

Nothing in 1799, Summary
Necessary

To Robert Smith

[? Jan 1800]

My dear Father. —

I suppose you are all so overwhelm'd in the amusements of Bath — that I shall never hear from any of you ^{again} — & if the agréments ~~[?]~~ of this place had as great charms for me our correspond^{en}ce would be at an end — What are we to do — upon the security of the Albion Mill it would not be wise to marry — & the Executors have positively refus'd to pay Miss Pybus her fortune, upon her marriage if ^{it be} not before that paid to them; I see nothing left but a suit in Chancery — What do you say to it. — upon the justice of the case there can be but one opinion. — If we are able from any arrangement to marry when I return from Scotland. — I have resolv'd not to live near London — I shall receive the younger Son of Mr Beach as a pupil — & one or two more if any ^{more} offer — but about this I am not very eager — I know no place to settle in preferable to the Environs of Bath — I can preach — obtain Masters for My pupils — have some chance for Society — & shall be near you — If I adopt this plan I shall with your permission come down to Beauchamp immediately after my marriage — return soon to Bath, & there find a house in the neighbourhood. — but these villainous Executors will disconcert all my plans — I am very well, & very happy — preach^{ing} — & Studyⁱⁿg & teaching without a moments interval of time — It is now above 4 months since I have heard any thing from India — Will you be so good as to tell me if

(? Jan 1800)

you have receiv'd any accounts — I took the liberty of sending you a barrel of herrings some time ago & hope they have been receiv'd — & that you find them good. — The administration are surely put in an awkward predicament by these Letters from Buonaparte — are they to be peremptorily rejected — why not see what he will offer ? — but what security have you in treating with him — make no peace I answer till he gives you security — if he offers bad security The people will willingly continue the war. if good why should they continue it ? — for if there be security character is of no importance. — but at all events hear what he will offer — I dislike Lord Grenvilles first reply very much — It will justify eternal Suspicion of the views of our Government in Republican France — & who shall say whether France may not remain a Republic ? — God bless you my dear Father I kiss your hands. —

Sydney Smith. --

Best love to my Mother & Maria —

[Addressed:] Robert Smith Esqr / Circus / Bath — / 25

Huntington Library microfilm.

HM 30421

Note: Britain and Austria rejected French overtures for peace on 24 Dec 1799.

22
To Robert Smith

28 Mar 1800

19. Queen Street. -- 1800 -- March -- 28 -- Friday --
Edinburgh. --

My dear father. --

I really cannot conceive what part of your letter I omitted to answer -- It was before me when I replied to you -- & I am almost certain that every part of it was noticed. -- I have not nor had not the most distant idea that you spoke of my affairs from any other motive than regard ^{to} ~~for~~ me -- & I felt -- & expressed myself very thankful for your kind offices -- I am by no means easy about the £8000 -- nor shall I be till the fortune is paid into the funds -- I have two modes of acting. -- to persuade Mrs Pybus to suffer the money vested in her name in the funds to be given up as part of her daughters ^G fortune. -- & to give her at the same time a bond of indemnification from any loss she may incur during her life time by the failure of the A M. Company -- (I mean to pay her annually any loss of interest she may sustain by such failure. -- the capital still vesting in Miss P. --) the other is to commence a Chancery suit immediately after my marriage against the Executors. I confess I lean to the first method -- I must determine speedily after my arrival in Town --

It is sad that the mine ^{has} ~~should~~ burst. -- & that the world should reform just as a worthy parson was about to profit by their iniquity -- I am about to write to Cecil, & Cortenay --

Sermons see a comment from Leydon to Heber, 24 Apr 1800, in the extracts file.

22.1

(28 Mar 1800)

I think I shall get my Sermons out by the end of April — I shall print about 100 Copies — of which I expect to sell at least half —

I shall be rather sorry to be burthen'd with old Mother Pybus from London to Devonshire — at which latter place my stay must be extremely short. as Mr B. is desirous his Son Should quit home as soon as possible — Maria & my mother will be so good as to excuse my writing to them in particular — as I am so taken up. I have not an instant of leisure from morning to night. — Pybus strenuously denies that she is either ill or abstemious — We are starving here ^s in the rest of the Island with perfect good temper. — I think these two famines coming so close upon each other will give the dying blow to our Tythes — which in a long series of plentiful ^y years might have surviv'd for another half century — Shall I call this go[od] [seal] evil or worse out of evil? — Shall I speak [as a] Statesman or a priest? — You should read the Bishop of Killal^g's narrative ^f of the proceedings of the French in their invasion of Ireland — adieu my dearest Father give my best love to M^aria & my mother, & beleive me ever yours —

S Smith —

[Addressed:] Robert Smith Esqr / Circus / Bath. — / 25 —

HM 30422

25

13
T

To Robert Smith

29 May [1800]

Cheam Epsom Surrey — Thursday — 29th May —

My dear Father. —

I arriv'd in Town Tuesday last, & if I had possess'd till this instant a single moment I could have call'd my own I would have appriz'd you of such arrival before — I found all our friends well — at least all I have yet seen — The Executors have ~~passed~~ ^{paid} the A.M. money. — & it is vested as directed in the Will of Mr Pybus. — they have rais'd lately some other objections, which I do not as yet comprehend — nor can I conjecture whether they will be able to make them good. I shall see ⁹ however Mr Drewe the Attorney on Monday in company with Bobus — & when I know you shall learn more —

I have as yet had no sort of communication with Mr Beach — but shall put him on the Subject of his Children as soon as possible. —

You will see from the date of my Letter that I am at Cheam Mrs & Miss P are quite well — tho considerably reduc'd in Flesh by vexatious Executors — However all the property now is fully secur'd — & after a week or two more of frivolous objections from the same Quarter I hope they will both get into better condition. —

We pass'd thro' a good deal of the Clothing Country of Yorkshire — & found every where the Symptoms of dreadful Searc-

25.1

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(29 May 1800)

ity, & vigorous commerce. — the poor with full employment & empty Stomachs. — the demand has been much greater in this tract of country for the 6 months past. — than in the Year preceding the War. — The manufacturers are highly enrag'd with Mr Pitt — for giving their Wool to the Irish — but the opinion of all sensible men is so thoroughly with him on this point — that the complaints of these Narrow Cloth - malcontents — will turn out to be according to the old Proverb great cry & little Wool — best love my dear Fa^{ther} to Maria & my mother — I will write to you again soon in the meantime beleive me with the truest affection & the most dutiful respect yrs

Sydney. —

[Addressed:] Robert Smith Esqr. / Circus / Bath. — / 25. —

Huntington Library microfilm. HM 30423

(27)
To Robert Smith

[21 Jun 1800]

My dear Father. —

You are angry with me for not writing tho' I have wrote to you twice & not heard a Syllable in return. — You ask me thro' the medium of Mrs Smith & John Trower about my affairs — It is utterly impossible press'd, as I am for time to give you a long & explicit history about them Suffice it to say. — they are going on entirely to mine & my Brothers Satisfaction as they would to yours — if your residence in this place gave me an opportunity of consulting you ^{upon} ~~about~~ them. — the money I told you long ago is all paid in by the Executors. — there [sic] only doubt about trans^[sic]ferring it is the consent of the residuary legatees, upon the necessity of their consent the Executors are going to ask the opinion of Counsel. There cannot be the Shadow of a doubt concerning the answer of Counsel — nor have I the smallest doubt but that the money will be convey'd to the Trustees of the marriage Settlement in 6 or 8 Weeks from this time — It is quite uncertain when we shall be married — it may be one week or 3 — our Settlements must be laid before Counsel — & our marriage will depend upon their despatch — I will bring your Grocery down if possible —

Love to my Mother & Sister & beleive me my dr Fr yrs ever —

Sydney. —

[Endorsed:] [1] 21-VI-1800 [2] Paper [illeg.] also Portmanteau
to Caroline [?]

[Addressed:] Robert Smith Esq - / Circus / Bath [Postmarked] JU 21 1800. (Miss Pi
Lcthr 21 x 169)

Huntington Library microfilm.

HM30424

To Mrs Hicks Beach

Autumn 1800

My dear Madam

When people of good breeding & education travel together they share equally the pleasures & the inconveniences of the journey, amongst the rest, in the article of sleeping rooms. Every Lady takes her share of good & bad, & sometimes she is accomodated well, & at others she yeilds to ^{her} fellow travellers the best that the Inn affords. — Nobody knows the rules of politeness better than you — & if Mrs Loveden, or Mrs ^aByrker, or any other of your respectable neighbours had been of your party — you would I think have strictly complied with them. — You uniformly through the whole of our tour put Mrs Smith in the worst room & took the best for yourself — without the smallest apology, or any one softening expression whatsoever. — Is not this to say in language too plain to be mistaken, I do not think this woman worthy of being treated with the common forms of politeness. — If there is any other interpretation to be put upon this, it has escaped my attentive consideration. My wife is of a disposition that she would not complain if she were to be placed in a dungeon — but am I to feel for her less because her disposition is amiable? I should be unworthy your notice if I thought for a moment whether my bed were ~~ever~~ good or bad or if the ~~bad~~ accomodation to which every person is exposed in travelling could for a moment ruffle my temper — but I want the consideration, & politeness — not the accomodation — I want not the thing itself, but the offer — & I want these ^u much more for my wife than myself. — I would have slept in mud [&] and water before I would in any one instance have suffered Mr Beach & yourself to take the worse accomodation — but would it have cost you much, to have shewn Mrs Smith by only once giving

Banker

(Autumn 1800)

her an opportunity of declining a choice of beds - that you thought her not an unworthy object of that good breeding which Ladies in general exercise towards one another. While many are starving in this world my dear Madam - & many are toiling, God has given you various good things, & you are blessed with ~~unruffled~~ unbounded affluence, & with unruffled ease - you are too valuable & too amiable a woman to be rendered proud by your opulence - but let me ask you - are you never rendered negligent of the feelings of others by it? are you never careless of giving pain - because you are exempted from any interested motives to consult the feelings of others. On the contrary it is ever the study of a truly Christian Spirit to soften by gentle behaviour the hard distinction of human lots & to efface that jealousy of contemptuous treatment which the little have so much to fear from the great. - Every body will ^{love} you my dear Madam if you treat them with consideration and respect - without these, you will meet with a ~~number~~ of base people who will hang upon you for their food and their drink - but no honorable spirited man or woman will or can be your friend. - I want nothing from Mr Beach or you - but that for which I toil - but I have a very great affection & respect for you both - & I wish with all my heart & soul to preserve them. - I know how easily people like Mrs Smith & myself are apt to be disregarded - unprotected as we are by the splendour of birth & fortune - & you & your ~~husband~~ husband would feel it - if you could change situations. - I am not the man to barter the respect due to me & due to my wife for any ^a ~~earthly~~ earthly consideration - she is the best of women, she has given up affluence for me, & may God Almighty curse me if ever I cease to feel for her more, & to love her better than myself. - All this ^s seems much to write about a bed - but negligence & contempt ^{my} be shewn in a thousand different ways. None but a fool can

29.2

(Autumn 1800)

quarrel with the vehicle - it is the thing conveyed ^hwhich is hateful. - You will call me selfish for clouding the good humour of a party, & not sacrificing my resentment to their entertainment - but my dear Madam there is a much more general, & ~~a~~ much better rule than that ~~which~~ this imputation includes, & that is "not to act so as to give rational cause of dissatisfaction to those with whom you travel - for it is much easier to consult the ~~feelings~~ of others than to stifle ones own ["]. -- I cannot for a moment suppose that any difference was made in this case by Mr Beach defraying the expen^se of the journey - because had I been the Paymaster, I should have thought it the most cogent reason possible for treating my companion in a different manner - nor was I a mere idle traveller at his expen^se. Myself & Wife had an object in the journey. If after all you really think I ^rcame for accomodations considered by themselves - ask your Sons Servant, if in our Journies, the most impartial justice was not preserved between me & your Son. -- I make you no apology for my resentment - because I think it wise & just - but I do apologise to you most sincerely - if I have expressed that resentment now or at any time indecently. - Farewell my dear Madam - you are little accustomed to such plain truths as this Letter contains - & yet I do not think you will hate me for telling them to you - whither you do or not - my opinion of you founded upon an acquaintance of six or 7 years, will remain invariably the same - & when I think or speak of Good women, you will be one of the first on my Lips & in my memory. - Farewell. I think it may be well to ~~drop~~ the subject entirely - my great object in writing this Letter was to ~~expl~~ain to you the cause of my dissatisfaction on our journey. -

29a

[Autumn 1800]

Note

In a note following her transcript of Sydney's letter to Michael Hicks Beach of 26 June 1800 [NCS 55], Mrs St John writes:

Here the correspondence ends for a time - there are no letters between Mr Sydney Smith's marriage in June, and October; when my Father and Mother with my brother William, went to Edinburgh accompanied by Mr and Mrs Smith. - My Mother was much surprised on the journey by Mr Smith's exceeding ill-temper - indeed for one day, he never spoke at all; she had been in the habit of travelling with friends, as well as relations, and always arranging the rooms etc. to the satisfaction of all - except Mr and Mrs Smith; certainly she was the last person to wish to provide better for herself, than for those who travelled at my Father's expence - but the idea of leaving the choice of rooms alternately to her friends certainly never occurred to her. - She always considered Mr Smith irritated to the writing of the following letters (to which I shall add my Mother's answers,) by Mrs Smith.

MS. Gordon N. Ray, St John
transcript, p. 100.

29a.1

W

[Autumn 1800]

From Mrs Hicks Beach to Sydney Smith

Your letter has not offended me, on the contrary I think you have done well in accounting for your very extraordinary behaviour^s at Bank House. But you must give me leave to contradict your assertion, for indeed you are much mistaken in supposing that Mrs Smith had always the worst bed room during our Journey: I do assure you that was far from being the case, her room was sometimes equal to mine & sometimes better. On the subject of travelling we certainly do not think exactly alike, but I forbear giving you my sentiments at large, because I am confident as your letter has not made a convert of me, mine never would convince you. However I must do myself the justice to say my good Sir that after a strict review of my past behaviour from the commencement of our acquaintance, I can fairly acquit myself of having at any time treated you or Mrs Smith with negligence or disrespect. I have ~~unfirmly~~^{uniformly} endeavoured to pay you both every proper attention, & can only add, I am sorry to find I have not succeeded better in her opinion & in yours. -

MS. Gordon N. Ray, St John transcript, p. 105.

30

To Mrs Hicks Beach

[-18 Oct 1870]

My dear Madam

I lay down this simple principle that under all the circumstances of our journey & from every principle of good breeding with which I am acquainted, a fair share of the accommodations experienced on the road ought to have been offered to Mrs Smith. If such as you say was the fact, or nearly the fact my conduct has been quite unpardonable by myself & by you. If the very reverse was the fact - as appeared to me at the time, & afterwards upon reflexion - then I have had fair right to complain. - What the facts were, we cannot agree. - I never accused you my dear Madam of intentional disrespect or neglect to me or any body - I am sure you are quite incapable of it - but I said to you in the spirit of that respect I truly feel for you, ^aask yourself if you never give pain by not attending to the feelings of people in a different situation of life from your own. ^[""] - You have involved Mrs Smith in our difference, who never complained directly or indirectly to you, & answered only such questions as I put to her. - I have spoke my mind very freely to you in my last Letter, tho' I hope neither rudely nor disrespectfully - as long as you & I continue to have any acquaintance together, I will always do so, unless you prefer that I should address myself to Mr Beach, but my idea on this subject is, that man & woman go through the quarrels indispensable to human life, ^[more] than man & man, or woman & woman. - I have perfectly forgot the whole business days ago. - If you & Mr B. mean to continue as angry with me as I can easily see you are by your last letter, - I can only say I am extremely sorry for it - & will beg you hereafter when you meet with a poor & proud man to remember this in justification of his

30.1

(18 Oct 1800)

W

faults - that the same pride which renders him perhaps litigiously jealous
of his superiors in ^ccondition, guards him from mean & dishonorable conduct in
difficult situations. - You son William is very well - his face tolerably
clear, his arm well - though I was sorry to observe how much the muscle had been
contracted by tight ligature - this we have guarded against. - His knowledge
of Latin & Greek is much greater than I had imagined, & does Mr Astley credit.
I have nothing I find to teach him in the use of Maps - he must have read a
good deal of English, because there are few difficult words with the meaning of
which he is not acquainted: his style, as far as I can judge of it from one
Essay is very fair & creditable - the progress he has made in French, consider-
able. - He wants confidence, & is so very timid, that I shall find a very
considerable difficulty in bringing him acquainted with young men of his own
age - a point of all others most important. - I hope he is now comfortable, &
have charged him to tell me his wants - if you can discover any by his Letters,
I will beg the favor of you to make me acquainted with them. Nothing can be
more amiable than his manners have hitherto been. - Mrs Smith begs her
best Compts to you, Mrs Beach, & your family, & I remain dear Madam with great
respecty^e obedient humble Servant

Sydney Smith

MS. Gordon N. Ray, St John transcripts, ^{pp} ff. 106-8.

30 a
From Mrs Hicks Beach to Sydney Smith

18 Oct 1800

My dear Sir

A few more words of the disagreeable subject of our last letters, & I hope to have done with it entirely. - You tell me if I have stated the fact or nearly the fact in my former letter, your conduct has been quite unpardonable. Now the account I gave you appears to me, as far as I am capable of judging, to be perfectly correct, & I am fully persuaded that any unprejudiced person who was to see the rooms would be of my opinion. When Mr Hicks & myself were at Matlock some years ago, we certainly chose the room you had this autumn because we thought it the best. I do not suppose you always looked at the different rooms yourself, if you had, perhaps you might have agreed with me, if you did not, as you know I generally did, why should you disbelieve me - it is not pleasant to be suspected of telling an untruth, the fault itself I abhor & hope I shall always endeavour to avoid it. According to your own way of thinking my good Sir I have some reason to be angry, altho' I am not at all inclined to consider your conduct as unpardonable. Those lines in your letter marked with Strictures I really do not comprehend. It gives us pleasure to hear that you find William a pleasant inmate in your family, & we heartily hope he will give you no cause to change your opinion. I shall certainly attend to what you say about him. Mr & Mrs Dyke with part of their family have been here almost a week; we talked of you; he thinks your excuse for not calling on him a very admissible one, & desires to be remembered to you & William. - Madam de Martheray is informed of our intentions respecting Henrietta; she received the intelligence better than I expected; we are trying to find an eligible situation for her, & hope with Mrs Chutes assistance we may succeed.

30a.1

W

(18 Oct 1800)

The ^mcommon people seem generally dissatisfied, & very much disposed to rise; there was scarcely a town of any consequence we passed through in our way home, where a riot had not lately happened on account of the high price of Provisions. Mr Hicks Beach unites me in ^oCompliments to Mrs Smith & love to William I am dear Sir your obedt Servt

Henrietta Maria Hicks Beach

Williamstrip Park

Octbr 18th 1800

MS. Gordon N. Ray, St John #transcript, pp. 108-9.

To Mrs Hicks Beach

1800

79 Queen St Edinburgh 1800 Friday Night

My dear Madam -

You have surely put a hard construction upon my last letter when you say "that I suspect you of telling an untruth". - You have said that it was your intention to give Mrs Smith as good accomodation as yourself, & that in the Selection of rooms you had this object in view - I am therefore bound to believe your intentions to have been irreproachable. I do, & did believe them to be so directly as you ~~explained~~ ^{explained} them - it is a justice I owe to every person of character in common with yourself, but I am at full liberty to say that I do not think you were very successful in evincing the obliging consideration you felt - & that the best tempered man living might from the same evidence have been betrayed into the same ~~feeling~~ jealousy which I felt, & confessed. I saw the rooms much more frequently than you imagine - Mrs Smith always, ~~except~~ the first night. - You say our rooms were better occasionally - doubtless you thought so, or you would not say it - I am only sorry that some very dissimilar mode of judging of these things, should so completely have blinded me to your civil & friendly conduct. It is some little pity that Mrs Smith in conformity with established usages, was never once offered to choose her own accomodations first - & that you never in any instance appealed to her own ideas of best & worst - this would have settled and sweetened every thing in a moment - would have convinced you of the disposition of the woman you had to deal with, & would have prevented me from misconceiving the conduct of my old & respected friends & benefactors. - The sentence you allude to in my last letter contains a very ^{ite} ~~true~~ & true opinion in morals, & has

(1800)

literally no sort of meaning but what the words obviously convey. - You say "according to my own way of thinking you have reason to be angry with me["]. - I have only to say in reply, that you will find me a most willing martyr to my own rules, whenever you chuse to make me so - & that I rather court such ^tmartrydom than avoid it. - State to me any incongruity between my practice & principles, & I will make every effort of candour to own myself wrong. - I am obliged to you for explaining to Mr Dyke the reasons of my postponed visit. I respect him too much not to be desirous of not offending him. - Pray make my apologies to Mr Beach for not having acknowledged the receipt of £500. - I presume he has received ^{the}~~the~~ note of hand. We are much obliged to you for the papers. Mr Beach I hope will command me, if he wishes implements of husbandry, or any thing else from this place. - William is extremely well. - I shall write to you towards the beginning of every month, to state to you how he goes on, presuming he will write to you in the course of the same month. Mrs Smith begs her best Compts to you & Mr Beach. I will write to Michael soon. - Will you have the goodness to remember me to my young friends Henrietta & Ann, & in the meantime my dear Madam beleive me your obedient humble Servant

Sydney Smith

33

To Mrs Hicks Beach

5 Nov 1800

79 Queen St 1800 November 5th

My dear Madam

Since I wrote to you last, William has made several acquaintance with respectable & gentlemanly young men, which I approve of extremely, & which will afford him amusement & society. - He is fatter, handsomer, & stouter than he was, & I think tolerably clear in his countenance. His arm continues quite well, & is regularly attended to by Mrs Smiths maid under my direction, if any thing extraordinary appears. - Nothing can exceed the propriety, politeness & good humour of his behaviour to every body in this house - & I can assure you he is a very great & justly a very great favorite with us all. - His French occupies him 6 hours a week, three with his master, & three without, besides learning dialogues, & saying them to me. I think he will speak French after he has been a little abroad extremely well, because he pronounces it in a manner very superior to most young men of his age, & understands such books as are not difficult, very well. - He attends a Mathematical Lecture at the College 6 days in the week, & is to attend another on Logic as often very soon. - I mean him also after Christmas to attend Mr Stewarts second class of Moral Philosophy. - We read together every night two hours or longer, as it may happen, & talk over what has been done in the day. - He writes me an Essay every week - all of which except one, have been done in a very superior manner. He is less shy than he was & we had one flood of tears the first time I spoke to him with any degree of seriousness, but upon explaining to him the difference between advice, & rebuke, & hinting to him that he was too old for this, & had outgrown it,

(5 Nov 1800)

W

it has been quite discontinued. Various articles of Clothing necessary for his proper appearance in this place have been procured, & I have blown him up to that moderate state of coxcomality about his dress, which is popular & becoming in a young man. He has had 24 Lessons of the Writing Master - these have been stopped for the present, as the College has opened, & his time would hardly suffice for their continuation. - He takes regular exercise defies the weather - is as hardy as I am from his own choice, & has not had one moment of ill health. - These details I enter into for your satisfaction. - I would really tell you the bad as well as the good - but there is no bad to tell you. - I beg to present my respects & those of Mrs Smith to all your good family, & remain my dear Madam with great respect - your obliged & obedient humble Servant

Sydney Smith

Our best regards to Mr B. -

MS. Gordon N. Ray, St John transcript, pp. 113-4. Expands NCS 56.

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as marked at
Wmstrip

34

W

To Mrs Hicks Beach

9 Nov 1800

November 9th 1800

My dear Madam —

Sol

As I consider Mr Beach as not very fond of writing, & yourself as his deputed Secretary, I presume it to be a matter of indifference whether I address myself to one, or the other. I am rather inclined upon a consideration of times & circumstances, to postpone my attempt of preaching in London for two or 3 years. Beginning thenⁿ at the period when I finished with Michael, & was ready to receive William last June, take either 2 or 3 years - If I dedⁱcate my time at this place to William for either one of those two peripds, as you may please, have I any further remuneration of any kind to expect from Mr Beach than the 200 per Annum I now receive ? We seem my dear Madam to be all so much agreed that this kind of explicit conduct is so much the most agreeable for all parties, that I should owe you rather ~~an~~ an apology for not pursuing, than pursuing it. —

I wrote to you so freely upon the subject of William last week, that I have nothing new to add. The only circumstance that gives me pain in putting this question to you, is, the panegyric upon William, & the p^learing account of our progress I have given you from time to time; but be assured, that you could hardly find any man as the guardian of your Sons education & morals, who would not be as much delighted as I have been by his good sense & his strong desire to give pleasure, & to do his duty. —

Mrs Smith is extremely well & begs her kind regards to you & Mrs~~s~~ Beach. — I remain my dear Madam with great respect

your obedⁱent humble Servant

Sydney Smith

55

To Mrs Hicks Beach

3 Dec 1800

79 Queen St - 3d December 1800

My dear Madam

I believe 200 per Annum will in addition to my own fortune nearly defray my expences in this place, & therefore if the whole question was, what William cost me by his residence in my house, there could be nothing ^d further to arrange. - You ask me to state what I ^{conceive} ~~consider~~ to be the value of my time; this is to me so new a question & so delicate a one, that I am rather embarrassed in answering it. The remuneration which the Clergy receive who may be engaged in the task of education differs with a prodigious variety of circumstances. I will however select one criterion. Mr Beach's former estimation of my services - for two years study with Michael, I received from him 730£ & all my expences were paid - & this at a time when money was of more value, & an unsettled life a less evil than it is now. To this criterion however the natural liberality of Mr Beach's temper will is an objection which I will remove. If Mr B. will continue his allowance of 200 per Ann. & give me his note of hand for 300£ June 1802 if I remain so long with his Son, or for 600£ June 1803 if I remain so long, I shall be well content. - In the case of staying the longer of these periods, I shall have given up 5 of the best years of my life to the education of your children, & shall be a richer man by about 1330£. - This ^u ~~sum~~, if sunk in an income of 9 per Cent, would ^v bring me in an income of 125£ which in recollecting the various instances of emolument derived either from money or preferment by gentlemen of my profession does not appear to ^m be exorbitant - but with which I shall be perfectly satisfied.

willis?)

(3 Dec 1800)

& deem all obligation dissolved between us - except that which I shall always owe to you & Mr Beach, for the compassion & protection I experienced at your hands in my unhappy solitude at Netheravon. - If Mr Beach shall differ with me on this offer, & should rather prefer placing William with Mr Stewart, my reluctance in parting with so truly amiable a young man, will be in some degree mitigated by the pleasure I shall have in forwarding any wish Mr B & you may entertain for the welfare of your Son. - I have had a long letter from Michael, who seems happy, & is as far as I can judge going on very well, with the exception of a cough which has recently appeared. - I know you have no high opinion of my skill in medicine, tho' on the present occasion I believe you will approve the recipe I have prescribed, which is no other than worsted stockings, & under stockings with the silk. - I am in the ~~press~~^{ess} with a second ~~vo~~^olume of Sermons, which I hope you will allow me to present to you. - In Edinburgh we are all Storm, in England, a storm is like a mild man in a passion; every body stares, & asks why. - am extremely glad to hear so good an account of the family & remain my dear Madam with great respect your obedient humble servant / Sydney Smith

[Dec 1800]

356

Mrs Hicks Beach to Sydney Smith

On the subject of William remaining longer with Mr Sydney Smith,
written by Mr Bramston corrected by my mother. [Note by ~~Lord~~ ^{Mrs} St John.]

Sr

Mr Beach agrees perfectly with you that some additional remuneration may be necessary at the expiration of the present year; at the same time he cannot but think the addition of £300 P Ann: to your present allowance of 200 for the 2 ensuing years if Wm remains with you so long rather a large sum. That he is perfectly satisfied with his continuing under his care provided it suits your convenience & does not interfere with any future plan that may tend more to your advantage you cannot have the least doubt, nor should he think of placing him under Mr Stewart except in the event of your declining any longer the care of him upon your conviction that your time might be employed more to your advantage in any other Line, & here I must take notice of one part of your Letter, the meaning of which I cannot quite comprehend. You say "In the case of staying the longer of these Periods I shall have given up 5 of the best Years of my Life to the Education of your Children". As I conceive the mode of your passing those five years to have been entirely that of Choice, that you have always been at liberty to continue or recede from that Choice, I must confess I am at some loss how to apply that Sentence. However to come to the point Mr B— is willing to pay 200£ per Ann. in addition to what you now receive, & when you consider the Expence at this time necessarily attending each of my Children's Education you must I think confess that sum to be no small one If upon Mature Reflection you are of opinion that it will not suit your purpose for William to continue with you according to Mr Beaches terms

W

35a.1

(Dec 1800)

we shall be obliged to speak to Mr Edward as soon as possible.

From
MS. Gordon N. Ray. ~~Transcript of~~ xerox of original.

✓

(36)
To Mrs Hicks Beach

28 Dec 1800

79 Queen St December 28 1800

My dear Madam --

The contents of your letter did not require that deliberation which you were so kind as to allow me to give them. I confess I had great objections to propose terms myself, because I thought it unprecedented & incorrect, but having done so in compliance with your desire, I cannot allow myself even to think of accepting any others, or to consider the question of interest when the question of decency & propriety, (which should always be prior in the order of reflexions) is so very plain & obvious. - I shall therefore in the Spring resign my charge into your hands, with that reluctance for his loss, which his charming understanding, & amiable disposition will most unfeignedly inspire. - I am surprised the quoted passage in my last letter should be considered by you as in any degree ambiguous. - I am making a calculation, & stating on one side the Services rendered, & on the other the advantages received - the first I specify to be five of the best years of my life given up to the education of your children - you ask me if it was not a matter of choice; to be sure my dear Madam it was a matter of choice on both sides - you ~~would~~ were as free to abandon me, as I was to abandon you - any body is free to leave any lucrative situation - but as long as they do not exercise that freedom, they remain entitled to remuneration. - You have always said with the most humane & generous attention to my welfare - do not let your ~~engagements~~ ^{engage}ments with us be any obstacle to your views in life - & I could prove to you plainly enough if it were worth while, how completely you abolished the possibility of using such a permission by giving it in so friendly a manner. Why should you suppose me desirous of fixing the charge

(28 Dec 1800)

of obligation upon Mr B. & you - when I have said repeatedly "my labor bestowed, & my Salary^a received, there is an end of all obligation between us upon this point["]. - Immediately upon the receipt of your letter, I waited upon Mr Stewart, & am sorry to inform you that he is completely full for a year or two - & that ~~it~~^t is wholly out of his power to receive William. - I subjoin his address if you think you can add to my solicitations, or to the very high character I gave William -

Dugald Stewart Esq Lothian House Cannongate, Ed.

Mr Stewart & myself are both considering what other eligible Situation^s this place affords - one very superior man we mean to try, but with little hope of succeeding. - I shall send you in a day or two the exact result of our deliberations & will give you a description of Mr Sandfords that you may see if you approve of his establishment. You may depend upon it, no exertions ~~of~~ of mine shall be wanting to effect your object.

In ~~the~~ meantime, as the knowledge I can have of the character of people here must necessarily be limited, it would be better perhaps to get what information you can from Baron Norton or any other friend you may have in this place.

You shall hear from me in a day or two - I have sent notice of giving up my house, & taken the usual steps preparatory to bidding adieu to this country in the Spring, & it is my intention to try my fortunes in London - & can only make you this offer, which I do with the greatest sincerity in the world, & with the most friendly disposition towards my old benefactors; If contrary to all probability, you should not meet with an eligible situation for William by the time I am settled in London, my services to superintend his education till you can succeed in placing him elsewhere, are most entirely at your disposal, & I shall conceive myself amply rewarded by the pleasure

36-2

(28 Dec 1800)

of improving so good a young man. -

Yours my dear Madam with great respect

Sydney Smith

I was perfectly surprised to hear from William the whole business of
Keevil - I am sure my Father is under very great obligation to yourself
& Mr Beach. -

MS. Gordon N. Ray, St John transcript, pp. 118-20.