

Hamilton 1/4/4/9
Sunday Jan^y Jan^y 4th
1784

I have been thinking much, My
Dear Miss Hamilton, upon what passed
last night and now I will open my
mind freely to you on the subject,
and you may make use of what I write
as far as you think proper, and with
your usual prudence. In first place
there is something in the act of selling
that gives a disagreeable sensation,
particularly when the value of the
objects for sale can only be ascertained
by what the french ^{call} prix d'affection
however as the first proposal did
not come from me but from the Duchess
I shall at once make what I think
a reasonable offer to Her Grace -
The Vase, the Head of Jupiter and
my Picture of Coraggio are the
cream of all the Virtù I have ever
reposed

possessed in my life and I believe
in my conscience there do not exist three
finer specimens of the perfection of
art. I am particularly circumstanced
as to my Corregio which induces me
to part with it for I can not enjoy it
as my Lot is to live at Naples and
I get it with difficulty from thence
in spite of a Royal Mandate not to
suffer it to go out of the Country. The
Duke of Lonsenzano's family, from
whom it was purchased by me, had it
from the Collection of Christina Queen
of Sweden when she died at home,
and there is great reason to believe
that it was ^{one} of Charles I.th Collection
as in his printed Catalogue there
is mention of the Venus of Corregio
Sold by Cumwell for 3000£ and
no other picture of a Venus by Corregio
existing at present. I have been
twice offered 2000£ for this picture

picture but always declared I would
never sell it for less than 3000£. Now
if the Duchess would take the Picture
at that price I would let her have the
Vase and Jupiter for the same price
they cost me, with ^{the} Hercules head and
the little curious glass ring you
mentioned, and for which articles I
paid exactly £1079. But if her
Grace should only be inclined to take
the Antiques without the Picture
I think them worth, and should not
be tempted to part with them under
the Sum of 2000£, Nay I am very
sure I could directly get that Sum
from the Empress of Russia for the
Vase alone, but I can not bear the
thought of its going out England
now it is once safe here, for there
is not such a monument of Antiquity
in the World - The Cupid & Psyche
of the D. of Marlborough is nothing
to it

to it & Mr Betty Germaine told me often
that Cardinal Albani had offered her
4000 Lichines for that Cameo alone.
In short the fact is this I have a debt
of 3000 £ for which I am paying 5 p.c.
interest and I am still to pay Mr Byes
for the Vase having given him for it
my Bond for 1000 £ bearing interest
5 p.c. Now should the Duchepe accept
the whole of my offer there would be
a deduction of upwards of 900 £
upon what I esteem the real value of
these precious pieces separately &
which I would give up for the sake
of being free of debt at once - whether
the 3000 £ for the Cameo was paid
now or the interest paid upon my
Bond which is in the hand of Mr W.
Hamilton of Lincoln's Inn and the
Capital paid whenever it might suit
the Duchepe it would be the same, the
Duchepe would only stand in my place
as to that debt. I am convinced that

that if the Duchepe does make this
purchase Her Grace nor any of her ^{Family}
will ever be losers; for such very
Capital and well known Pieces
must always bear their full value.
Diamonds & precious Stones maybe
found at Markets but such pieces
of Art can only be purchased when
the opportunity offers of which is but
Seldom - I have now spent the whole
of my thoughts to have read it over
twice and communicate to the
Duchepe what you please, ^{or} assuring
Her Grace that whatever is done
I shall never open my lips upon the
Subject without her consent

most sincerely & affectionately
yours
Thos. St. Pierre
