Richard Bull to Thomas Pennant

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From:	Richard Bull
To:	Thomas Pennant
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Dear Sir

Northcourt, Isle of Wight, July 6. 1788

Having lost my old Housekeeper, who liv'd with me forty years, and having left a new Servant behind me in town, who sent my letters into Essex, instead of Hampshire, I have been depriv'd of the pleasure of yours till within these few days..

Forgive my stupidity If I don't construe your letter right; am I to return the letter press of England and orkney,[1] or the drawings you last sent me? I shall obey your commands in either, but I know not how to get at them, being lock'd up in my Bureau in Stratton Street, till I go next to town, which will hardly be sooner than Michaelmas, when business will call me there for a few days.

I naturally supposed they were intended for *my book*, (the drawings I mean) and have rang'd them therein, but luckily had no time to paste them in their proper places, so, if you desire it, you shall most certainly have them return'd, malgré moi,[2] and when Moses has leisure to copy them, I shall rejoice to have them back again, for my own use and benefit. I am au desespoir[3] respecting a good binder; I quarrel with Wingrave eternally, and go to others who use me worse; Lord Sandys recommended me one Walther, a German, who does well, but his prices are enormous, and his lettering not even.

I know little and care less, what is doing in London, but I have a good french correspondent, who tells me the Storm in that Country encreases, tant mieux pour nous.[4] it is very probable the Etats Generaux[5] will be conven'd e'er long, the clergy having made a remonstrance tending to hasten such a convention. all their troubles take their rise from the American war; the day of retribution is come. Mons^{r}. Necker borrow'd money, and while the Bill was not brought in, the War was popular, its aim being to distress Great Britain. now pay day is come. – the monarch, & the nation find the war cost money. – the nation dislikes parting with money, and the monarch wishes to retain his power.

The Emperor seems to be making a bad figure against the Turks.[6] the Empress is Stop'd in her career, because M^{r} Thornton will not supply her with transports. this gives one a poor opinion of Russian Force, when we see a transport monger, stopping the mighty armaments of her Hyperborean Majesty. The report is that Sweden has got together her fleet by having the money advanc'd by G. B.[7] - tis true money don't abound in that country, and as it could not come from France, it is naturally supposed it is issued by the good city of London. Foreign nations consider this country as a perfect Fortunatus's Cap;[8] put in your hand and you are sure to find an everlasting treasure. If I live to return to England, I will write again, and tell you the news of the day, in the mean time receive my thanks, for claring up every doubt respecting the Patagonians.[9] we are very gay here, Sailing matches, music meetings, ship wrecks, and

Wilkes & his daughter, who are become our neighbors. – I hope you are all well – Stet Fortuna Domus.[10] I, and mine are well, and what is better, contented and happy.

I am Dear Sir, yours very truly

Rich[d]: Bull

we have no members of Parliament here – pray respect me, for I am become a Great Grand father by the birth of Sir John Swinburne's boy. -

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Stamp: (postmark) JY 8 88

Thomas Pennant Esqr. | Downing | Flintshire

Editorial Notes

[1] Sections of '*Introduction of the Arctic World*' undergoing extra-illustration by both Pennant and Bull. See 1077, where Pennant also mentions 'a forgotten treasure of drawings relative to [Orkney]'.

[2] 'in spite of myself'.

[3] 'in despair'.

[4] 'so much the better for us'.

[5] On 19 November 1787 Louis XVI agreed to the convocation of the 'Estates-General' before 1792. The first meeting in fact took place on 5 May 1789.

[6] Austria entered an ongoing war between Russia and Turkey on 9 February 1788 and continued at war with Turkey until 1791.

[7] The Russo-Swedish War of 1788–1790 began as the Swedish open sea fleet put out to sea on 9 June 1788. Western powers, including Great Britain, lobbied for a war in the north as a means of diverting Catherine II of Russia from her successful campaign against Turkey.

[8] In the German tale of Fortunatus, popular in fifteenth- and sixteenth-century Europe, Fortunatus is given a purse containing a boundless fortune by the goddess Fortune, and steals from a sultan a hat able to transport its wearer wherever he wishes.

[9] A reference to Pennant, *Of the Patagonians*.

[10] 'Let the good fortune of the house endure'.