Richard Bull to Thomas Pennant

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From:	Richard Bull
To:	Thomas Pennant
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Dear Sir.

North Court House, Isle of Wight
August 25. 1790

I send you a few very hasty lines, because you desir'd a return of the enclos'd,[1] and because I just now happen to have a franker in the house. – I thank you much for the private engravings, and at the same moment ^that I feel myself oblig'd to you for the deep secret (which shall be buried in my breast, till you call it to resurrection) of the *new Edition of London*, I am almost ready to wish you every thing but ill, for stopping me in my carrier of finishing *that work*. I am an old man, and am fully satisfied with your old secretary; at 68 one has no loose years to throw away upon expectation; Expedition is better by half to me, than even perfection to be waited for. I wish you would have the goodness to direct m^{r}M^{r}: Hugh's to send a porter, with your *litterary life*, safely pack'd, and directed to me at M^{rs} Luthers, Lower Grosvenor Street where it will be taken care of, till my return, which may not be the case, if I direct it to be sent to my own house, because it is under a full repair, and no place lock'd up.

—— I have been used very ill by Smith the Engraver, with respect to the little head of Pitt, - the story is not worth troubling you with, tending only to prove, what you know already, that Artists, (in general I mean,) are all interested wretches, without a grain of liberality in their disposition. The Fleet lately at Spithead has made this Island very gay,, rather too much, for me, or for my pocket, for every acquaintance calls himself ones friend, when he is upon his travels, and has no better house to go to eat his toast and butter at, than yours. since the beginning of July, I have seldom had less than ten at table every day in the parlor, and so it seems likely to continue; when they write me word of their intentions to come to view the fleet, and, par bricole[2] only, to visit me, in vain I answer
– atria longa patent, sed nec cænantibus usquam
nec somno locus est[3] —— – they come for all that, and as far as my homely way of living will satisfie them, they are heartily welcome, but I put myself out of my way for no man. I think with you, that France is sinking below contempt and infamy, but how this Country has risen since its unpromissing situation a very few years back, and how good Fortune has seconded the good Intentions of our good Minister?

You and yours have the best good wishes, of me and mine and I am always, Dear Sir,
Yours with much truth

Rich^{d}: Bull

Marginalia

Endorsement in Thomas Pennant’s hand: answ[d]

Editorial Notes

[1] The enclosure is no longer present with the manuscript letter.

[2] 'tinkering; messing around; toying'.

[3] 'halls stretch at length, but there is nowhere a place to dine or to sleep'. Bull quotes from Martial, Epigram L, 'In Habentem Amœnas Ædes' ('On having a charming dwelling').