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Col. J. McMahon b.H.R.H.

39524-5

Cheltenham, August 22^d 1798

Sir

I have had the Honor to duly receive your Royal Highness's three Letters address'd to this Place. In consequence of a paragraph I had observ'd in the True Briton of Saturday I wrote to Christie & to another quarter, previous to my receiving your Royal Highness's Command, & I have this day repeated my Application in the strongest possible language. It distressed me beyond expression, Sir, to have been prepared by a Letter from Court to expect some attack in the True Briton & Times, as various attempts has been made on the other papers to obtain the insertion of a long detail respecting your R.H. & a Mrs C. — D. B. has behaved extremely well on the occasion, & given positive orders to firmly resist every thing which may be offer'd on that head. He wrote to me immediately

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wishing to know the foundation for this Clamour; & stating the substance of those Calumnies which had endeavoured to force their way into the M. H. "Asserting that L^d E. had settled £400 a year on Mrs C. & retired in favor of a certain young Gentleman who had made another settlement of £1000 a year on the Lady & undertaken to provide for her four Children. That a House was to be taken for the Lady in the neighbourhood of Pall Mall. That she had slept at the Pavilion on Sunday Evening & that the Gentleman was to sleep on the Tuesday following at the Lady's Habitation in Hans Place" with many other little aggravations that I cannot pain your Royal Highness's generous mind with the recital of; but I have instructed Stuart & all others to be vigilant & faithful at this particular crisis.

Pardon me, Sir, for communicating anything unpleasant, but to a Heart glowing like mine with honest Love, Affection & fidelity to your Royal Highness, it cuts my very Soul to hear any thing even whispered that is not full of your Praises, Sir.

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Col. J. McMahon to H.R.H.

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& it is with real grief that I find some cursed Devils in London
 have been busy with their infernal machinations, & have been corre-
 sponding with different people here respecting this business? That
 Nasty ill tempered old fellow Mr. Bouveries' husband came here
 two days ago, & with a malicious joy detail'd out to Foly patrick
 & others a variety of circumstances about it? Middleton the
 Actor is just come, says it has been spoken of in the Green Room of
 the Little Theatre a good deal; & Stuart writes me, Sir, that a Mrs
 Glapscote of the Theatre has been very imprudently talking on the
 subject. I know, Sir (tho' a Lady here) that Mrs. F. has had
 particular Letters from Town respecting this Affair? I do not know
 how she feels upon it, but, I know that her Brother has not been
 kind in speaking of it. Condescend, Sir, I humbly implore
 you to instruct me how I am to subdue the venom of those reports
 by giving it among try'd & staunch Friends such a turn as may
 be agreeable to your pleasure, for be assur'd, Sir, that my Heart
 tells me I would cheerfully lay down my Life in the service
 of Your Royal Highness, or in any way that could promote
 your

Happiness. I lament, Sir, with most infinite concern that
Mr. F. entertains an ill opinion of me, for I am conscious that
I have never deserved it. I have always thought of her in the
properest manner, & never in my life spoke of her but in
terms of the highest respect; besides, Sir, I never was honored
with any intercourse by which she could have the most
distant knowledge of me? I know Mr. F. places me among
the particular friends of L. J. & I have been represented to her
as a strong partizan in that interest? Another instance
in which I fear I may have been unlucky is the being mentioned
as an intimate of O'Byrne whom she with reason is offended
with, but God knows she has no reason to be so with me, for I was
no Ally of his in any transaction farther than Talk & Conversation
she has declined taking lodgings, & intends to continue at the
Plough Inn during the remainder of her Three Weeks? I have paid
her every respect without being particular? In look & manner she
has been uniformly gracious & civil, but no material conversation has
happened? I have taken care to do your R. H. ample justice by a side wind thro
one or two Ladies, with whom she associates chiefly here, & there

not exist a suspicion of anything like preconcertment?
 She goes everywhere & to everything & says that her spirits
 are better than for many years, but I have reason to think
 by what has fallen from a lady of her acquaintance at times
 here, that your R. H. occupies her thoughts a vast deal.

Pardon this long intrusion, Sir, & that every blessing
 may attend your Royal Highness prays

Your faithful & Affect. Servant

John M. Mason

Colonel C. H. Callahan
Aug. 22, 1790.