
 Honor and true Interest as the first
 objects of my Political Life, directed
 as I am sure your Efforts will ever
 be to the essential interests of the
 Country and the Constitution.

To this Sense of Conduct I am prompted
 by every motive of personal Gratitude
 and confirmed in it by every opportunity
 which peculiar circumstances and long
 Experience have afforded me of judging
 of your Heart and understanding.

To the superior excellence of both, beyond
 all I believe ^{that ever} stood in a similar relation
 of rank & Power to Society I fear not
 to give my humble Testimony, because

R. B. Sheridan to H. R. A.

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I scruple not to say for myself that I have been no flatterer, and I never found that to become one was the road to your real regard.

I state thus much, because it has been under the influence of these Factions, thus warmly perhaps expressed, that I have not felt myself warranted, without any previous communication with your Royal Highness, to follow implicitly the dictates of others, however my superiors in Political Pretension, but among whom I can subscribe to no superiority in devotion of attachment or dutiful affection to your Royal Highness, or, permit me to add, as to that practical knowledge of

The Public mind and character upon which alone can be built that popular and personal estimation of your Royal Highness so necessary to the arduous situation you may so soon be called to act on these grounds I saw no Policy or consistency in unacceptably giving a general sanction to the examination of the Physicians before the Privy-Council, and then attempting on the Question of adjournment for a fortnight to hold that examination as aught, on the same grounds I have ventured to doubt the wisdom or Propriety of any endeavour, if any such endeavour has been made, to induce your Royal Highness at so

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momentous and perilous a crisis to
steer one such from the strong & high
reserved Post you had chosen, or to
give the slightest public demonstration
of any future intended political preference
either as to men or measures.

My opinion on this respect could not but
be fortified by observing the universal
admission that the rule of conduct
you appear'd to have prescribed to
yourself was precisely that which
was gaining you the general Heart,
and rendering it impracticable for
any Quarter to succeed in annexing
unworthy & unconstitutional conditions
to the Character you might be desir'd
to accept. It is possible, Sir that I

may have been guilty of great
error in judgement in both the
instances I have refer'd to, differing
as I fear I have done from those I
highly & sincerely respect, but at
the same time I feel it little presumption
to say that until better instructed
I have a strong confidence in the
justness of my own view of
the subject; and that confidence
arises from two considerations -
the first that my opinion was
not formed on a rash and impatient
party view of the subject, and
the second ^{that} in forming that opinion
I was moved by no selfish object

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or Political Purpose of my own -

In this respect I am sure your
Royal Highness will give me credit,
I abstain from Professions. -

your Royal Highness will I am
sure forgive this intrusion, and at the
same time attribute to its true nature
my having refrain'd from paying my
personal Duty to you hitherto, on
Tuesday I will attend your commands.

With the most anxious solicitude for
your present situation
but with future confidence that
you will honourably surmount all difficulties

I am with the truest
sentiments of gratitude & Devotion
your dutiful Servant
R. G. Sheridan

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M. Gordon

R. B. Thurston

Dec. 19. 1810.

To the Prince of Wales

[Faint, mostly illegible cursive handwriting covering the majority of the page]