Thomas Pennant to Richard Bull

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To:	Richard Bull
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Downing March 4th 1786.

Dear Sir

I sincerely congratulate you, & Mrs Luther on the great acquisition of fortune.[1] may health & every other blessing give you the full relish of it. I hope no calls from bad health in any of your family will make another retreat from the Capital necessary, for I now find your presence there no small addition to my comfort whenever I happen to visit the place. But for the uncommon severe return of winter, we should have set out in about a weeks time: now our journey is uncertain, because we dare not venture our two little ones,[2] who were to have visited town at the request of certain relations who appeared anxious to see them. Whenever I come I shall bring with me the Tours in Wales[3] & *the journey to London* to be bound. since you had your sets many additions are made which moses will be happy to execute for you: He will have done near a dozen in *the journey* since yours reached you. The man with the virgula divinatoria was taken from Agricola *de re metallica*. I thank you for Admiral Seymour. Before I bind *the journey* I shall new-write the whole account of the pictures at Hatfield[4] according to the present arrangement. This shall be printed, & the old leaves cancelled. let me honestly premise that I cannot bear every expence of collecting matter, printing these gratuitous affairs, &c &c. I shall expect those interested to go a small share & that I think my friend will not refuse. Pray send me the name of some M. P. to whom I may inclose now Sir R. M. is setting out. I will also bring up the *Introduction to the arctic Zoology* in its half binding you will see what a rich volume I have made of it: but I know you will soon beat me so zealous, & conversant are you in prints. I ~~am~~ have some where read that Aristotle lays it down as a certainty that no great attempts are wisely undertaken or successfully executed after our forty ninth year.[5] you will certainly brand me with foll~~[illegible]~~y when I tell you I am going to <u>finish</u> my *Indian Zoology* on the plan of the *arctic* at a period in which I want but <u>four months of sixty</u>. I give up the pretensions to the wisdom, but will not to the success of the attempt, unless I meet with certain external obstructions which the successful are almost sure of m~~[illegible]~~eeting. I will anticipate your idea of the archbishop of Grenada in *Gil Blas*: for I suspect that Idea will arise in your mind.[6] But why may not the be a second spring in the animal man as well as the vegetable world. Do not you think it wise at lest in ~~[illegible]~~ one who is advanced in life to approach towards the sun, & to be invigorated with its rays in a region over which it shines with fuller power than in this frozen clime?[8] Think of being made attendant in my ideal voyage along the soft shores of Iberia, till we reach the sultry Senegal; sail along the barbarous coast of Africa, double the cape, & inhale the Sabæan odors of antient arabia. be enraptured with India & its islands; & point out to you the novel beauties of the creation in all that that can be pleasing to Eye smell or taste, Happily the paper proves a ne plus,[9] but not to what [illegible] will never cease that of subscribing myself

Dear Sir
most truely & affectly yrs

Thomas Pennant

Remember me to M^r^ Burrel & M^r^ Storer.

Editorial Notes

[1] See 1052.

[2] Sarah and Thomas Pennant, junior.

[3] See 1051, n. 1, which identifies the edition being extra-illustrated at this time as *A tour in Wales* (2nd edn., 1784)

[4] For Pennant's description of portraits at Hatfield, Hertfordshire, see *The journey from Chester to London* ([1782]), pp. 403–11. It is noted on p. 411 that 'Since this account of these pictures was taken, they have been differently arranged'.

[5] Aristotle, *Rhetoric*, part 14: 'The body is in its prime from thirty to five-and-thirty; the mind about forty-nine'.

[6] Rash, vain and susceptible to flattery, the archbishop of Granada in Lesage's *Gil Blas* suffers from diminished capacities following an apoplectic fit, producing a sermon which is no better than 'a vague discourse, the rhetoric of an old professor, a mere capucinade'. Alain René Lesage, *The Adventures of Gil Blas de Santillane*, trans. Tobias Smollett (3 vols., London, 1819), II, p. 221. For Pennant's fears of emulating the archbishop and his determination to 'hang up my pen in time' lest he should do so, see his comments in the Advertisement to *Of London* (1790), p. v.[6]

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[8] Pennant describes the geographical foci of further volumes of his 'Outlines of the Globe'.

[9] Short for 'ne plus ultra', translatable here as 'command to go no further'.