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Chenevix, Richard, 1774-1830

[Dresden]: [s.n.], 1804

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Dear Sir

I have no time in answering yours of the 19th Sep^r,
which has this moment reached my hands.

The paper may be delivered to the Royal Society without signature,
but the author may afterwards make himself known if he pleases; and
it is his object that the paper should be printed, then that the
truth should be known. What we principally wish from the committee
is their decision, and if they are so good as to give that, our end is so far
answered. Your opinion is that the offer will not produce the desired
effect. I will very readily acquiesce in any other method that you may
approve, if any other shall appear more likely to succeed. There is no doubt
of the metal sold by Mr Foster being Palladium. I have likewise no
doubt that there is Palladium in crude Platina, in a very small quantity;
and I will admit that ^{it} is there formed by nature. But if it were found
that the new Plant Shrovels and his seven octahedra were Palladium, it
would not prove that Palladium was a simple substance.

Nov 7

The proposal I meant for Wollaston is neither more nor less than

a wasp; and of course it never could enter my mind that the
Royal Society should in the most remote ~~remote~~ or indirect manner
have any share in the ~~disposition~~ arrangement of the terms or the
decision of the results. It is altogether a private concern; and as such
I would propose it thus. An advertisement, without ~~or name~~ name, may be
inserted in Nicholson or Philock & C, saying that if the author of
Palladium is disposed to treat upon reasonable terms, a mode will be
adopted for that purpose, and he may still keep his incognito. It is likewise
very far from my intention that either Wollertons name, or my name,
or any name of any person should appear in this. The advertisement and
the terms may be the work of an anonymous person. The remainder is private,
and is an agreement entered into by two individuals independent of
every thing, and every body. I think it not unlikely to produce the effect;
for I still think the author a person of the lower order; and I must
sincerely hope so for the credit of the science of our country. His writings
are unaffectedly illiterate. In this point of view, for my own part,
I should decline all pecuniary contributions toward the purchase of the
scant; for, if I am wrong, I shall not be sorry to purchase a little wisdom.
If, on the other hand, the R. S. should think it an object of sufficient

importance for them to interfere as a body, that is another ¹³⁵
affair. The ^{then merely} ~~sub~~ is open, and I shall ^{but} have to be admitted as a
subscriber upon the highest terms.

You may remember that I mentioned to you Ritter's experiments
with a Galvanic pile. I understand that Volta has overturned his
pile altogether. Ritter is experimenter in chief, or as they term
him empiric of the new transcendental school - I saw him repeat
his experiments and they appeared to me most convincing. Whether there

was any trick in them or not

I cannot pretend to say. I wish
that somebody would repeat them
fairly; for Volta is rather
interested in their failure.

Ritter with a large body of

professors and pupils is gone from Jena, and Bavaria is now to be enlightened
by their doctrines. It is impossible to conceive any thing so disgusting
or so humiliating for the human understanding as their dreams -

If you think that time may produce some change, perhaps it may
be as well to give another year to this affair of Palladium. I hope to
be in England by the beginning of the next winter Nov 1805, and it
will be more easy to settle things when we meet. But this I leave to
you. Believe me I am your most truly O. Chenevix



M

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Mr. M. H. Foxcroft Banker

10th Square
Fenchurch Lane & London

Mr. Foxcroft
Mar 2 1804