

Edingurgh 8 of March 1776

Nothing can be more obliging, my Dear Lord, than your friendly Letter; and I believe also your Prescription to be good, to those whose Cure it will suit. But I need no Remedy for Looseness: For I have not had the least of it for more than a Month; and very little for several Months before. My Colics also are very slight Complaints, and come after long Intervals. My only Disorder is the strange Necessity of Coolness in the Night-time, which my Physicians pronounce to be the Effect of Want of Persperation: And for this Ailment, they have prescribed tepid Baths and Friction, which is a Regimen that is agreeable, and I think has a good Effect. But why I shoud be afflicted with Want of Persperation in the Night-time, and never throughout the day, they nor any body else has been able to inform me. The Matter might be entirely neglected, did not my visible Decrease in Size, and my sensible Decay in Strength, together with a livid, sallow Colour, announce some latent Illness, which had better be removed.¹ What makes the whole more surprizing is, that never, even in my early Youth, did I possess such strong and equal Spirits; insomuch, that, though I universally refuse all Invitations abroad, and see even little Company at home; I employ myself with as great Assiduity in Reading and literary Occupations, without ever tiring, as when I had the most natural Object of Pursuit. I have got a new Book, which pleases me very much; and I recommend it to your Lordship's Perusal: It is Gibbon's History of the Fall and Decline of the Roman Empire. It is written in a very good Style, with much Learning, great Freedom, and some Depth. The Style only, now

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then inclines to be a little, and but a little, timid. But on the whole, it is the best Book, that has been written by an Englishman in our time. I know the Author who is a Man of merit, and above the Motives of decrying his Predecessors in the same Carreer.²

I am happy to hear, that, though I cannot profit by your Lordship Prescription, it has had a very good Effect on Yourself, and has alleviated your Complaint, I am My Lord,

Your Lordship's

Most humble and most obedient Servant

David Hume

注1 ヒュームの最期の病気と死去に関する完全な顛末については次のものを見よ。『生涯』第39章。Geoffrey Hunter (ed.), "David Hume : Some Unpublished Letters, 1771-1776," *Texas Studies in Literature and Language*, II (1960), pp.136-150.

2 1776年3月18日、ヒュームのギボン宛〔の書簡〕を見よ。「私は認めます。もし私が前もって、あなたの個人的知識の巧妙さが分かっていなければ、現代のイギリス人によるこのような業績によって、私は驚愕したことでしょう」。『ヒューム書簡集』第2巻、309頁。ギボンは、この書簡が「10年間の労苦に報いて余りありました」と知らせた。