

No. 19.

"12th Feb. 1863.

"I saw Mr. Powell in Birmingham on Tuesday. He informs me that his friends at Trentham are doing all in their power to find the old camera; but he fears it will require a house-to-house search. He expects it will be found somewhere in the North of Staffordshire, nailed against a cottage chimney corner, and used as a salt-box.

"He is going to send me the very first picture he took with this same old camera. It is the only picture he has, and, singular enough, the first he ever took. When I get it, I will forward it to you."

No. 22.

"23rd May, 1863.

"One thing is certain—the Soho people manufactured pictures and sold

20 Oval Pictures in form of Medallions, viz.—

Table listing 20 oval pictures in form of medallions with prices in £ s. d. format. Includes items like 'Sir Joshua Reynolds—One Old Man' and 'Bartalotzi—An Eastern Lady'.

Inside partitions case

\* Mr. Boulton's repaired.

£14 14 0

"Sir,—Inclosed Mr. Eginton's charge for the 24 pictures sent you this afternoon in a case mark'd in the Corner thereof, 'Paintings.' The amount being £13 7s. 6d. have credited him with in our books—you will, therefore, please credit Plating Co. for this sum, and for 2/6 more being cost of Case. The inclosed invoice is a copy from Mr. Eginton's with ye addition of the 4 paintings from Mr. Boulton's stock, which he had to repair.

I am, Sir, yr. most obed. Servt.,

"JNO. HODGES.

"Soho, 22nd April, 1791."

"Handsworth, April 15th, 1791.

"Mr. Boulton, Bt. of

"Fr. Eginton

"for Order, S W L

Table listing 16 oval pictures in form of medallions with prices in £ s. d. format. Includes items like 'One Square Mechanical Painting, from West—Venus and Adonis'.

16 Oval Pictures in form of Medallions, viz.:

Finish from the dead colour and retouching Tragedy and Comedy Heads, and Melpomony, 15s.; and Thalia, 15s. Figures, 4 in all, 7/6

£13 7 6

"Sir,—In the above I have conform'd to the Order as near as the very low prices to which I was limeted would permit some alterations I have been obliged to make on that act, particularly in the four Historical square ones which should have been according to order from 15s. to 20s. instead of which you will find one pair from West at 25s. each and one pair from Angelica at 21s., each which were the lowest Historical Pictures I could send the 16 Oval or Medallion formed Pictures are of different sizes; and altho' some of them are something higher priced than what was fixed, others are lower, so that upon the average they will be nearly the price at which they were ordered.

"I hope they will meet yr

"approbation and

"am, Sir,

"Your Obed Servt,

"Fr. EGINTON."

them very extensively. I have many letters from purchasers, and from the entries in the books there must still be a great many of these pictures amongst the nobility and gentry in London, for they bought largely, and at such very low prices. I think Government had something to do with the suspension of this trade, because the person who held the secret was offered a pension, but Matthew Boulton objected to it in a letter to Lord Dartmouth, who was, I believe, Lord Chamberlain."

No. 23.

"28th May, 1863.

"I am in doubts whether we can prove much or anything from my old papers to establish the silver plates. But the picture-copying there is no doubt about.

"Eginton's name is erased in many places in the old books: all this is a mystery.

"Since I began this note, I have received your message. What can I do but send you my bundle of old papers? I cannot find anything about the silvered plates. Boulton and Eginton, I believe, alone knew the secret, and with them it died. Eginton, I believe, came to Boulton; and they perfected some copies of pictures. A painter named Barney, and another named Wilson, had these copies to paint in oil after Eginton had transferred them from the originals. If you read the letters and papers through, I think you will be of the same opinion; and these pictures were sold by way of trade to Boulton and Fothergill's customers, the same as they sold teapots or buttons.

"London, 10 July 1781.

"GENT,—We send you orders for some few Pictures, which must be painted in a much more masterly manner than the Pictures you sent as samples. They are all to be painted on canvas, the particulars on the other side—you will please to write us by return of post says the time they certainly can be got ready—& we likewise wish to know if the same subjects cannot be done on diff: sizes and shapes—suppose—Rynaldo preventing Armyna from stabbing herself—you give us the size of 50 In high by 40 Inches wide Can this same picture be done 24 In high by 30 inches wide—we shall likewise want the Vale of Tivoli, some Views of Naples & a variety of Views of Italy & likewise of other diff: Views—the sizes which best please 24 In by 30 In—you'll not delay giving us the Particulars—we cannot help thinking your prices very high—and request you'll further consider and give us another list of prices—we mean the Pictures only without the frames as those we chuse to have made ourselves—the wise men's offering must be of size ab 24 by 30.

"For Self & Co

"Yr. H. Ser.

"RICHD. CLARKE."

Table listing various pictures with prices in £ s. d. format. Includes items like '2—Telemachus at the Court of Sparta' and '2—Telemachus on his return to his mother'.

The Pictures marked x we have got here.

F. P. S.

\* Copy of a Letter to the Right Honourable the Earl of Dartmouth.

"My Lord,—A few days ago I received a letter from Sir John Dalrymple, dated Dublin, May 27, in which he surprises me by saying, 'I have written to Sir Gray Cooper to have a pension of £20 per annum for Mr. Eginton; so if there is any stop, write me of it to Scotland, and I will get it set to rights, as I know nothing but inattention can stop it.'

"As I think I cannot with propriety write to Sir Gray Cooper upon that matter, having not the honour of being known to him, and as I have never mentioned the subject to him, or any person besides your Lordship, I hope, therefore, to be pardoned for thus troubling you with my sentiments and wishes.

"In the first place, I wish to have an entire stop put to the pension, because Mr. Eginton hath no claim nor expectations. I pay him by the year, and consequently he is already paid by me for all the three or four months spent in that business; and as to an overplus reward for his secrecy, I know how to do that more effectually and with more prudence than giving him annually £20, which will only serve to keep up the remembrance of that business, and therefore it is impolitical.

"Besides, it might perhaps be injurious to me, as such a pension would tend to make him more independent of me and my manufacture.

"His attachment to me, his knowing that no use hath been made of the things, the obligation he is under to me, and his own natural caution and prudence renders me firmly persuaded that the scheme will die away in his memory, or at least will never be mentioned.

"If anybody is entitled to any pecuniary reward in this business it is myself, because I have not only bestowed some time upon it, but have actually expended in money between one and two hundred pounds, as I can readily convince your Lordship when I have the honour of seeing you at Soho; and although I was induced by to believe that I was working at the request and under the authority of a noble lord (whose wisdom and virtue I revere), yet I never intended making any charge to Government of my expenses or for my trouble.

"All that I have now to request or your Lordship is that a negative be put upon the pension.

"My lord, your lordship's most dutiful, most obliged, and most faithful, humble servant,

"M. B."