

Articles for a Treaty of Peace with Madame Brillon

Passy, July 27.

What a difference, my dear Friend, between you and me! -- You find my Faults so many as to be innumerable, while I can see but one in you; and perhaps that is the Fault of my Spectacles. -- The Fault I mean is that kind of Covetousness, by which you would engross all my Affection, and permit me none for the other amiable Ladies of your Country. You seem to imagine that it cannot be divided without being diminish'd: In which you mistake the nature of the Thing and forget the Situation in which you have plac'd and hold me. You renounce and exclude arbitrarily every thing corporal from our Amour, except such a merely civil Embrace now and then as you would permit to a country Cousin, -- what is there then remaining that I may not afford to others without a Diminution of what belongs to you? The Operations of the Mind, Esteem, Admiration, Respect, & even Affection for one Object, may be multiply'd as more Objects that merit them present themselves and yet remain the same to the first, which therefore has no room to complain of Injury. They are in their Nature as divisible as the sweet Sounds of the Forte Piano produc'd by your exquisite Skill: Twenty People may receive the same Pleasure from them, without lessening that which you kindly intend for me; and I might as reasonably require of your Friendship, that they should reach and delight no Ears but mine.

You see by this time how unjust you are in your Demands, and in the open War you declare against me if I do not comply with them. Indeed it is I that have the most Reason to complain. My poor little Boy, whom you ought methinks to have cherish'd, instead of being fat and Jolly like those in your elegant Drawings, is meagre and starv'd almost to death for want of the substantial Nourishment which you his Mother inhumanly deny him, and yet would now clip his little Wings to prevent his seeking it elsewhere! --

I fancy we shall neither of us get any thing by this War, and therefore as feeling my self the Weakest, I will do what indeed ought always to be done by the Wisest, be first in making the Propositions for Peace. That a Peace may be lasting, the Articles of the Treaty should be regulated upon the Principles of the most

perfect Equity & Reciprocity. In this View I have drawn up & offer the following,

viz. --

ARTICLE 1.

There shall be eternal Peace, Friendship & Love, between Madame B. and Mr F.

ARTICLE 2.

...In order to maintain the same inviolably, Made B. on her Part stipulates and agrees, that Mr F. shall come to her whenever she sends for him.

ART. 3.

That he shall stay with her as long as she pleases.

ART. 4.

That when he is with her, he shall be oblig'd to drink Tea, play Chess, hear Musick; or do any other thing that she requires of him.

ART. 5.

And that he shall love no other Woman but herself.

ART. 6.

And the said Mr F. on his part stipulates and agrees, that he will go away from M. B.'s whenever he pleases.

ART. 7.

That he will stay away as long as he pleases.

ART. 8.

That when he is with her, he will do what he pleases.

ART. 9.

And that he will love any other Woman as far as he finds her amiable.

Let me know what you think of these Preliminaries. To me they seem to express the true Meaning and Intention of each Party more plainly than most Treaties. -- I shall insist pretty strongly on the eighth Article, tho' without much Hope of your Consent to it; and on the ninth also, tho I despair of ever finding any other Woman that I could love with equal Tenderness: being ever, my dear dear Friend,

Yours most sincerely

1782