5-5-1788

John Kean to Susan Kean, May 5, 1788

John Kean

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Beaufort May 5. 1788.

Scarcely had my last letter left me ere I had the happiness of receiving my dearest Susans letter of the 10th April accompanied by six others dated in January & March - my satisfaction was very great but I cannot say complete - your sons illness & Mr R's situation awaken all my fears but let us hope the best - how unfortunate that your letters should be so determined as to arrive all at once had they have come in regular succession as my love wrote them how much more ease should I have enjoyed - one of them was inclosed in a letter from our friend St Clair he speaks very handsomely of your son & what is more flattering to me of my Susan - our dear Eliza he laments as becomes that friendship which subsisted between them.
and with that genuine sorrow which all who knew her truly must feel — you have done very right in suppressing the letter I wrote our Lewis William — it would be the severest insult to his feelings that could be possibly offered & God forbid that I ever should wound his delicacy or irritate a sensibility which has already a sufficiency of ill to bear —

I feel a satisfaction & at the same time a degree of sorrow at the appointment which you think there is a probability of his attaining — satisfaction, because it will remove him to a distance from those objects which must forever remind him of his great loss & by keeping his mind employed on other subjects alleviate his sorrow — besides it is more honorable theretive than that which he now holds — my sorrow arises from a source which your heart can better explain than any words —
I rejoice in the description of your son, may all our children have a due mixture of the good parts of both Parents both in body and mind exterior form the not necessary to happiness is attended with many advantages it serves as a letter of recommendation which disposes all around to attend to the good qualities of the heart, head and places them in the best point of view— I cannot agree with you that his hair will be red— I think it will become a light brown— perhaps nearly the colour of your own which is not quite so dark as mine— but you will remember there is a tendency to redness in my hair— for all the hair of my head is not red— yet red hairs are to be found in it & my beard is wholly red— if he but escapes the infirmities of his fathers constitution & receives no hereditary taint, I am satisfied— the natural weakness of his
nerves we must try to remedy - the cold bath & good precepts altho' it may not make a hero of him, will I hope enable him to pass through life with becoming courage & fortitude - a good heart, with less sensibility than his dear mother - a well-organised head, with less phlegm than his Father is what I pray nature may have done for him - it is all we ought to ask of heaven - the rest depends upon us & I trust that those affections which are called natural but which I observe to operate very unnaturally (in my opinion) will never so far blind us to the true interest of our offspring as to deprive them of any of those advantages which arise from instruction, let the attainment cost us what it may either in a pecuniary sense or in one more dear the deprivation of their society -