

ON PRINCE ALBERT

Queen Victoria (1819–1901) to Leopold I (1790–1865), King of Belgium

Windsor Castle, 15 October 1839

This letter will, I am sure, give you pleasure, for you have always shown and taken so warm an interest in all that concerns me. My mind is quite made up—and I told Albert this morning of it; the warm affection he showed me on learning this gave me *great* pleasure. He seems *perfection*, and I think that I have the prospect of very great happiness before. I *love* him *more* than I can say, and I shall do everything in my power to render the sacrifice he has made (for a *sacrifice* in my opinion it is) as small as I can. He seems to have a very great tact—a very necessary thing in his position. These last few days have passed like a dream to me, and I am so much bewildered by it all that I know hardly how to write; but I *do* feel *very, very* happy.

It is absolutely necessary that this determination of mine should be known to *no one* but yourself, and Uncle Ernest—till the meeting of Parliament—as it would be considered otherwise neglectful on my part not to have assembled Parliament at once to have informed them of it.... Lord Melbourne, whom I of course have consulted about the whole affair, quite approves my choice, and expresses great satisfaction at the event, which he thinks in every way highly desirable. Lord Melbourne has acted in this business, as he has always done towards me, with the greatest kindness and affection.

We also think it better, and Albert quite approves of it, that we should be married very soon after Parliament meets, about the beginning of February; and indeed, loving Albert as I do, I cannot wish it should be delayed. My feelings are a *little* changed, I must say, since last Spring, when I said I couldn't *think* of marrying for *three or four years*; but seeing Albert has changed all this.

Pray, dearest Uncle, forward these two letters to Uncle Ernest (to whom I beg you will enjoin *strict* secrecy, and explain these details, which I have not time to do) and to faithful Stockmar.

I think you might tell Louise of it, but none of her family. I should wish to keep the dear young gentlemen here till the end of next month. Ernest's sincere pleasure gave me great delight. He does so adore dearest Albert.

Arthur Christopher Benson, ed. *The Letters of Queen Victoria* (London: 1908), I:188–189.