

Letters of Horace Walpole

Volume I

Horace Walpole

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LETTERS

OF

HORACE WALPOLE

SELECTED AND EDITED BY

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AUTHOR OF "THE HISTORY OF FRANCE UNDER THE BOURBONS," "A LIFE OF MARIE ANTOINETTE," ETC., ETC.

WITH PORTRAITS AND ILLUSTRATIONS

VOLUME I

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MDCCCXC

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INTRODUCTION.

It is creditable to our English nobility, and a feature in their character that distinguishes them from their fellows of most other nations, that, from the first revival of learning, the study of literature has been extensively cultivated by men of high birth, even by many who did not require literary fame to secure them a lasting remembrance; and they have not contented themselves with showing their appreciation of intellectual excellence by their patronage of humbler scholars, but have themselves afforded examples to other labourers in the hive, taking upon themselves the toils, and earning no small nor undeserved share of the honours of authorship. The very earliest of our poets, Chaucer, must have been a man of gentle birth, since he was employed on embassies of importance, and was married to the daughter of a French knight of distinction, and sister of the Duchess of Lancaster. The long civil wars of the fifteenth century prevented his having any immediate followers; but the sixteenth opened more propitiously. The conqueror of Flodden was also "Surrey of the deathless lay";[1] and from his time to the present day there is hardly a break in the long line of authors who have shown their feeling that noble birth and high position are no excuses for idleness, but that the highest rank gains additional illustration when it is shown to be united with brilliant talents worthily exercised. The earliest of our tragic poets was Sackville Earl of Dorset. The preux chevalier of Elizabeth's Court, the accomplished and high-minded Sidney, took up the lyre of Surrey: Lord St. Albans, more generally known by his family name of Bacon, "took all learning for his province"; and, though peaceful studies were again for a while rudely interrupted by the "dark deeds of horrid war," the restoration of

peace was, as it had been before, a signal for the resumption of their studies by many of the best-born of the land. Another Earl of Dorset displayed his hereditary talent not less than his martial gallantry. Lord Roscommon well deserved the praises which Dryden and Pope, after his death, liberally bestowed. The great Lord Chancellor Clarendon devoted his declining years to a work of a grander class, leaving us a History which will endure as long as the language itself; while ladies of the very highest rank, the Duchess of Newcastle and Lady Mary Wortley Montague, vindicated the claims of their sex to share with their brethren the honours of poetical fame.

[Footnote 1: "Lay of the Last Minstrel," vi. 14.]

Among this noble and accomplished brotherhood the author of these letters is by general consent allowed to be entitled to no low place. Horace Walpole, born in the autumn of 1717, was the youngest son of that wise minister, Sir Robert Walpole, who, though, as Burke afterwards described him, "not a genius of the first class," yet by his adoption of, and resolute adherence to a policy of peace throughout the greater part of his administration, in which he was fortunately assisted by the concurrence of Fleury of France, contributed in no slight degree to the permanent establishment of the present dynasty on the throne. He received his education at the greatest of English schools, Eton, to which throughout his life he preserved a warm attachment; and where he gave a strong indication of his preference for peaceful studies and his judicious appreciation of intellectual ability, by selecting as his most intimate friend Thomas Gray, hereafter to achieve a poetical immortality by the Bard and the Elegy. From Eton they both went to Cambridge, and, when they quitted the University, in 1738, joined in a travelling tour through France and Italy. They continued companions for something more than two years; but at the end of that time they separated, and in the spring of 1741 Gray returned to England. The cause of their parting was never distinctly avowed; Walpole took the blame, if blame there was, on himself; but, in fact, it probably lay in an innate difference of disposition, and consequently of object. Walpole being fond of society, and, from his position as the Minister's son, naturally courted by many of the chief men in the different cities which they visited; while Gray was of a reserved character shunning the notice of strangers, and fixing his attention on more serious subjects than Walpole found attractive.

In the autumn of the same year Walpole himself returned home. He had become a member of Parliament at the General Election in the summer, and took his seat just in time to bear a part in the fierce contest which terminated in the dissolution of his father's Ministry. His maiden speech, almost the only one he ever made, was in defence of the character and policy of his father, who was no longer in the House of Commons to defend himself.[1] And the result of the conflict made no slight impression on his mind; but gave a colour to all his political views.

He began almost immediately to come forward as an author: not, however, as--

Obliged by hunger and request of friends;

for in his circumstances he was independent, and even opulent; but seeking to avenge his father by squibs on Mr. Pulteney (now Lord Bath), as having been the leader of the attacks on him, and on the new Ministry which had succeeded him. In one respect that age was a happy one for ministers and all connected with them. Pensions and preferments were distributed with a lavish hand; and, even while he was a schoolboy, he had received more than one "patent place," as such were called, in the Exchequer, to which before his father's resignation others were added, which after a time raised his income to above £5,000 a year, a fortune which in those times was exceeded by comparatively few, even of those

regarded as wealthy. So rich, indeed, was he, that before he was thirty he was able to buy Strawberry Hill, "a small house near Twickenham," as he describes it at first, but which he gradually enlarged and embellished till it grew into something of a baronial castle on a small scale, somewhat as, under the affectionate diligence of a greater man, Abbotsford in the present century became one of the lions of the Tweed.

[Footnote 1: The speech was made March 23, 1742; but Sir Robert had resigned office, and been created Earl of Orford in the February preceding.]

From this time forth literary composition, with the acquisition of antiques and curiosities for the decoration of "Strawberry" occupied the greater part of his life. He erected a printing press, publishing not only most of his own writings, but some also of other authors, such as poems of Gray, with whom he kept up uninterrupted intercourse. But, in fact, his own works were sufficiently numerous to keep his printers fully employed. He was among the most voluminous writers of a voluminous age. In the course of the next twenty years he published seven volumes of memoirs of the last ten years of the reign of George II. and the first ten of George III.; five volumes of a work entitled "Royal and Noble Authors;" several more of "Anecdotes of Painting;" "The Mysterious Mother," a tragedy; "The Castle of Otranto," a romance; and a small volume to which he gave the name of "Historic Doubts on Richard III." Of all these not one is devoid of merit. He more than once explains that the "Memoirs" have no claim to the more respectable title of "History"; and he apologises for introducing anecdotes which might be thought inconsistent with what Macaulay brands as "a vile phrase," the dignity of history. He excuses this, which he looked on as a new feature in historical composition, on the ground that, if trifles, "they are trifles relating to considerable people; such as all curious people have ever loved to read." "Such trifles," he says, "are valued, if relating to any reign one hundred and fifty years ago; and, if his book should live so long, these too might become acceptable." Readers of the present day will not think such apology was needed. The value of his "trifles" has been proved in a much shorter time; for there is no subsequent historian of that period who has not been indebted to him for many particulars of which no other trustworthy record existed. Walpole had in a great degree a historical mind; and perhaps there are few works which show a keener critical insight into the value of old traditions than the "Historic Doubts," directed to establish, not, indeed, Richard's innocence of the crimes charged against him, but the fact that, with respect to many of them, his guilt has never been proved by any evidence which is not open to the gravest impeachment. His "Royal and Noble Authors," and his "Anecdotes of Painting" are full of entertainment, not unmixed with instruction. "The Mysterious Mother" was never performed on the stage, nor is it calculated for representation; since he himself admits that the subject is disgusting. But dramas not intended for representation, and which therefore should perhaps be more fitly called dramatic poems, were a species of composition to which more than one writer of reputation had lately begun to turn their attention; though dramas not designed for the stage seem to most readers defective in their very conception, as lacking the stimulus which the intention of submitting them to the extemporaneous ocular judgement of the public can alone impart. Among such works, however, "The Mysterious Mother" is admitted to rank high for vigorous description and poetic imagery. A greater popularity, which even at the present day has not wholly passed away, since it is still occasionally reprinted, was achieved by "The Castle of Otranto," which, as he explains it in one of his letters, owed its origin to a dream. Novels had been a branch of literature which had slumbered for several years after the death of Defoe, but which the genius of Fielding and Smollett had again brought into fashion. But their tales purported to be pictures of the manners of the day. This was rather the forerunner of Mrs. Radcliffe's[1] weird tales of supernatural mystery, which for a time so engrossed the public attention as to lead

that "wicked wag," Mr. George Coleman, to regard them as representatives of the class, and to describe how--

A novel now is nothing more
Than an old castle and a creaking door;
A distant hovel;
Clanking of chains, a gallery, a light,
Old armour, and a phantom all in white,
And there's a novel.

[Footnote 1: "'The Castle of Otranto' was the father of that marvellous series which once overstocked the circulating library, and closed with Mrs. Radcliffe."--D'Israeli, "Curiosities of Literature," ii. 115.]

He had published it anonymously as a tale that had been found in the library of an ancient family in the North of England; but it was not indebted solely to the mystery of its authorship for its favourable reception--since, after he acknowledged it as his own work in a second edition, the sale did not fall off. And it deserved success, for, though the day had passed when even the most credulous could place any faith in swords that required a hundred men to lift, and helmets which could only fit the champion whose single strength could wield such a weapon, the style was lively and attractive, and the dialogue was eminently dramatic and sparkling.

But the interest of all these works has passed away. The "Memoirs" have served their turn as a guide and aid to more regular historians, and the composition which still keeps its author's fame alive is his Correspondence with some of his numerous friends, male and female, in England or abroad, which he maintained with an assiduity which showed how pleasurable he found the task, while the care with which he secured the preservation of his letters, begging his correspondents to retain them, in case at any future time he should desire their return, proves that he anticipated the possibility that they might hereafter be found interesting by other readers than to those to whom they were addressed.

But he did not suffer either his writings or the enrichment of "Strawberry" with antiquarian treasures to engross the whole of his attention. For the first thirty years and more of his public life he was a zealous politician. And it is no slight proof how high was the reputation for sagacity and soundness of judgement which he enjoyed, that in the ministerial difficulties caused by Lord Chatham's illness, he was consulted by the leaders of more than one section of the Whig party, by Conway, the Duke of Bedford, the Duke of Grafton, Lord Holland, and others; that his advice more than once influenced their determinations; and that he himself drew more than one of the letters which passed between them. Even the King himself was not ignorant of the weight he had in their counsels, and, on one occasion at least, condescended to avail himself of it for a solution of some of the embarrassments with which their negotiations were beset.

But after a time his attendance in Parliament, which had never been very regular, grew wearisome and distasteful to him. At the General Election of 1768 he declined to offer himself again as a candidate for Lynn, which he had represented for several years. And henceforth his mornings were chiefly occupied with literature; the continuation of his Memoirs; discussion of literary subjects with Gibbon, Voltaire, Mason, and others, while his evenings were passed in the society of his friends, a mode of enjoying his time in which he was eminently calculated to shine, since abundant testimony has come down to us from many competent judges of the charm of his conversation; the liveliness of his disposition acting as a most attractive frame to the extent and variety of his information.

Among his distractions were his visits to France, which for some time

were frequent. He had formed a somewhat singular intimacy with a blind old lady, the Marquise du Deffand, a lady whose character in her youth had been something less than doubtful, since she had been one of the Regent Duc d'Orleans's numerous mistresses; but who had retained in her old age much of the worldly acuteness and lively wit with which she had borne her part in that clever, shameless society. Her _salon_ was now the resort of many personages of the highest distinction, even of ladies themselves of the most unstained reputation, such as the Duchesse de Choiseul; and the rumours or opinions which he heard in their company enabled him to enrich his letters to his friends at home with comments on the conduct of the French Parliament, of Maupeou, Maurepas, Turgot, and the King himself, which, in many instances, attest the shrewdness with which he estimated the real bearing of the events which were taking place, and anticipated the possible character of some of those which were not unlikely to ensue.

Thus, with a mind which, to the end, was so active and so happily constituted as to be able to take an interest in everything around him, and, even when more than seventy years old, to make new friends to replace those who had dropped off, he passed a long, a happy, and far from an useless life. When he was seventy-four he succeeded to his father's peerage, on the death of his elder brother; but he did not long enjoy the title, by which, indeed, he was not very careful to be distinguished, and in the spring of 1797 he died, within a few months of his eightieth birthday.

A great writer of the last generation, whose studies were of a severer cast, and who, conscious perhaps of his own unfitness to shine at the tea-table of fashionable ladies, was led by that feeling to undervalue the lighter social gifts which formed conspicuous ingredients in Walpole's character, has denounced him not only as frivolous in his tastes, but scarcely above mediocrity in his abilities (a sentence to which Scott's description of him as "a man of great genius" may be successfully opposed); and is especially severe on what he terms his affectation in disclaiming the compliments bestowed on his learning by some of his friends. The expressed estimate of his acquirements and works which so offended Lord Macaulay was that "there is nobody so superficial, that, except a little history, a little poetry, a little painting, and some divinity, he knew nothing; he had always lived in the busy world; had always loved pleasure; played loo till two or three in the morning; haunted auctions—in short, did not know so much astronomy as would carry him to Knightsbridge; not more physic than a physician; nor, in short, anything that is called science. If it were not that he laid up a little provision in summer, like the ant, he should be as ignorant as the people he lived with."^[1] In Lord Macaulay's view, Walpole was never less sincere than when pronouncing such a judgement on his works. He sees in it nothing but an affectation, fishing for further praises; and, fastening on his account of his ordinary occupations, he pronounces that a man of fifty should be ashamed of playing loo till after midnight.

[Footnote 1: Letter to Mann, Feb. 6, 1760.]

In spite, however, of Lord Macaulay's reproof, something may be said in favour of a man who, after giving his mornings to works which display no little industry as well as talent, unbent his bow in the evening at lively supper-parties, or even at the card-table with fair friends, where the play never degenerated into gambling. And his disparagement of his learning, which Lord Macaulay ridicules as affectation, a more candid judgement may fairly ascribe to sincere modesty. For it is plain from many other passages in his letters, that he really did undervalue his own writings; and that the feeling which he thus expressed was genuine is to a great extent proved by the patience, if not thankfulness, with which he allowed his friend Mann to alter passages in "The Mysterious Mother," and confessed the alterations to be

improvements. It may be added that Lord Macaulay's disparagement of his judgement and his taste is not altogether consistent with his admission that Walpole's writings possessed an "irresistible charm" that "no man who has written so much is so seldom tiresome;" that, even in "The Castle of Otranto," which he ridicules, "the story never flags for a moment," and, what is more to our present purpose, he adds that "his letters are with reason considered his best performance;" and that those to his friend at Florence, Sir H. Mann, "contain much information concerning the history of that time: the portion of English History of which common readers know the least."

Of these letters it remains for us now to speak. The value of such *pour servir*, to borrow a French expression, that is to say, to serve as materials to supply the historian of a nation or an age with an acquaintance with events, or persons, or manners, which would be sought for in vain among Parliamentary records, or ministerial despatches, has long been recognised.[1] Two thousand years ago, those of the greatest of Roman orators and statesmen were carefully preserved; and modern editors do not fear to claim for them a place "among the most valuable of all the remains of Roman literature; the specimens which they give of familiar intercourse, and of the public and private manners of society, drawing up for us the curtain from scenes of immense historical interest, and laying open the secret workings, the complications, and schemes of a great revolution period." [2] Such a description is singularly applicable to the letters of Walpole; and the care which he took for their preservation shows that he was not without a hope that they also would be regarded as interesting and valuable by future generations. He praises one of his correspondents for his diligence in collecting and publishing a volume of letters belonging to the reigns of James I. and Charles I., on the express ground that "nothing gives so just an idea of an age as genuine letters; nay, history waits for its last seal from them." And it is not too much to say that they are superior to journals and diaries as a mine to be worked by the judicious historian; while to the general public they will always be more attractive, from the scope they afford to elegance of style, at which the diary-keeper does not aim; and likewise from their frequently recording curious incidents, fashions, good sayings, and other things which, from their apparently trifling character, the grave diarist would not think worth preserving.

[Footnote 1: D'Israeli has remarked that "the *gossiping* of a profound politician, or a vivacious observer, in one of their letters, often by a spontaneous stroke reveals the individual, or by a simple incident unriddles a mysterious event;" and proceeds to quote Bolingbroke's estimate of the importance, from this point of view, of "that valuable collection of Cardinal d'Ossat's Memoirs" ("Curiosities of Literature," iii. p. 381).]

[Footnote 2: The Rev. J.E. Yonge, Preface to an edition of "Cicero's Letters."]

He, however, was not the first among the moderns to achieve a reputation by his correspondence. In the generation before his birth, a French lady, Madame de Sevigne, had, with an affectionate industry, found her chief occupation and pleasure in keeping her daughters in the provinces fully acquainted with every event which interested or entertained Louis XIV. and his obsequious Court; and in the first years of the eighteenth century a noble English lady, whom we have already mentioned, did in like manner devote no small portion of her time to recording, for the amusement and information of her daughter, her sister, and her other friends at home, the various scenes and occurrences that came under her own notice in the foreign countries in which for many years her lot was cast, as the wife of an ambassador. In liveliness of style, Lady Mary Montague is little if at all inferior to her French prototype; while, since she was endowed with far more brilliant talents, and, from her

foreign travels, had a wider range of observation, her letters have a far greater interest than could attach to those of a writer, however accomplished and sagacious, whose world was Paris, with bounds scarcely extending beyond Versailles on one side, and Compiègne on the other. To these fair and lively ladies Walpole was now to succeed as a third candidate for epistolary fame; though, with his habit of underrating his own talents, he never aspired to equal the gay Frenchwoman; (the English lady's correspondence was as yet unknown). There is evident sincerity in his reproof of one of his correspondents who had expressed a most flattering opinion: "You say such extravagant things of my letters, which are nothing but gossiping gazettes, that I cannot bear it; you have undone yourself with me, for you compare them to Madame de Sevigné's. Absolute treason! Do you know there is scarcely a book in the world I love so much as her letters?"

Yet critics who should place him on an equality with her would not be without plausible grounds for their judgement. Many circumstances contributed to qualify him in a very special degree for the task which, looking at his letters in that light, he may be said to have undertaken. His birth, as the son of a great minister; his comparative opulence; even the indolent insignificance of his elder brothers, which caused him to be looked upon as his father's representative, and as such to be consulted by those who considered themselves as the heirs of his policy, while the leader of that party in the House of Commons, General Conway, was his cousin, and the man for whom he ever felt the strongest personal attachment,—were all advantages which fell to the lot of but few. And to these may be added the variety of his tastes, as attested by the variety of his published works. He was a man who observed everything, who took an interest in everything. His correspondents, too, were so various and different as to ensure a variety in his letters. Some were politicians, ministers at home, or envoys abroad; some were female leaders of fashion, planning balls and masquerades, summoning him to join an expedition to Ranelagh or Vauxhall; others were scholars, poets, or critics, inviting comments on Gray's poems, on Robertson's style, on Gibbon's boundless learning; or on the impostures of Macpherson and Chatterton; others, again, were antiquarians, to whom the helmet of Francis, or a pouncet-box of the fair Diana, were objects of far greater interest than the intrigues of a Secretary of State, or the expedients of a Chancellor of the Exchequer; and all such subjects are discussed by him with evidently equal willingness, equal clearness, and liveliness.

It would not be fair to regard as a deduction from the value of those letters which bear on the politics of the day the necessity of confessing that they are not devoid of partiality—that they are coloured with his own views, both of measures and persons. Not only were political prejudices forced upon him by the peculiarities of his position, but it may be doubted whether any one ever has written, or can write, of transactions of national importance which are passing under his own eyes, as it were, with absolute impartiality. It may even be a question whether, if any one did so, it would not detract from his own character, at least as much as it might add to the value of his writings. In one of his letters, Byron enumerates among the merits of Mitford's "History of Greece," "wrath and partiality," explaining that such ingredients make a man write "in earnest." And, in Walpole's case, the dislike which he naturally felt towards those who had overthrown his father's administration by what, at a later day, they themselves admitted to have been a factious and blamable opposition, was sharpened by his friendship for his cousin Conway. At the same time we may remark in passing that his opinions and prejudices were not so invincible as to blind him to real genius and eminent public services; and the admirers of Lord Chatham may fairly draw an argument in favour of his policy from Walpole's admission of its value in raising the spirit of the people; an admission which, it may be supposed, it must have gone against his grain to make in favour of a follower of Pulteney.

But from his letters on other topics, on literature and art, no such deduction has to be made. His judgement was generally sound and discriminating. He could appreciate the vast learning and stately grandiloquence of Gibbon, and the widely different style of Robertson. Nor is it greatly to his discredit that his disgust at what he considers Hume's needless parade of scepticism and infidelity, which did honour to his heart, blinded him in a great degree to the historian's unsurpassed acuteness and insight, and (to borrow the eulogy of Gibbon) "the careless inimitable felicities" of his narrative. He was among the first to recognize the peculiar genius of Crabbe, and to detect the impostures of Macpherson and Chatterton, while doing full justice to "the astonishing prematurity" of the latter's genius. And in matters of art, so independent as well as correct was his taste, that he not only, in one instance, ventured to differ from Reynolds, but also proved to be right in his opinion that a work extolled by Sir Joshua, was but a copy, and a poor one.

On his qualifications to be a painter of the way of life, habits, and manners (*_quorum pars magna fuit_*) of the higher classes in his day, it would be superfluous to dwell. Scott, who was by no means a warm admirer of his character, does not hesitate to pronounce him "certainly the best letter-writer in the English language;" and the great poet who, next to Scott, holds the highest place in the literary history of the last two centuries, adds his testimony not only to the excellence of his letters, but also to his general ability as that of a high order. "It is the fashion to underrate Horace Walpole, firstly, because he was a nobleman, and, secondly, because he was a gentleman; but, to say nothing of the composition of his incomparable letters and of 'The Castle of Otranto,' he is the 'Ultimus Romanorum,' the author of 'The Mysterious Mother,' a tragedy of the highest order, and not a puling love-play. He is the father of the first romance, and the last tragedy in our language; and surely worthy of a higher place than any living writer, be he who he may."^[1]

[Footnote 1: Byron, Preface to "Marino Faliero." But in the last sentence the poet certainly exaggerated his admiration for Walpole; since it is sufficiently notorious from his own letters, and from more than one passage in his works, as where he ranks Scott as second to Shakespeare alone, that he deservedly admired him more than all their contemporaries put together.]

And it seems not unnatural to entertain a hope that a selection from a correspondence which extorted such an eulogy from men whose own letters form no small part of the attraction of Lockhart's and Moore's biographies, will be acceptable to many who, while lacking courage, or perhaps leisure, to grapple with publications in many volumes, may welcome the opportunity thus here afforded them of forming an acquaintance, however partial, with works which, in their entire body, are deservedly reckoned among the masterpieces of our literature.^[1]

[Footnote 1: It may be proper to point out that, in some few instances, a letter is not given in its entirety; but, as in familiar correspondence, it must constantly happen that, while the incidents mentioned in one portion of a letter are full of interest, of others--such as marriages, deaths, &c.--the importance is of the most temporary and transitory character. It may be hoped that the liberty taken of leaving out such portions will be regarded as, if not commendable, at the least excusable.]

A SELECTION

FROM THE

LETTERS OF HORACE WALPOLE.

MARRIAGE OF THE PRINCESS OF WALES--VERY LIVELY.[1]

[Footnote 1: This letter, written before he was nineteen, is worth noticing as a proof how innate was his liveliness of style, since in that respect few of the productions of his maturer age surpasses it. It also shows how strong already was his expectations that his letters would hereafter be regarded as interesting and valuable.]

TO GEORGE MONTAGU, ESQ.[1]

[Footnote 1: George Montagu, Esq., of Roel, in the county of Gloucester, son of Brigadier-General Edward Montagu, and long M.P. for Northampton. He was the grandnephew of the first Earl of Halifax of the Montagu family, the statesman and poet, and was the contemporary at Eton of Walpole and Gray. When his cousin, the Earl of Halifax, was Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland, he was his secretary; and when Lord North was Chancellor of the Exchequer, he occupied the same position with him. He died May 10, 1780, leaving the bulk of his fortune to Lord North. Walpole's letters to him, 272 in number, and dating between 1736 and **1770, were first published in 1818, "from the Originals in the possession of the Editor."** There was a coolness between Walpole and Montagu several years before the latter's death, the correspondence dropping very abruptly. The cause is explained by Walpole in a letter to Cole, dated May 11, 1780. Mr. Montagu's brother, Edward, was killed at Fontenoy. His sister, Arabella, was married to a Mr. Wetenhall--a relation of the Wetenhall mentioned in De Grammont. "Of Mr. Montagu, it is only remembered that he was a gentleman-like body of the *vieille cour*, and that he was usually attended by his brother John (the Little John of Walpole's correspondence), who was a midshipman at the age of sixty, and found his chief occupation in carrying about his brother's snuff-box" (*Quarterly Rev.* for *April*, 1818, p. 131).]

KING'S COLLEGE, *May* 2, 1736.

Dear Sir,--Unless I were to be married myself, I should despair ever being able to describe a wedding so well as you have done: had I known your talent before, I would have desired an epithalamium. I believe the Princess[1] will have more beauties bestowed on her by the occasional poets, than even a painter would afford her. They will cook up a new Pandora, and in the bottom of the box enclose Hope, that all they have said is true. A great many, out of excess of good breeding, having heard it was rude to talk Latin before women, propose complimenting her in English; which she will be much the better for. I doubt most of them, instead of fearing their compositions should not be understood, should fear they should: they write they don't know what, to be read by they don't know who. You have made me a very unreasonable request, which I will answer with another as extraordinary: you desire I would burn your letters: I desire you would keep mine. I know but of one way of making what I send you useful, which is, by sending you a blank sheet: sure you would not grudge threepence for a halfpenny sheet, when you give as much for one not worth a farthing. You drew this last paragraph on you by your exordium, as you call it, and conclusion. I hope, for the future, our correspondence will run a little more glibly, with dear George, and dear Harry [Conway]; not as formally as if we were playing a game at chess in Spain and Portugal; and Don Horatio was to have the honour of specifying to Don Georgio, by an epistle, whither he would move. In one point I would have our correspondence like a game at chess; it should last all our lives--but I hear you cry check; adieu!

Dear George, yours ever.

[Footnote 1: Augusta, younger daughter of Frederic II., Duke of Saxe-Gotha, married (27th April, 1736) to Frederick, Prince of Wales, father of George III.

In 1736, I wrote a copy of Latin verses, published in the "Gratulatio Acad. Cantab.," on the marriage of Frederick, Prince of Wales.--_Walpole_ (_Short Notes_.)]

FONDNESS FOR OLD STORIES--REMINISCENCES OF ETON, ETC.

TO GEORGE MONTAGU, ESQ.

KING'S COLLEGE, _May_ 6, 1736.

Dear George,--I agree with you entirely in the pleasure you take in talking over old stories, but can't say but I meet every day with new circumstances, which will be still more pleasure to me to recollect. I think at our age 'tis excess of joy, to think, while we are running over past happinesses, that it is still in our power to enjoy as great. Narrations of the greatest actions of other people are tedious in comparison of the serious trifles that every man can call to mind of himself while he was learning those histories. Youthful passages of life are the chippings of Pitt's diamond, set into little heart-rings with mottoes; the stone itself more worth, the filings more gentle and agreeable.--Alexander, at the head of the world, never tasted the true pleasure that boys of his own age have enjoyed at the head of a school. Little intrigues, little schemes, and policies engage their thoughts; and, at the same time that they are laying the foundation for their middle age of life, the mimic republic they live in furnishes materials of conversation for their latter age; and old men cannot be said to be children a second time with greater truth from any one cause, than their living over again their childhood in imagination. To reflect on the season when first they felt the titillation of love, the budding passions, and the first dear object of their wishes! how unexperienced they gave credit to all the tales of romantic loves! Dear George, were not the playing fields at Eton food for all manner of flights? No old maid's gown, though it had been tormented into all the fashions from King James to King George, ever underwent so many transformations as those poor plains have in my idea. At first I was contented with tending a visionary flock, and sighing some pastoral name to the echo of the cascade under the bridge. How happy should I have been to have had a kingdom only for the pleasure of being driven from it, and living disguised in an humble vale! As I got further into Virgil and Clelia, I found myself transported from Arcadia to the garden of Italy; and saw Windsor Castle in no other view than the _Capitoli immobile saxum_. I wish a committee of the House of Commons may ever seem to be the senate; or a bill appear half so agreeable as a billet-doux. You see how deep you have carried me into old stories; I write of them with pleasure, but shall talk of them with more to you. I can't say I am sorry I was never quite a schoolboy: an expedition against bargemen, or a match at cricket, may be very pretty things to recollect; but, thank my stars, I can remember things that are very near as pretty. The beginning of my Roman history was spent in the asylum, or conversing in Egeria's hallowed grove; not in thumping and pummelling king Amulius's herdsmen. I was sometimes troubled with a rough creature or two from the plough; one, that one should have thought, had worked with his head, as well as his hands, they were both so callous. One of the most agreeable circumstances I can recollect is the Triumvirate, composed of yourself, Charles, and

Your sincere friend.

_WISH TO TRAVEL--SUPERIORITY OF FRENCH MANNERS TO ENGLISH IN THEIR

MANNER TO LADIES._

TO GEORGE MONTAGU, ESQ.

KING'S COLLEGE, _March_ 20, 1737.

Dear George,--The first paragraph in my letter must be in answer to the last in yours; though I should be glad to make you the return you ask, by waiting on you myself. 'Tis not in my power, from more circumstances than one, which are needless to tell you, to accompany you and Lord Conway to Italy: you add to the pleasure it would give me, by asking it so kindly. You I am infinitely obliged to, as I was capable, my dear George, of making you forget for a minute that you don't propose stirring from the dear place you are now in. Poppies indeed are the chief flowers in love nosegays, but they seldom bend towards the lady; at least not till the other flowers have been gathered. Prince Volscius's boots were made of love-leather, and honour leather; instead of honour, some people's are made of friendship: but since you have been so good to me as to draw on this, I can almost believe you are equipped for travelling farther than Rheims. 'Tis no little inducement to make me wish myself in France, that I hear gallantry is not left off there; that you may be polite, and not be thought awkward for it. You know the pretty men of the age in England use the women with no more deference than they do their coach-horses, and have not half the regard for them that they have for themselves. The little freedoms you tell me you use take off from formality, by avoiding which ridiculous extreme we are dwindled into the other barbarous one, rusticity. If you had been at Paris, I should have inquired about the new Spanish ambassadress, who, by the accounts we have thence, at her first audience of the queen, sat down with her at a distance that suited respect and conversation.

Adieu, dear George,

Yours most heartily.

THEATRES AT PARIS--ST. DENIS--FONDNESS OF THE FRENCH FOR SHOW, AND FOR GAMBLING--SINGULAR SIGNS--THE ARMY THE ONLY PROFESSION FOR MEN OF GENTLE BIRTH--SPLENDOUR OF THE PUBLIC BUILDINGS.

TO RICHARD WEST, ESQ.

PARIS, _April_ 21, N.S. 1739.[1]

[Footnote 1: He is here dating according to the French custom. In England the calendar was not rectified by the disuse of the "Old Style" till 1752.]

Dear West,--You figure us in a set of pleasures, which, believe me, we do not find; cards and eating are so universal, that they absorb all variation of pleasures. The operas, indeed, are much frequented three times a week; but to me they would be a greater penance than eating maigre: their music resembles a gooseberry tart as much as it does harmony. We have not yet been at the Italian playhouse; scarce any one goes there. Their best amusement, and which, in some parts, beats ours, is the comedy; three or four of the actors excel any we have: but then to this nobody goes, if it is not one of the fashionable nights; and then they go, be the play good or bad--except on Moliere's nights, whose pieces they are quite weary of. Gray and I have been at the Avare to-night: I cannot at all commend their performance of it. Last night I was in the Place de Louis le Grand (a regular octagon, uniform, and the houses handsome, though not so large as Golden Square), to see what they reckoned one of the finest burials that ever was in France. It was the Duke de Tresmes, governor of Paris and marshal of France. It began on foot from his palace to his parish-church, and from thence in coaches to

the opposite end of Paris, to be interred in the church of the Celestins, where is his family-vault. About a week ago we happened to see the grave digging, as we went to see the church, which is old and small, but fuller of fine ancient monuments than any, except St. Denis, which we saw on the road, and excels Westminster; for the windows are all painted in mosaic, and the tombs as fresh and well preserved as if they were of yesterday. In the Celestins' church is a votive column to Francis II., which says, that it is one assurance of his being immortalized, to have had the martyr Mary Stuart for his wife. After this long digression, I return to the burial, which was a most vile thing. A long procession of flambeaux and friars; no plumes, trophies, banners, led horses, scutcheons, or open chariots; nothing but

friars,

White, black, and grey, with all their trumpery.

This godly ceremony began at nine at night, and did not finish till three this morning; for, each church they passed, they stopped for a hymn and holy water. By the bye, some of these choice monks, who watched the body while it lay in state, fell asleep one night, and let the tapers catch fire of the rich velvet mantle lined with ermine and powdered with gold flower-de-luces, which melted the lead coffin, and burnt off the feet of the deceased before it wakened them. The French love show; but there is a meanness reigns through it all. At the house where I stood to see this procession, the room was hung with crimson damask and gold, and the windows were mended in ten or a dozen places with paper. At dinner they give you three courses; but a third of the dishes is patched up with salads, butter, puff-paste, or some such miscarriage of a dish. None, but Germans, wear fine clothes; but their coaches are tawdry enough for the wedding of Cupid and Psyche. You would laugh extremely at their signs: some live at the Y grec, some at Venus's toilette, and some at the sucking cat. You would not easily guess their notions of honour: I'll tell you one: it is very dishonourable for any gentleman not to be in the army, or in the king's service as they call it, and it is no dishonour to keep public gaming-houses: there are at least a hundred and fifty people of the first quality in Paris who live by it. You may go into their houses at all hours of the night, and find hazard, pharaoh, &c. The men who keep the hazard-table at the Duke de Gesvres' pay him twelve guineas each night for the privilege. Even the princesses of the blood are dirty enough to have shares in the banks kept at their houses. We have seen two or three of them; but they are not young, nor remarkable but for wearing their red of a deeper dye than other women, though all use it extravagantly.

The weather is still so bad, that we have not made any excursions to see Versailles and the environs, not even walked in the Tuileries; but we have seen almost everything else that is worth seeing in Paris, though that is very considerable. They beat us vastly in buildings, both in number and magnificence. The tombs of Richelieu and Mazarin at the Sorbonne and the College de Quatre Nations are wonderfully fine, especially the former. We have seen very little of the people themselves, who are not inclined to be propitious to strangers, especially if they do not play and speak the language readily. There are many English here: Lord Holdemesse, Conway and Clinton, and Lord George Bentinck; Mr. Brand, Offley, Frederic, Frampton, Bonfoy, &c. Sir John Cotton's son and a Mr. Vernon of Cambridge passed through Paris last week. We shall stay here about a fortnight longer, and then go to Rheims with Mr. Conway for two or three months. When you have nothing else to do, we shall be glad to hear from you; and any news. If we did not remember there was such a place as England, we should know nothing of it: the French never mention it, unless it happens to be in one of their proverbs. Adieu!

Yours ever.

To-morrow we go to the Cid. They have no farces, but petites pieces like our 'Devil to Pay.'

MAGNIFICENCE OF VERSAILLES--THE CHARTREUX RELICS.

TO RICHARD WEST, ESQ.

FROM PARIS, 1739.

Dear West,--I should think myself to blame not to try to divert you, when you tell me I can. From the air of your letter you seem to want amusement, that is, you want spirits. I would recommend to you certain little employments that I know of, and that belong to you, but that I imagine bodily exercise is more suitable to your complaint. If you would promise me to read them in the Temple garden, I would send you a little packet of plays and pamphlets that we have made up, and intend to dispatch to "Dick's"[1] the first opportunity.--Stand by, clear the way, make room for the pompous appearance of Versailles le Grand!----But no: it fell so short of my idea of it, mine, that I have resigned to Gray the office of writing its panegyric. He likes it. They say I am to like it better next Sunday; when the sun is to shine, the king is to be fine, the water-works are to play, and the new knights of the Holy Ghost are to be installed! Ever since Wednesday, the day we were there, we have done nothing but dispute about it. They say, we did not see it to advantage, that we ran through the apartments, saw the garden en passant, and slubbered over Trianon. I say, we saw nothing. However, we had time to see that the great front is a lumber of littleness, composed of black brick, stuck full of bad old busts, and fringed with gold rails. The rooms are all small, except the great gallery, which is noble, but totally wainscoted with looking-glass. The garden is littered with statues and fountains, each of which has its tutelary deity. In particular, the elementary god of fire solaces himself in one. In another, Enceladus, in lieu of a mountain, is overwhelmed with many waters. There are avenues of water-pots, who disport themselves much in squirting up cascadelins. In short, 'tis a garden for a great child. Such was Louis Quatorze, who is here seen in his proper colours, where he commanded in person, unassisted by his armies and generals, and left to the pursuit of his own puerile ideas of glory.

[Footnote 1: A celebrated coffee-house, near the Temple Gate in Fleet Street, where quarto poems and pamphlets were taken in.]

We saw last week a place of another kind, and which has more the air of what it would be, than anything I have yet met with: it was the convent of the Chartreux. All the conveniences, or rather (if there was such a word) all the adaptments are assembled here, that melancholy, meditation, selfish devotion, and despair would require. But yet 'tis pleasing. Soften the terms, and mellow the uncouth horror that reigns here, but a little, and 'tis a charming solitude. It stands on a large space of ground, is old and irregular. The chapel is gloomy: behind it, through some dark passages, you pass into a large obscure hall, which looks like a combination-chamber for some hellish council. The large cloister surrounds their burying-ground. The cloisters are very narrow and very long, and let into the cells, which are built like little huts detached from each other. We were carried into one, where lived a middle-aged man not long initiated into the order. He was extremely civil, and called himself Dom Victor. We have promised to visit him often. Their habit is all white: but besides this he was infinitely clean in his person; and his apartment and garden, which he keeps and cultivates without any assistance, was neat to a degree. He has four little rooms, furnished in the prettiest manner, and hung with good prints. One of them is a library, and another a gallery. He has several canary-birds disposed in a pretty manner in breeding-cages. In his garden was a bed of good tulips in bloom, flowers and fruit-trees, and

all neatly kept. They are permitted at certain hours to talk to strangers, but never to one another, or to go out of their convent. But what we chiefly went to see was the small cloister, with the history of St. Bruno, their founder, painted by Le Soeur. It consists of twenty-two pictures, the figures a good deal less than life. But sure they are amazing! I don't know what Raphael may be in Rome, but these pictures excel all I have seen in Paris and England. The figure of the dead man who spoke at his burial, contains all the strongest and horridest ideas, of ghastliness, hypocrisy discovered, and the height of damnation, pain and cursing. A Benedictine monk, who was there at the same time, said to me of this picture: *_'C'est une fable, mais on la croyoit autrefois.'* Another, who showed me relics in one of their churches, expressed as much ridicule for them. The pictures I have been speaking of are ill preserved, and some of the finest heads defaced, which was done at first by a rival of Le Soeur's. Adieu! dear West, take care of your health; and some time or other we will talk over all these things with more pleasure than I have had in seeing them.

Yours ever.

_'THE CARNIVAL--THE FLORENTINES CIVIL, GOOD-NATURED, AND FOND OF THE ENGLISH--A CURIOUS CHALLENGE.'

TO RICHARD WEST, ESQ.

FLORENCE, *_'February_ 27, 1740, N.S.*

Well, West, I have found a little unmasqued moment to write to you; but for this week past I have been so muffled up in my domino, that I have not had the command of my elbows. But what have you been doing all the mornings? Could you not write then?--No, then I was masqued too; I have done nothing but slip out of my domino into bed, and out of bed into my domino. The end of the Carnival is frantic, bacchanalian; all the morn one makes parties in masque to the shops and coffee-houses, and all the evening to the operas and balls. *_'Then I have danced, good gods! how have I danced!'* The Italians are fond to a degree of our country dances: *_'Cold and raw'* they only know by the tune; *_'Blowzybella'* is almost Italian, and *_'Buttered peas'* is *_'Pizelli al buro'*. There are but three days more; but the two last are to have balls all the morning at the fine unfinished palace of the Strozzi; and the Tuesday night a masquerade after supper: they sup first, to eat *_'gras'*, and not encroach upon Ash-Wednesday. What makes masquerading more agreeable here than in England, is the great deference that is showed to the disguised. Here they do not catch at those little dirty opportunities of saying any ill-natured thing they know of you, do not abuse you because they may, or talk gross bawdy to a woman of quality. I found the other day, by a play of Etheridge's, that we have had a sort of Carnival even since the Reformation; 'tis in *_'She would if She could'*, they talk of going a-mumming in Shrove-tide.--

After talking so much of diversions, I fear you will attribute to them the fondness I own I contract for Florence; but it has so many other charms, that I shall not want excuses for my taste. The freedom of the Carnival has given me opportunities to make several acquaintances; and if I have not found them refined, learned, polished, like some other cities, yet they are civil, good-natured, and fond of the English. Their little partiality for themselves, opposed to the violent vanity of the French, makes them very amiable in my eyes. I can give you a comical instance of their great prejudice about nobility; it happened yesterday. While we were at dinner at Mr. Mann's, word was brought by his secretary, that a cavalier demanded audience of him upon an affair of honour. Gray and I flew behind the curtain of the door. An elderly gentleman, whose attire was not certainly correspondent to the greatness of his birth, entered, and informed the British minister, that one

Martin, an English painter, had left a challenge for him at his house, for having said Martin was no gentleman. He would by no means have spoke of the duel before the transaction of it, but that his honour, his blood, his &c. would never permit him to fight with one who was no cavalier; which was what he came to inquire of his excellency. We laughed loud laughs, but unheard: his fright or his nobility had closed his ears. But mark the sequel: the instant he was gone, my very English curiosity hurried me out of the gate St. Gallo; 'twas the place and hour appointed. We had not been driving about above ten minutes, but out popped a little figure, pale but cross, with beard unshaved and hair uncombed, a slouched hat, and a considerable red cloak, in which was wrapped, under his arm, the fatal sword that was to revenge the highly injured Mr. Martin, painter and defendant. I darted my head out of the coach, just ready to say, "Your servant, Mr. Martin," and talk about the architecture of the triumphal arch that was building there; but he would not know me, and walked off. We left him to wait for an hour, to grow very cold and very valiant the more it grew past the hour of appointment. We were figuring all the poor creature's huddle of thoughts, and confused hopes of victory or fame, of his unfinished pictures, or his situation upon bouncing into the next world. You will think us strange creatures; but 'twas a pleasant sight, as we knew the poor painter was safe. I have thought of it since, and am inclined to believe that nothing but two English could have been capable of such a jaunt. I remember, 'twas reported in London, that the plague was at a house in the city, and all the town went to see it.

I have this instant received your letter. Lord! I am glad I thought of those parallel passages, since it made you translate them. 'Tis excessively near the original; and yet, I don't know, 'tis very easy too.--It snows here a little to-night, but it never lies but on the mountains. Adieu!

Yours ever.

P.S.--What is the history of the theatres this winter?

HERCULANEUM--SEARCH SHOULD BE MADE FOR OTHER SUBMERGED CITIES--QUOTATIONS FROM STATIUS.

TO RICHARD WEST, ESQ.

NAPLES, _June_ 14, 1740, N.S.

Dear West,--One hates writing descriptions that are to be found in every book of travels; but we have seen something to-day that I am sure you never read of, and perhaps never heard of. Have you ever heard of a subterraneous town? a whole Roman town, with all its edifices, remaining under ground? Don't fancy the inhabitants buried it there to save it from the Goths: they were buried with it themselves; which is a caution we are not told that they ever took. You remember in Titus's time there were several cities destroyed by an eruption of Vesuvius, attended with an earthquake. Well, this was one of them, not very considerable, and then called Herculaneum. Above it has since been built Portici, about three miles from Naples, where the King has a villa. This underground city is perhaps one of the noblest curiosities that ever has been discovered. It was found out by chance, about a year and half ago. They began digging, they found statues; they dug further, they found more. Since that they have made a very considerable progress, and find continually. You may walk the compass of a mile; but by the misfortune of the modern town being overhead, they are obliged to proceed with great caution, lest they destroy both one and t'other. By this occasion the path is very narrow, just wide enough and high enough for one man to walk upright. They have hollowed, as they found it easiest to work, and have carried their streets not exactly where were the ancient ones, but

sometimes before houses, sometimes through them. You would imagine that all the fabrics were crushed together; on the contrary, except some columns, they have found all the edifices standing upright in their proper situation. There is one inside of a temple quite perfect, with the middle arch, two columns, and two pilasters. It is built of brick plastered over, and painted with architecture: almost all the insides of the houses are in the same manner; and, what is very particular, the general ground of all the painting is red. Besides this temple, they make out very plainly an amphitheatre: the stairs, of white marble, and the seats are very perfect; the inside was painted in the same colour with the private houses, and great part cased with white marble. They have found among other things some fine statues, some human bones, some rice, medals, and a few paintings extremely fine. These latter are preferred to all the ancient paintings that have ever been discovered. We have not seen them yet, as they are kept in the King's apartment, whither all these curiosities are transplanted; and 'tis difficult to see them--but we shall. I forgot to tell you, that in several places the beams of the houses remain, but burnt to charcoal; so little damaged that they retain visibly the grain of the wood, but upon touching crumble to ashes. What is remarkable, there are no other marks or appearance of fire, but what are visible on these beams.

There might certainly be collected great light from this reservoir of antiquities, if a man of learning had the inspection of it; if he directed the working, and would make a journal of the discoveries. But I believe there is no judicious choice made of directors. There is nothing of the kind known in the world; I mean a Roman city entire of that age, and that has not been corrupted with modern repairs. Besides scrutinising this very carefully, I should be inclined to search for the remains of the other towns that were partners with this in the general ruin.[1] 'Tis certainly an advantage to the learned world, that this has been laid up so long. Most of the discoveries in Rome were made in a barbarous age, where they only ransacked the ruins in quest of treasure, and had no regard to the form and being of the building; or to any circumstances that might give light into its use and history. I shall finish this long account with a passage which Gray has observed in Statius, and which directly pictures out this latent city:--

Haec ego Chalcidicis ad te, Marcelle, sonabam
Littoribus, fractas ubi Vestius egerit iras,
Aemula Trinacrii volvens incendia flammis.
Mira fides! credetne virum ventura propago,
Cum segetes iterum, cum jam haec deserta virebunt,
Infra urbes populosque premi?

SYLV. lib. iv. epist. 4.

Adieu, my dear West! and believe me yours ever.

[Footnote 1: It was known from the account of Pliny that other towns had been destroyed by the same eruption as Herculaneum, and eight years after the date of this letter some fresh excavations led to the discovery of Pompeii. Matthews, in his "Diary of an Invalid," describes both, and his account explains why Pompeii, though the smaller town, presents more attractions to the scholar or the antiquarian. "On our way home we explored Herculaneum, which scarcely repays the labour. This town is filled up with lava, and with a cement caused by the large mixture of water with the shower of earth and ashes which destroyed it; and it is choked up as completely as if molten lead had been poured into it. Besides, it is forty feet below the surface, and another town is now built over it.... Pompeii, on the contrary, was destroyed by a shower of cinders in which there was a much less quantity of water. It lay for centuries only twelve feet below the surface, and, these cinders being easily removed, the town has been again restored to the light of day" (vol. i. p. 254).]

DANGER OF MALARIA--ROMAN CATHOLIC RELICS--"ADMIRAL HOSIER'S GHOST"--CONTEST FOR THE POPEDOM.

TO THE HON. H.S. CONWAY.

RE DI COFANO, vulg. RADICOFANI,

July 5, 1740, N.S.

You will wonder, my dear Hal, to find me on the road from Rome: why, intend I did to stay for a new popedom, but the old eminences are cross and obstinate, and will not choose one, the Holy Ghost does not know when. There is a horrid thing called the malaria, that comes to Rome every summer, and kills one, and I did not care for being killed so far from Christian burial. We have been jolted to death; my servants let us come without springs to the chaise, and we are wore threadbare: to add to our disasters, I have sprained my ankle, and have brought it along, laid upon a little box of baubles that I have bought for presents in England. Perhaps I may pick you out some little trifle there, but don't depend upon it; you are a disagreeable creature, and may be I shall not care for you. Though I am so tired in this devil of a place, yet I have taken it into my head, that it is like Hamilton's Bawn,[1] and I must write to you. 'Tis the top of a black barren mountain, a vile little town at the foot of an old citadel: yet this, know you, was the residence of one of the three kings that went to Christ's birthday; his name was Alabaster, Abarasser, or some such thing; the other two were kings, one of the East, the other of Cogn. 'Tis this of Cofano, who was represented in an ancient painting, found in the Palatine Mount, now in the possession of Dr. Mead; he was crowned by Augustus. Well, but about writing--what do you think I write with? Nay, with a pen; there was never a one to be found in the whole circumference _but one_, and that was in the possession of the governor, and had been used time out of mind to write the parole with: I was forced to send to borrow it. It was sent me under the conduct of a serjeant and two Swiss, with desire to return it when I should have done with it. 'Tis a curiosity, and worthy to be laid up with the relics which we have just been seeing in a small hovel of Capucins on the side of the hill, and which were all brought by his Majesty from Jerusalem. Among other things of great sanctity there is a set of gnashing of teeth, the grinders very entire; a bit of the worm that never dies, preserved in spirits; a crow of St. Peter's cock, very useful against Easter; the crisping and curling, frizzling and frowning of Mary Magdalen, which she cut off on growing devout. The good man that showed us all these commodities was got into such a train of calling them the blessed this, and the blessed that, that at last he showed us a bit of the blessed fig-tree that Christ cursed.

[Footnote 1: Hamilton's Bawn is an old building near Richhill, in the County of Armagh, the subject of one of Swift's burlesque poems.]

FLORENCE, _July_ 9.

My dear Harry,--We are come hither, and I have received another letter from you with "Hosier's Ghost." [1] Your last put me in pain for you, when you talked of going to Ireland; but now I find your brother and sister go with you, I am not much concerned. Should I be? You have but to say, for my feelings are extremely at your service to dispose as you please. Let us see: you are to come back to stand for some place; that will be about April. 'Tis a sort of thing I should do, too; and then we should see one another, and that would be charming: but it is a sort of thing I have no mind to do; and then we shall not see one another, unless you would come hither--but that you cannot do: nay, I would not

have you, for then I shall be gone.--So, there are many _ifs_ that just signify nothing at all. Return I must sooner than I shall like. I am happy here to a degree. I'll tell you my situation. I am lodged with Mr. Mann, the best of creatures. I have a terreno all to myself, with an open gallery on the Arno, where I am now writing to you. Over against me is the famous Gallery: and, on either hand, two fair bridges. Is not this charming and cool? The air is so serene, and so secure, that one sleeps with all the windows and doors thrown open to the river, and only covered with a slight gauze to keep away the gnats. Lady Pomfret has a charming conversation once a week. She has taken a vast palace and a vast garden, which is vastly commode, especially to the cicisbeo-part of mankind, who have free indulgence to wander in pairs about the arbours. You know her daughters: Lady Sophia is still, nay she must be, the beauty she was: Lady Charlotte is much improved, and is the cleverest girl in the world; speaks the purest Tuscan, like any Florentine. The Princess Craon has a constant pharaoh and supper every night, where one is quite at one's ease. I am going into the country with her and the prince for a little while, to a villa of the Great Duke's. The people are good-humoured here and easy; and what makes me pleased with them, they are pleased with me. One loves to find people care for one, when they can have no view in it.

[Footnote 1: "Admiral Hosier's Ghost" is the title of a ballad by Glover on the death of Admiral Hosier, a distinguished admiral, who had been sent with a squadron to blockade the Spanish treasure-ships in Porto Bello, but was prohibited from attacking them in the harbour. He died in **1727, according to the account that the poet adopted, of mortification** at the inaction to which his orders compelled him; but according to another statement, more trustworthy if less poetical, of fever.]

You see how glad I am to have reasons for not returning; I wish I had no better.

As to "Hosier's Ghost," I think it very easy, and consequently pretty; but, from the ease, should never have guessed it Glover's. I delight in your, "the patriots cry it up, and the courtiers cry it down, and the hawkers cry it up and down," and your laconic history of the King and Sir Robert, on going to Hanover, and turning out the Duke of Argyle. The epigram, too, you sent me on the same occasion is charming.

Unless I sent you back news that you and others send me, I can send you none. I have left the Conclave, which is the only stirring thing in this part of the world, except the child that the Queen of Naples is to be delivered of in August. There is no likelihood the Conclave will end, unless the messages take effect which 'tis said the Imperial and French ministers have sent to their respective courts for leave to quit the Corsini for the Albani faction: otherwise there will never be a pope. Corsini has lost the only one he could have ventured to make pope, and him he designed; 'twas Cenci, a relation of the Corsini's mistress. The last morning Corsini made him rise, stuffed a dish of chocolate down his throat, and would carry him to the scrutiny. The poor old creature went, came back, and died. I am sorry to have lost the sight of the Pope's coronation, but I might have staid for seeing it till I had been old enough to be pope myself.[1]

[Footnote 1: The contest was caused by the death of Clement XII. The successful candidate was Benedict XIV.]

Harry, what luck the Chancellor has! first, indeed, to be in himself so great a man; but then in accident: he is made Chief Justice and peer, when Talbot is made Chancellor and peer. Talbot dies in a twelvemonth, and leaves him the seals at an age when others are scarce made Solicitors:--then marries his son into one of the first families of Britain, obtains a patent for a Marquisate and eight thousand pounds a year after the Duke of Kent's death: the Duke dies in a fortnight, and

leaves them all! People talk of Fortune's wheel, that is always rolling: troth, my Lord Hardwicke has overtaken her wheel, and rolled away with it.... Yours ever.

A FLORENTINE WEDDING--ADDISON'S DESCRIPTIONS ARE BORROWED FROM BOOKS--A SONG OF BONDELMONTI'S, WITH A LATIN VERSION BY GRAY, AND AN ENGLISH ONE BY THE WRITER.

TO RICHARD WEST, ESQ.

FLORENCE, _Oct._ 2, 1740, N.S.

Dear West,--T'other night as we (you know who _we_ are) were walking on the charming bridge, just before going to a wedding assembly, we said, "Lord, I wish, just as we are got into the room, they would call us out, and say, West is arrived! We would make him dress instantly, and carry him back to the entertainment. How he would stare and wonder at a thousand things, that no longer strike us as odd!" Would not you? One agreed that you should have come directly by sea from Dover, and be set down at Leghorn, without setting foot in any other foreign town, and so land at _Us_, in all your first full amaze; for you are to know, that astonishment rubs off violently; we did not cry out Lord! half so much at Rome as at Calais, which to this hour I look upon as one of the most surprising cities in the universe. My dear child, what if you were to take this little sea-jaunt? One would recommend Sir John Norris's convoy to you, but one should be laughed at now for supposing that he is ever to sail beyond Torbay.[1] The Italians take Torbay for an English town in the hands of the Spaniards, after the fashion of Gibraltar, and imagine 'tis a wonderful strong place, by our fleet's having retired from before it so often, and so often returned.

[Footnote 1: Sir John Norris was one of the most gallant and skilful seamen of his time; but an expedition in which he had had the command had lately proved fruitless. He had been instructed to cruise about the Bay of Biscay, in the hope of intercepting some of the Spanish treasure-ships; but the weather had been so uninterruptedly stormy that he had been compelled to return to port without having even seen an enemy. The following lines were addressed to him upon this occasion:

Homeward, oh! bend thy course; the seas are rough;
To the Land's End who sails, has sailed enough.]

We went to this wedding that I told you of; 'twas a charming feast: a large palace finely illuminated; there were all the beauties, all the jewels, and all the sugar-plums of Florence. Servants loaded with great chargers full of comfits heap the tables with them, the women fall on with both hands, and stuff their pockets and every creek and corner about them. You would be as much amazed at us as at anything you saw: instead of being deep in the liberal arts, and being in the Gallery every morning, as I thought of course to be sure I would be, we are in all the idleness and amusements of the town. For me, I am grown so lazy, and so tired of seeing sights, that, though I have been at Florence six months, I have not seen Leghorn, Pisa, Lucca, or Pistoia; nay, not so much as one of the Great Duke's villas. I have contracted so great an aversion to inns and post-chaises, and have so absolutely lost all curiosity, that, except the towns in the straight road to Great Britain, I shall scarce see a jot more of a foreign land; and trust me, when I return, I will not visit Welsh mountains, like Mr. Williams. After Mount Cenis, the Bocchetto, the Giogo, Radicofani, and the Appian Way, one has mighty little hunger after travelling. I shall be mighty apt to set up my staff at Hyde-park-corner: the alehouseman there at Hercules's Pillars[1] was certainly returned from his travels into foreign parts.

[Footnote 1: The sign of the Hercules' Pillars remained in Piccadilly

till very lately. It was situated on part of the ground now [1798] occupied by the houses of Mr. Drummond Smith and his brother.--MISS BERRY. That is, on the space between Hamilton Place and Apsley House. It was the inn mentioned in Fielding's "Tom Jones," and was notorious as a favourite resort of the Marquis of Granby.]

Now I'll answer your questions.

I have made no discoveries in ancient or modern arts. Mr. Addison travelled through the poets, and not through Italy; for all his ideas are borrowed from the descriptions, and not from the reality. He saw places as they were, not as they are.[1] I am very well acquainted with Doctor Cocchi;[2] he is a good sort of man, rather than a great man; he is a plain honest creature, with quiet knowledge, but I dare say all the English have told you, he has a very particular understanding: I really don't believe they meant to impose on you, for they thought so. As to Bondelmonti, he is much less; he is a low mimic; the brightest cast of his parts attains to the composition of a sonnet: he talks irreligion with English boys, sentiment with my sister [Lady Walpole], and bad French with any one that will hear him. I will transcribe you a little song that he made t'other day; 'tis pretty enough; Gray turned it into Latin, and I into English; you will honour him highly by putting it into French, and Ashton into Greek. Here 'tis.

Spesso Amor sotto la forma
D'amista ride, e s'asconde;
Poi si mischia, e si confonde
Con lo sdegno e col rancor.

In pietade ei si trasforma,
Par trastullo e par dispetto,
Ma nel suo diverso aspetto,
Sempre egli e l'istesso Amor.

Risit amicitiae interdum velatus amictu,
Et bene composita veste fefeliit Amor:
Mox irae assumpsit cultus faciemque minantem,
Inque odium versus, versus et in lacrymas:
Sudentem fuge, nec lacrymanti aut crede furenti;
Idem est dissimili semper in ore Deus.

Love often in the comely mien
Of friendship fancies to be seen;
Soon again he shifts his dress,
And wears disdain and rancour's face.

To gentle pity then he changes;
Thro' wantonness, thro' piques he ranges;
But in whatever shape he move,
He's still himself, and still is Love.

[Footnote 1: Compare Letter to Zouch, March 20th, 1762. Fielding says ("Voyage to Lisbon") that Addison, in his "Travels," is to be looked upon rather as a commentator on the classics, than as a writer of travels.]

[Footnote 2: Antonio Cocchi, a learned physician and author at Florence, a particular friend of Mr. Mann.--WALPOLE. He died in 1758.]

See how we trifle! but one can't pass one's youth too amusingly; for one must grow old, and that in England; two most serious circumstances either of which makes people grey in the twinkling of a bed-staff; for know you, there is not a country upon earth where there are so many old fools and so few young ones.

Now I proceed with my answers.

I made but small collections, and have only bought some bronzes and medals, a few busts, and two or three pictures; one of my busts is to be mentioned; 'tis the famous Vespasian in touchstone, reckoned the best in Rome, except the Caracalla of the Farnese: I gave but twenty-two pounds for it at Cardinal Ottoboni's sale. One of my medals is as great a curiosity: 'tis of Alexander Severus, with the amphitheatre in brass; this reverse is extant on medals of his, but mine is a *_medagliuncino_*, or small medallion, and the only one with this reverse known in the world: 'twas found by a peasant while I was in Rome, and sold by him for sixpence to an antiquarian, to whom I paid for it seven guineas and a half; but to virtuosi 'tis worth any sum.

As to Tartini's[1] musical compositions, ask Gray; I know but little in music.

[Footnote 1: Giuseppe Tartini, of Padua, the celebrated composer of the Devil's Sonata: in which he attempted to reproduce an air which he dreamt that Satan had played to him while he was asleep; but, in his own opinion, he failed so entirely, that he declared that if he had any other means of livelihood he would break his violin and give up music.]

But for the Academy, I am not of it, but frequently in company with it: 'tis all disjointed. Madame ----, who, though a learned lady, has not lost her modesty and character, is extremely scandalised with the other two dames, especially with Moll Worthless [Lady Mary Wortley], who knows no bounds. She is at rivalry with Lady W[alpole] for a certain Mr. ----, whom perhaps you knew at Oxford. If you did not, I'll tell you: he is a grave young man by temper, and a rich one by constitution; a shallow creature by nature, but a wit by the grace of our women here, whom he deals with as of old with the Oxford toasts. He fell into sentiments with my Lady W[alpole] and was happy to catch her at Platonic love: but as she seldom stops there, the poor man will be frightened out of his senses when she shall break the matter to him; for he never dreamt that her purposes were so naught. Lady Mary is so far gone, that to get him from the mouth of her antagonist she literally took him out to dance country dances last night at a formal ball, where there was no measure kept in laughing at her old, foul, tawdry, painted, plastered personage. She played at pharaoh two or three times at Princess Craon's, where she cheats horse and foot. She is really entertaining: I have been reading her works, which she lends out in manuscript, but they are too womanish: I like few of her performances. I forgot to tell you a good answer of Lady Pomfret to Mr. ----, who asked her if she did not approve Platonic love? "Lord, sir," says she, "I am sure any one that knows me never heard that I had any love but one, and there sit two proofs of it," pointing to her two daughters.

So I have given you a sketch of our employments, and answered your questions, and will with pleasure as many more as you have about you.

Adieu! Was ever such a long letter? But 'tis nothing to what I shall have to say to you. I shall scold you for never telling us any news, public or private, no deaths, marriages, or mishaps; no account of new books: Oh, you are abominable! I could find it in my heart to hate you, if I did not love you so well; but we will quarrel now, that we may be the better friends when we meet: there is no danger of that, is there? Good-night, whether friend or foe! I am most sincerely

Yours.

DEBATE ON PULTENEY'S MOTION FOR A COMMITTEE ON PAPERS RELATING TO THE WAR--SPEECHES OF PULTENEY, PITT, SIR R. WALPOLE, SIR W. GEORGE, ETC.--SMALLNESS OF THE MINISTERIAL MAJORITY._

TO SIR HORACE MANN.[1]

[Footnote 1: Sir H. Mann was an early friend of Walpole; and was Minister at Florence from 1740-1786.]

[Illustration: SIR HORACE MANN.]

_Friday, Jan. _22, 1742.

Don't wonder that I missed writing to you yesterday, my constant day: you will pity me when you hear that I was shut up in the House of Commons till one in the morning. I came away more dead than alive, and was forced to leave Sir R. at supper with my brothers: he was all alive and in spirits.[1] He says he is younger than me, and indeed I think so, in spite of his forty years more. My head aches to-night, but we rose early; and if I don't write to-night, when shall I find a moment to spare? Now you want to know what we did last night; stay, I will tell you presently in its place: it was well, and of infinite consequence—so far I tell you now.

[Footnote 1: Sir Robert Wilmot also, in a letter to the Duke of Devonshire, written on the 12th, says, "Sir Robert was to-day observed to be more naturally gay and full of spirits than he has been for some time past."]

Our recess finished last Monday, and never at school did I enjoy holidays so much—but, *_les voila finis jusqu'au printems_!* Tuesday (for you see I write you an absolute journal) we sat on a Scotch election, a double return; their man was Hume Campbell[1], Lord Marchmont's brother, lately made solicitor to the Prince, for being as troublesome, as violent, and almost as able as his brother. They made a great point of it, and gained so many of our votes, that at ten at night we were forced to give it up without dividing. Sandys, who loves persecution, *_even unto death_*, moved to punish the sheriff; and as we dared not divide, they ordered him into custody, where by this time, I suppose, Sandys has eaten him.

[Footnote 1: Hume Campbell, twin brother of Hugh, third Earl of Marchmont, the friend of Pope, and one of his executors. They were sons of Alexander, the second earl, who had quarrelled with Sir Robert Walpole at the time of the excise scheme in 1733. Sir Robert, in consequence, prevented him from being re-elected one of the sixteen representative Scotch peers in 1734; in requital for which, the old earl's two sons became the bitterest opponents of the minister. They were both men of considerable talents; extremely similar in their characters and dispositions, and so much so in their outward appearance, that it was very difficult to know them apart.]

On Wednesday Sir Robert Godschall, the Lord Mayor, presented the Merchant's petition, signed by three hundred of them, and drawn up by *_Leonidas_* Glover.[1] This is to be heard next Wednesday. This gold-chain came into parliament, cried up for his parts, but proves so dull, one would think he chewed opium. Earle says, "I have heard an oyster speak as well twenty times."...

[Footnote 1: Mr. Glover, a London merchant, was the author of a poem entitled "Leonidas"; of a tragedy, "Boadicea"; and of the ode on "Admiral Hosier's Ghost," which is mentioned in the letter to Conway at p. 23.]

On this Thursday, of which I was telling you, at three o'clock, Mr. Pulteney rose up, and moved for a secret committee of twenty-one. This inquisition, this council of ten, was to sit and examine whatever persons and papers they should please, and to meet when and where they

pleased. He protested much on its not being intended against _any person_, but merely to give the King advice, and on this foot they fought it till ten at night, when Lord Perceval blundered out what they had been cloaking with so much art, and declared that he should vote for it as a committee of accusation. Sir Robert immediately rose, and protested that he should not have spoken, but for what he had heard last; but that now, he must take it to himself. He pourtrayed the malice of the Opposition, who, for twenty years, had not been able to touch him, and were now reduced to this infamous shift. He defied them to accuse him, and only desired that if they should, it might be in an open and fair manner; desired no favour, but to be acquainted with his accusation. He spoke of Mr. Dodington, who had called his administration infamous, as of a person of great self-mortification, who, for sixteen years, had condescended to bear part of the odium. For Mr. Pulteney, who had just spoken a second time, Sir R. said, he had begun the debate with great calmness, but give him his due, he had made amends for it in the end. In short, never was innocence so triumphant!

There were several glorious speeches on both sides; Mr. Pulteney's two, W. Pitt's [Chatham's] and George Grenville's, Sir Robert's, Sir W. Yonge's, Harry Fox's [Lord Holland's], Mr. Chute's, and the Attorney-General's [Sir Dudley Ryder]. My friend Coke [Love], for the first time, spoke vastly well, and mentioned how great Sir Robert's character is abroad. Sir Francis Dashwood replied that he had found quite the reverse from Mr. Coke, and that foreigners always spoke with contempt of the Chevalier de Walpole. This was going too far, and he was called to order, but got off well enough, by saying, that he knew it was contrary to rule to name any member, but that he only mentioned it as spoken by an impertinent Frenchman.

But of all speeches, none ever was so full of wit as Mr. Pulteney's last. He said, "I have heard this committee represented as a most dreadful spectre; it has been likened to all terrible things; it has been likened to the King; to the inquisition; it will be a committee of safety; it is a committee of danger; I don't know what it is to be! One gentleman, I think, called it _a cloud_! (this was the Attorney) _a cloud_! I remember Hamlet takes Lord Polonius by the hand shows him _a cloud_, and then asks him if he does not think it is like a whale." Well, in short, at eleven at night we divided, and threw out this famous committee by 253 to 250, the greatest number that ever was in the house, and the greatest number that ever _lost_ a question.[1]

[Footnote 1: Lord Stanhope ("History of England," i. 24) gives a long account of this debate, mainly derived from this letter.]

It was a most shocking sight to see the sick and dead brought in on both sides! Men on crutches, and Sir William Gordon from his bed, with a blister on his head, and flannel hanging out from under his wig. I could scarce pity him for his ingratitude. The day before the Westminster petition, Sir Charles Wager gave his son a ship, and the next day the father came down and voted against him. The son has since been cast away; but they concealed it from the father, that he might not absent himself. However, as we have our good-natured men too on our side, one of his own countrymen went and told him of it in the House. The old man, who looked like Lazarus at his resuscitation, bore it with great resolution, and said, he knew _why_ he was told of it, but when he thought his country in danger, he would not go away. As he is so near death, that it is indifferent to him whether he died two thousand years ago or to-morrow, it is unlucky for him not to have lived when such insensibility would have been a Roman virtue.

There are no arts, no menaces, which the Opposition do not practise. They have threatened one gentleman to have a reversion cut off from his son, unless he will vote with them. To Totness there came a letter to the mayor from the Prince, and signed by two of his lords, to recommend

a candidate in opposition to the Solicitor-General [Strange]. The mayor sent the letter to Sir Robert. They have turned the Scotch to the best account. There is a young Oswald, who had engaged to Sir R. but has voted against us. Sir R. sent a friend to reproach him; the moment the gentleman who had engaged for him came into the room, Oswald said, "You had like to have led me into a fine error! did you not tell me that Sir R. would have the majority?"

When the debate was over, Mr. Pulteney owned that he had never heard so fine a debate on our side; and said to Sir Robert, "Well, nobody can do what you can!" "Yes," replied Sir R., "Yonge did better." Mr. Pulteney answered, "It was fine, but not of that weight with what you said." They all allow it; and now their plan is to persuade Sir Robert to retire with honour. All that evening there was a report about the town, that he and my uncle [_old_ Horace] were to be sent to the Tower, and people hired windows in the City to see them pass by--but for this time I believe we shall not exhibit so historical a parade....

Sir Thomas Robinson [Long] is at last named to the government of Barbadoes; he has long prevented its being asked for, by declaring that he had the promise of it. Luckily for him, Lord Lincoln liked his house, and procured him this government on condition of hiring it.

I have mentioned Lord Perceval's speeches; he has a set who has a rostrum at his house, and harangue there. A gentleman who came thither one evening was refused, but insisting that he was engaged to come, "Oh, Sir," said the porter, "what are you one of those who play at members of parliament?"...

RANELAGH GARDENS OPENED--GARRICK, "A WINE-MERCHANT TURNED PLAYER"--DEFEAT OF THE INDEMNITY BILL.

TO SIR HORACE MANN.

DOWNING STREET, May 26, 1742.

To-day calls itself May the 26th, as you perceive by the date; but I am writing to you by the fire-side, instead of going to Vauxhall. If we have one warm day in seven, "we bless our stars, and think it luxury." And yet we have as much water-works and fresco diversions, as if we lay ten degrees nearer warmth. Two nights ago Ranelagh-gardens were opened at Chelsea; the Prince, Princess, Duke, much nobility, and much mob besides, were there. There is a vast amphitheatre, finely gilt, painted, and illuminated, into which everybody that loves eating, drinking, staring, or crowding, is admitted for twelvecence. The building and disposition of the garden cost sixteen thousand pounds. Twice a-week there are to be Ridottos, at guinea-tickets, for which you are to have a supper and music. I was there last night, but did not find the joy of it. Vauxhall is a little better; for the garden is pleasanter, and one goes by water. Our operas are almost over; there were but three-and-forty people last night in the pit and boxes. There is a little simple farce at Drury Lane, called "Miss Lucy in Town," in which Mrs. Clive mimics the Muscovita admirably, and Beard, Amorevoli tolerably. But all the run is now after Garrick, a wine-merchant, who is turned player, at Goodman's fields. He plays all parts, and is a very good mimic. His acting I have seen, and may say to you, who will not tell it again here, I see nothing wonderful in it; but it is heresy to say so: the Duke of Argyll says, he is superior to Betterton. Now I talk of players, tell Mr. Chute, that his friend Bracegirdle breakfasted with me this morning. As she went out, and wanted her clogs, she turned to me, and said, "I remember at the playhouse, they used to call Mrs. Oldfield's chair! Mrs. Barry's clogs! and Mrs. Bracegirdle's pattens!"

I did, indeed, design the letter of this post for Mr. Chute; but I have

received two such charming long ones from you of the 15th and 20th of May (N.S.), that I must answer them, and beg him to excuse me till another post; so must the Prince [Craon], Princess, the Grifona, and Countess Galli. For the Princess's letter, I am not sure I shall answer it so soon, for hitherto I have not been able to read above every third word; however, you may thank her as much as if I understood it all. I am very happy that *_mes bagatelles_* (for I still insist they were so) pleased. You, my dear child, are very good to be pleased with the snuff-box. I am much obliged to the superior *_lumieres_* of old Sarasin about the Indian ink: if she meant the black, I am sorry to say I had it into the bargain with the rest of the Japan: for coloured, it is only a curiosity, because it has seldom been brought over. I remember Sir Hans Sloane was the first who ever had any of it, and would on no account give my mother the least morsel of it. She afterwards got a good deal of it from China; and since that, more has come over; but it is even less valuable than the other, for we never could tell how to use it; however, let it make its figure.

I am sure you hate me all this time, for chatting about so many trifles, and telling you no politics. I own to you, I am so wearied, so worn with them, that I scarce know how to turn my hand to them; but you shall know all I know. I told you of the meeting at the Fountain tavern: Pulteney had promised to be there, but was not; nor Carteret. As the Lords had put off the debate on the Indemnity Bill,[1] nothing material passed; but the meeting was very Jacobite. Yesterday the bill came on, and Lord Carteret took the lead against it, and about seven in the evening it was flung out by almost two to one, 92 to 47, and 17 proxies to 10. To-day we had a motion by the new Lord Hillsborough (for the father is just dead), and seconded by Lord Barrington, to examine the Lords' votes, to see what was become of the bill; this is the form. The Chancellor of the Exchequer, and all the new ministry, were with us against it; but they carried it, 164 to 159. It is to be reported to-morrow, and as we have notice, we may possibly throw it out; else they will hurry on to a breach with the Lords. Pulteney was not in the House: he was riding the other day, and met the King's coach; endeavouring to turn out of the way, his horse started, flung him, and fell upon him: he is much bruised; but not at all dangerously. On this occasion, there was an epigram fixed to a list, which I will explain to you afterwards: it is not known who wrote it, but it was addressed to him:

Thy horse does things by halves, like thee:
Thou, with irresolution,
Hurt'st friend and foe, thyself and me,
The King and Constitution.

[Footnote 1: A previous letter describes this as a Bill "to indemnify all persons who should accuse themselves of any crime, provided they accuse Lord Orford [Sir R.W]." It was carried in the House of Commons by 251 to 228, but, as this letter mentions, was thrown out by the Lords by 109 to 57. Lord Stanhope (c. 24) describes it as "a Bill which broke through the settled forms and safeguards of law, to strike at one obnoxious head."]

* * * * *

I must tell you an ingenuity of Lord Raymond, an epitaph on the Indemnifying Bill--I believe you would guess the author:--

Interr'd beneath this marble stone doth lie
The Bill of Indemnity;
To show the good for which it was design'd,
It died itself to save mankind.

* * * * *

There has lately been published one of the most impudent things that ever was printed; it is called "The Irish Register," and is a list of all the unmarried women of any fashion in England, ranked in order, duchesses-dowager, ladies, widows, misses, &c., with their names at length, for the benefit of Irish fortune-hunters, or as it is said, for the incorporating and manufacturing of British commodities. Miss Edwards is the only one printed with a dash, because they have placed her among the widows. I will send you this, "Miss Lucy in Town," and the magazines, by the first opportunity, as I should the other things, but your brother tells me you have had them by another hand. I received the cedrati, for which I have already thanked you: but I have been so much thanked by several people to whom I gave some, that I can very well afford to thank you again....

P.S.--I unseal my letter to tell you what a vast and, probably, final victory we have gained to-day. They moved, that the Lords flinging out the Bill of Indemnity was an obstruction of justice, and might prove fatal to the liberties of this country. We have sat till this moment, seven o'clock, and have rejected this motion by 245 to 193. The call of the House, which they have kept off from fortnight to fortnight, to keep people in town, was appointed for to-day. The moment the division was over, Sir John Cotton rose and said, "As I think the inquiry is at an end, you may do what you will with the call." We have put it off for two months. There's a noble postscript!

DEBATE ON DISBANDING THE HANOVERIAN TROOPS--FIRST SPEECH OF MURRAY (AFTERWARDS EARL OF MANSFIELD)--BON MOT OF LORD CHESTERFIELD.

TO SIR HORACE MANN.

ARLINGTON STREET, _Dec._ 9, 1742.

I shall have quite a partiality for the post of Holland; it brought me two letters last week, and two more yesterday, of November 20th and **27th; but I find you have your perpetual headaches--how can you say that** you shall tire me with talking of them? you may make me suffer by your pains, but I will hear and insist upon your always telling me of your health. Do you think I only correspond with you to know the posture of the Spaniards or the epuiselements of the Princess! I am anxious, too, to know how poor Mr. Whithed does, and Mr. Chute's gout. I shall look upon our sea-captains with as much horror as the King of Naples can, if they bring gouts, fits, and headaches.

You will have had a letter from me by this time, to give up sending the Dominichin by a man-of-war, and to propose its coming in a Dutch ship. I believe that will be safe.

We have had another great day in the House on the army in Flanders, which the Opposition were for disbanding; but we carried it by a hundred and twenty. Murray spoke for the first time, with the greatest applause; Pitt answered him with all his force and art of language, but on an ill-founded argument. In all appearances, they will be great rivals. Shippen was in great rage at Murray's apostacy; if anything can really change his principles, possibly this competition may. To-morrow we shall have a tougher battle on the sixteen thousand Hanoverians. Hanover is the word given out for this winter: there is a most bold pamphlet come out, said to be Lord Marchmont's, which affirms that in every treaty made since the accession of this family, England has been sacrificed to the interests of Hanover, and consequently insinuates the incompatibility of the two. Lord Chesterfield says "that if we have a mind effectually to prevent the Pretender from ever obtaining this crown, we should make him Elector of Hanover, for the people of England will never fetch another king from thence."

Adieu! my dear child. I am sensible that I write you short letters, but I write you all I know. I don't know how it is, but _the wonderful_ seems worn out. In this our day, we have no rabbit-women--no elopements--no epic poems, finer than Milton's--no contest about Harlequins and Polly Peachems. Jansen[1] has won no more estates, and the Duchess of Queensberry has grown as tame as her neighbours. Whist has spread an universal opium over the whole nation; it makes courtiers and patriots sit down to the same pack of cards. The only thing extraordinary, and which yet did not seem to surprise anybody, was the Barbarina's being attacked by four men masqued, the other night, as she came out of the Opera House, who would have forced her away; but she screamed, and the guard came. Nobody knows who set them on, and I believe nobody inquired.

[Footnote 1: H. Jansen, a celebrated gamester, who cheated the Duke of Bedford of an immense sum: Pope hints at that affair in this line,

Or when a duke to Jansen punts at White's.]

The Austrians in Flanders have separated from our troops a little out of humour, because it was impracticable for them to march without any preparatory provision for their reception. They will probably march in two months, if no peace prevents it. Adieu!

KING THEODORE--HANDEL INTRODUCES ORATORIOS.

TO SIR HORACE MANN.

ARLINGTON STREET, _Feb._ 24, 1743.

I write to you in the greatest hurry in the world, but write I will. Besides, I must wish you joy: you are warriors; nay, conquerors[1]; two things quite novel in this war, for hitherto it has been armies without fighting, and deaths without killing. We talk of this battle as of a comet; "Have you heard of _the_ battle?" it is so strange a thing, that numbers imagine you may go and see it at Charing Cross. Indeed, our officers, who are going to Flanders, don't quite like it; they are afraid it should grow the fashion to fight, and that a pair of colours should no longer be a sinecure. I am quite unhappy about poor Mr. Chute: besides, it is cruel to find that abstinence is not a drug. If mortification ever ceases to be a medicine, or virtue to be a passport to carnivals in the other world, who will be a self-tormentor any longer--not, my child, that I am one; but, tell me, is he quite recovered?

[Footnote 1: This alludes to an engagement, which took place on the 8th of February, near Bologna, between the Spaniards under M. de Gages, and the Austrians under General Traun, in which the latter were successful.]

I thank you for King Theodore's declaration,[1] and wish him success with all my soul. I hate the Genoese; they make a commonwealth the most devilish of all tyrannies!

[Footnote 1: With regard to Corsica, of which he had declared himself king. By this declaration, which was dated January 30, Theodore recalled, under pain of confiscation of their estates, all the Corsicans in foreign service, except that of the Queen of Hungary, and the Grand Duke of Tuscany. (See vol. ii. p. 74.)]

We have every now and then motions for disbanding Hessians and Hanoverians,[1] alias mercenaries; but they come to nothing. To-day the party have declared that they have done for this session; so you will hear little more but of fine equipages for Flanders: our troops are

actually marched, and the officers begin to follow them--I hope they know whither! You know in the last war in Spain, Lord Peterborough^[2] rode galloping about to inquire for his army.

[Footnote 1: The employment of Hessian and Hanoverian troops in this war was not only the subject of frequent complaints in Parliament, but was also the cause of very general dissatisfaction in the country, where it was commonly regarded as one of the numerous instances in which the Ministers sacrificed the interests of England from an unworthy desire to maintain their places by humouring the king's preference for his native land.]

[Footnote 2: Lord Peterborough is celebrated by Pope as

taming the genius of the arid plain
Almost as quickly as he conquered Spain:

not that he did conquer Spain; but by an extraordinary combination of hardihood and skill he took Barcelona, which had defied all previous attacks; and, in the confidence inspired by this important success, he offered Archduke Charles to escort him to Madrid, so that he might be crowned King of Spain in that capital. But the Archduke, under the advice of some of his own countrymen, who were jealous of his influence, rejected the plan.]

But to come to more real contests; Handel has set up an Oratorio against the Operas, and succeeds. He has hired all the goddesses from farces and the singers of Roast Beef ^[1] from between the acts at both theatres, with a man with one note in his voice, and a girl without ever an one; and so they sing, and make brave hallelujahs; and the good company encore the recitative, if it happens to have any cadence like what they call a tune. I was much diverted the other night at the opera; two gentlewomen sat before my sister, and not knowing her, discoursed at their ease. Says one, "Lord! how fine Mr. W. is!" "Yes," replied the other, with a tone of saying sentences, "some men love to be particularly so, your petit-maitres--but they are not always the brightest of their sex."--Do thank me for this period! I am sure you will enjoy it as much as we did.

[Footnote 1: It was customary at this time for the galleries to call for a ballad called "The Roast Beef of Old England" between the acts, or before or after the play.--WALPOLE.]

I shall be very glad of my things, and approve entirely of your precautions; Sir R. will be quite happy, for there is no telling you how impatient he is for his Dominchin. Adieu!

BATTLE OF DETTINGEN--DEATH OF LORD WILMINGTON.

TO SIR HORACE MANN.

HOUGHTON, July 4, 1743.

I hear no particular news here, and I don't pretend to send you the common news; for as I must have it first from London, you will have it from thence sooner in the papers than in my letters. There have been great rejoicings for the victory; which I am convinced is very considerable by the pains the Jacobites take to persuade it is not. My Lord Carteret's Hanoverian articles have much offended; his express has been burlesqued a thousand ways. By all the letters that arrive, the loss of the French turns out more considerable than by the first accounts: they have dressed up the battle into a victory for themselves--I hope they will always have such! By their not having declared war with us, one should think they intended a peace. It is

allowed that our fine horse did us no honour: the victory was gained by the foot. Two of their princes of the blood, the Prince de Dombes, and the Count d'Eu his brother, were wounded, and several of their first nobility. Our prisoners turn out but seventy-two officers, besides the private men; and by the printed catalogue, I don't think many of great family. Marshal Noailles' mortal wound is quite vanished, and Duc d'Arenberg's shrunk to a very slight one. The King's glory remains in its first bloom.

Lord Wilmington is dead.[1] I believe the civil battle for his post will be tough. Now we shall see what service Lord Carteret's Hanoverians will do him. You don't think the crisis unlucky for him, do you? If you wanted a Treasury, should you choose to have been in Arlington Street, or driving by the battle of Dettingen? You may imagine our Court wishes for Mr. Pelham. I don't know any one who wishes for Lord Bath but himself--I believe that is a pretty substantial wish.

[Footnote 1: Formerly Sir Spencer Compton, and successor of Sir R. Walpole at the Treasury. He was succeeded by Mr. Pelham, a brother of the Duke of Newcastle.]

I have got the Life of King Theodore, but I don't know how to convey it--I will inquire for some way.

We are quite alone. You never saw anything so unlike as being here five months out of place, to the congresses of a fortnight in place; but you know the "Justum et tenacem propositi virum"[1] can amuse himself without the "Civium ardor!" As I have not so much dignity of character to fill up my time, I could like a little more company. With all this leisure, you may imagine that I might as well be writing an ode or so upon the victory; but as I cannot build upon the Laureate's[2] place till I know whether Lord Carteret or Mr. Pelham will carry the Treasury, I have bounded my compliments to a slender collection of quotations against I should have any occasion for them. Here are some fine lines from Lord Halifax's[3] poem on the battle of the Boyne--

The King leads on, the King does all inflame,
The King;--and carries millions in the name.

[Footnote 1: A quotation from Horace, Odes iii. 3.]

[Footnote 2: The Poet Laureate was Colley Cibber.]

[Footnote 3: The celebrated Chancellor of the Exchequer, Charles Montagu, was raised to the peerage as Earl of Halifax. In conjunction with Prior, he wrote the "Country and City Mouse," in ridicule of Dryden's "Hind and Panther."]

Then follows a simile about a deluge, which you may imagine; but the next lines are very good:

So on the foe the firm battalions prest,
And he, like the tenth wave, drove on the rest.
Fierce, gallant, young, he shot through ev'ry place,
Urging their flight, and hurrying on the chase,
He hung upon their rear, or lighten'd in their face.

The next are a magnificent compliment, and, as far as verse goes, to be sure very applicable.

Stop, stop! brave Prince, allay that generous flame;
Enough is given to England and to Fame.
Remember, Sir, you in the centre stand;
Europe's divided interests you command,
All their designs uniting in your hand.

Down from your throne descends the golden chain
Which does the fabric of our world sustain,
That once dissolved by any fatal stroke,
The scheme of all our happiness is broke.

Adieu! my dear Sir; pray for peace!

_FRENCH ACTORS AT CLIFDEN--A NEW ROMAN CATHOLIC MIRACLE--LADY MARY
WORTLEY._

TO SIR HORACE MANN.

HOUGHTON, _Sept._ 7, 1743.

My letters are now at their _ne plus ultra_ of nothingness; so you may hope they will grow better again. I shall certainly go to town soon, for my patience is worn out. Yesterday, the weather grew cold; I put on _a new_ waistcoat for its being winter's birthday--the season I am forced to love; for summer has no charms for me when I pass it in the country.

We are expecting another battle, and a congress at the same time. Ministers seem to be flocking to Aix la Chapelle: and, what will much surprise you, unless you have lived long enough not to be surprised, is, that Lord Bolingbroke has hobbled the same way too--you will suppose, as a minister for France; I tell you, no. My uncle [_old_ Horace], who is here, was yesterday stumping along the gallery with a very political march: my Lord asked him whither he was going. Oh, said I, to Aix la Chapelle.

You ask me about the marrying Princesses. I know not a tittle. Princess Louisa seems to be going, her clothes are bought; but marrying our daughters makes no conversation. For either of the other two, all thoughts seem to be dropped of it. The Senate of Sweden design themselves to choose a wife for their man of Lubeck.

The City, and our supreme governors, the mob, are very angry that there is a troop of French players at Clifden. One of them was lately impertinent to a countryman, who thrashed him. His Royal Highness sent angrily to know the cause. The fellow replied, "he thought to have pleased his Highness in beating one of them, who had tried to kill his father and had wounded his brother." This was not easy to answer.

I delight in Prince Craon's exact intelligence! For his satisfaction, I can tell him that numbers, even here, would believe any story full as absurd as that of the King and my Lord Stair; or that very one, if anybody will write it over. Our faith in politics will match any Neapolitan's in religion. A political missionary will make more converts in a county progress than a Jesuit in the whole empire of China, and will produce more preposterous miracles. Sir Watkin Williams, at the last Welsh races, convinced the whole principality (by reading a letter that affirmed it), that the King was not within two miles of the battle of Dettingen. We are not good at hitting off anti-miracles, the only way of defending one's own religion. I have read an admirable story of the Duke of Buckingham, who, when James II. sent a priest to him to persuade him to turn Papist, and was plied by him with miracles, told the doctor, that if miracles were proofs of a religion, the Protestant cause was as well supplied as theirs. We have lately had a very extraordinary one near my estate in the country. A very holy man, as you might be, Doctor, was travelling on foot, and was benighted. He came to the cottage of a poor dowager, who had nothing in the house for herself and daughter but a couple of eggs and a slice of bacon. However, as she was a pious widow, she made the good man welcome. In the morning, at taking leave, the saint made her over to God for payment, and prayed that whatever she should do as soon as he was gone she might continue to do all day. This

was a very unlimited request, and, unless the saint was a prophet too, might not have been very pleasant retribution. The good woman, who minded her affairs, and was not to be put out of her way, went about her business. She had a piece of coarse cloth to make a couple of shifts for herself and child. She no sooner began to measure it but the yard fell a-measuring, and there was no stopping it. It was sunset before the good woman had time to take breath. She was almost stifled, for she was up to her ears in ten thousand yards of cloth. She could have afforded to have sold Lady Mary Wortley a clean shift, of the usual coarseness she wears, for a groat halfpenny.

I wish you would tell the Princess this story. Madame Riccardi, or the little Countess d'Elbenino, will doat on it. I don't think it will be out of Pandolfini's way, if you tell it to the little Albizzi. You see I have not forgot the tone of my Florentine acquaintance. I know I should have translated it to them: you remember what admirable work I used to make of such stories in broken Italian. I have heard old Churchill tell Bussy English puns out of jest-books: particularly a reply about eating hare, which he translated, "j'ai mon ventre plein de poil." Adieu!

DEATH OF HIS FATHER--MATTHEWS AND LESTOCK IN THE
MEDITERRANEAN--THOMSON'S "TANCRED AND SIGISMUNDA"--AKENSIDE'S
ODES--CONUNDRUMS IN FASHION._

TO SIR HORACE MANN.

ARLINGTON STREET, _March_ 29, 1745.

I begged your brother to tell you what it was impossible for me to tell you. You share nearly in our common loss! Don't expect me to enter at all upon the subject. After the melancholy two months that I have passed, and in my situation, you will not wonder I shun a conversation which could not be bounded by a letter--a letter that would grow into a panegyric, or a piece of moral; improper for me to write upon, and too distressful for us both!--a death is only to be felt, never to be talked over by those it touches!

I had yesterday your letter of three sheets: I began to flatter myself that the storm was blown over, but I tremble to think of the danger you are in! a danger, in which even the protection of the great friend you have lost could have been of no service to you. How ridiculous it seems for me to renew protestations of my friendship for you, at an instant when my father is just dead, and the Spaniards just bursting into Tuscany! How empty a charm would my name have, when all my interest and significance are buried in my father's grave! All hopes of present peace, the only thing that could save you, seem vanished. We expect every day to hear of the French declaration of war against Holland. The new Elector of Bavaria is French, like his father; and the King of Spain is not dead. I don't know how to talk to you. I have not even a belief that the Spaniards will spare Tuscany. My dear child, what will become of you? whither will you retire till a peace restores you to your ministry? for upon that distant view alone I repose!

We are every day nearer confusion. The King is in as bad humour as a monarch can be; he wants to go abroad, and is detained by the Mediterranean affair; the inquiry into which was moved by a Major Selwyn, a dirty pensioner, half-turned patriot, by the Court being overstocked with votes. This inquiry takes up the whole time of the House of Commons, but I don't see what conclusion it can have. My confinement has kept me from being there, except the first day; and all I know of what is yet come out is, as it was stated by a Scotch member the other day, "that there had been one (Matthews)[1] with a bad head, another (Lestock) with a worse heart, and four (the captains of the inactive ships) with na heart at all." Among the numerous visits of form

that I have received, one was from my Lord Sandys: as we two could only converse upon general topics, we fell upon this of the Mediterranean, and I made him allow, "that, to be sure, there is not so bad a court of justice in the world as the House of Commons; and how hard it is upon any man to have his cause tried there!"...

[Footnote 1: Admiral Matthews, an officer of great courage and skill, was Commander-in-chief of the Mediterranean fleet. Lestock, his second in command, was also a skilful officer; but the two were on bad terms, and when, in February, 1744, Matthews attacked the Spanish fleet, Lestock disobeyed his signals, and by his misconduct deprived Matthews of a splendid victory, which was clearly within his grasp. Court-martials were held on the conduct of both officers; but the Admiralty was determined to crush Matthews, as being a member of the House of Commons and belonging to the party of Opposition, and the consequence was that, though Lestock's misconduct was clearly proved, he was acquitted, and Matthews was sentenced to be cashiered, and declared incapable of any further employment in his Majesty's service. The whole is perhaps the most disgraceful transaction in the history of the navy or of the country. (See the Editor's "History of the British Navy," i. **203-214.**)]

The town flocks to a new play of Thomson's called "Tancred and Sigismunda:" it is very dull; I have read it. I cannot bear modern poetry; these refiners of the purity of the stage, and of the incorrectness of English verse, are most wofully insipid. I had rather have written the most absurd lines in Lee, than "Leonidas" or "The Seasons;" as I had rather be put into the round-house for a wrong-headed quarrel, than sup quietly at eight o'clock with my grandmother. There is another of these tame genius's, a Mr. Akenside, who writes Odes: in one he has lately published, he says, "Light the tapers, urge the fire."^[1] Had not you rather make gods "jostle in the dark," than light the candles for fear they should break their heads? One Russel, a mimic, has a puppet-show to ridicule Operas; I hear, very dull, not to mention its being twenty years too late: it consists of three acts, with foolish Italian songs burlesqued in Italian.

[Footnote 1: Walpole's quotation, however, is incorrect; the poet wrote:

Urge the warm bowl, and ruddy fire.]

There is a very good quarrel on foot between two duchesses: she of Queensberry sent to invite Lady Emily Lenox to a ball: her Grace of Richmond, who is wonderfully cautious since Lady Caroline's elopement [with Mr. Fox], sent word, "she could not determine." The other sent again the same night: the same answer. The Queensberry then sent word, that she had made up her company, and desired to be excused from having Lady Emily's: but at the bottom of the card wrote, "too great a trust." You know how mad she is, and how capable of such a stroke. There is no declaration of war come out from the other Duchess; but, I believe it will be made a national quarrel of the whole illegitimate royal family.

It is the present fashion to make conundrums: there are books of them printed, and produced at all assemblies: they are full silly enough to be made a fashion. I will tell you the most renowned: "Why is my uncle Horace like two people conversing?—Because he is both teller and auditor." This was Winnington's....

I will take the first opportunity to send Dr. Cocchi his translated book; I have not yet seen it myself.

Adieu! my dearest child! I write with a house full of relations, and must conclude. Heaven preserve you and Tuscany.

BATTLE OF FONTENOY--THE BALLAD OF THE PRINCE OF WALES.

TO SIR HORACE MANN.

ARLINGTON STREET, May 11, 1745.

I stayed till to-day, to be able to give you some account of the battle of Tournay: the outlines you will have heard already. We don't allow it to be a victory on the French side: but that is, just as a woman is not called Mrs. till she is married, though she may have had half-a-dozen natural children. In short, we remained upon the field of battle three hours; I fear, too many of us remain there still! without palliating, it is certainly a heavy stroke. We never lost near so many officers. I pity the Duke [of Cumberland], for it is almost the first battle of consequence that we ever lost. By the letters arrived to-day, we find that Tournay still holds out. There are certainly killed Sir James Campbell, General Ponsonby, Colonel Carpenter, Colonel Douglas, young Ross, Colonel Montagu, Gee, Berkeley, and Kellet. Mr. Vanburgh is since dead. Most of the young men of quality in the Guards are wounded. I have had the vast fortune to have nobody hurt, for whom I was in the least interested. Mr. Conway, in particular, has highly distinguished himself; he and Lord Petersham, who is slightly wounded, are most commended; though none behaved ill but the Dutch horse. There has been but very little consternation here: the King minded it so little, that being set out for Hanover, and blown back into Harwich roads since the news came, he could not be persuaded to return, but sailed yesterday with the fair wind. I believe you will have the Gazette sent to-night; but lest it should not be printed time enough, here is a list of the numbers, as it came over this morning:

British foot	1237 killed.
Ditto horse	90 ditto.
Ditto foot	1968 wounded.
Ditto horse	232 ditto.
Ditto foot	457 missing.
Ditto horse	18 ditto.
Hanoverian foot	432 killed.
Ditto horse	78 ditto.
Ditto foot	950 wounded.
Ditto horse	192 ditto.
Ditto horse and foot	53 missing.
Dutch	625 killed and wounded.
Ditto	1019 missing.

So the whole hors de combat is above seven thousand three hundred. The French own the loss of three thousand; I don't believe many more, for it was a most rash and desperate perseverance on our side. The Duke behaved very bravely and humanely; but this will not have advanced the peace.

However coolly the Duke may have behaved, and coldly his father, at least his brother [the Prince of Wales] has outdone both. He not only went to the play the night the news came, but in two days made a ballad. It is in imitation of the Regent's style, and has miscarried in nothing but the language, the thoughts, and the poetry. Did not I tell you in my last that he was going to act Paris in Congreve's "Masque"? The song is addressed to the goddesses.

I.

Venez, mes cheres Deesses,
Venez calmer mon chagrin;
Aidez, mes belles Princesses,
A le noyer dans le vin.
Poussons cette douce Ivresse
Jusqu'au milieu de la nuit,

Et n'écoutez que la tendresse
D'un charmant vis-a-vis.

II.

Quand le chagrin me devore,
Vite à table je me mets,
Loin des objets que j'abhorre,
Avec joie j'y trouve la paix.
Peu d'amis, restes d'un naufrage
Je rassemble autour de moi,
Et je me ris de l'étalage
Qu'à chez lui toujours un Roi.

III.

Que m'importe, que l'Europe
Ait un, ou plusieurs tyrans?
Prions seulement Calliope,
Qu'elle inspire nos vers, nos chants
Laissons Mars et toute la gloire;
Livrons nous tous à l'amour;
Que Bacchus nous donne à boire;
A ces deux faisons la cour.

IV.

Passons ainsi notre vie,
Sans rêver à ce qui suit;
Avec ma chère Sylvie
Le temps trop vite me fuit.
Mais si, par un malheur extrême,
Je perdois cet objet charmant,
Oui, cette compagnie même
Ne me tiendrait un moment.

V.

Me livrant à ma tristesse,
Toujours plein de mon chagrin,
Je n'aurois plus d'allégresse
Pour mettre Bathurst en train:
Ainsi pour vous tenir en joie
Invoquez toujours les Dieux,
Qu'elle vive et qu'elle soit
Avec nous toujours heureuse!

Adieu! I am in great hurry.

_M. DE GRIGNAN--LIVY'S PATAVINITY--THE MARECHAL DE BELLEISLE--WHISTON
PROPHECIES THE DESTRUCTION OF THE WORLD--THE DUKE OF NEWCASTLE._

TO GEORGE MONTAGU, ESQ.

[_August_ 1, 1745.]

Dear George,--I cannot help thinking you laugh at me when you say such
very civil things of my letters, and yet, coming from you, I would fain
not have it all flattery:

So much the more, as, from a little elf,
I've had a high opinion of myself,
Though sickly, slender, and not large of limb.

With this modest prepossession, you may be sure I like to have you commend me, whom, after I have done with myself, I admire of all men living. I only beg that you will commend me no more: it is very ruinous; and praise, like other debts, ceases to be due on being paid. One comfort indeed is, that it is as seldom paid as other debts.

I have been very fortunate lately: I have met with an extreme good print of M. de Grignan;^[1] I am persuaded, very like; and then it has his *_touffe ebourfee_*; I don't, indeed, know what that was, but I am sure it is in the print. None of the critics could ever make out what Livy's Patavinity is; though they are all confident it is in his writings. I have heard within these few days what, for your sake, I wish I could have told you sooner--that there is in Belleisle's suite the Abbe Perrin, who published Madame Sevigne's letters, and who has the originals in his hands. How one should have liked to have known him! The Marshal^[2] was privately in London last Friday. He is entertained to-day at Hampton Court by the Duke of Grafton. Don't you believe it was to settle the binding the scarlet thread in the window, when the French shall come in unto the land to possess it? I don't at all wonder at any shrewd observations the Marshal has made on our situation. The bringing him here at all--the sending him away now--in short, the whole series of our conduct convinces me, that we shall soon see as silent a change as that in "The Rehearsal," of King Usher and King Physician. It may well be so, when the disposition of the drama is in the hands of the Duke of Newcastle--those hands that are always groping and sprawling, and fluttering, and hurrying on the rest of his precipitate person. But there is no describing him but as M. Courcelle, a French prisoner, did t'other day: "Je ne sçais pas," dit il, "je ne scaurois m'exprimer, mais il a un certain tatillonage." If one could conceive a dead body hung in chains, always wanting to be hung somewhere else, one should have a comparative idea of him.

[Footnote 1: M. de Grignan son-in-law to Mme. de Sevigne, the greater part of whose letters are to his wife.]

[Footnote 2: The Marechal de Belleisle and his younger brother, the Comte de Belleisle, were the grandsons of Fouquet, the Finance Minister treated with such cruelty and injustice by Louis XIV. The Parisians nicknamed the two brothers "Imagination" and "Common Sense." The Marshal was joined with the Marshal de Broglie in the disastrous expedition against Prague in the winter of 1742; when, though they succeeded in taking and occupying the city for a time, they were afterwards forced to evacuate it; and though Belleisle conducted the retreat with great courage and skill, the army, which had numbered fifty thousand men when it crossed the Rhine, scarcely exceeded twelve thousand when it regained the French territory. (See the Editor's "History of France under the Bourbons," c. xxv.)]

For my own part, I comfort myself with the humane reflection of the Irishman in the ship that was on fire--I am but a passenger! If I were not so indolent, I think I should rather put in practice the late Duchess of Bolton's geographical resolution of going to China, when Whiston told her the world would be burnt in three years. Have you any philosophy? Tell me what you think. It is quite the fashion to talk of the French coming here. Nobody sees it in any other light but as a thing to be talked of, not to be precautions against. Don't you remember a report of the plague being in the City, and everybody went to the house where it was to see it? You see I laugh about it, for I would not for the world be so unenglished as to do otherwise. I am persuaded that when Count Saxe,^[1] with ten thousand men, is within a day's march of London, people will be hiring windows at Charing-cross and Cheapside to see them pass by. 'Tis our characteristic to take dangers for sights, and evils for curiosities.

[Footnote 1: The great Marechal Saxe, Commander-in-chief of the French

army in Flanders during the war of the Austrian succession.]

Adieu! dear George: I am laying in scraps of Cato against it may be necessary to take leave of one's correspondents a la Romaine, and before the play itself is suppressed by a lettre de cachet to the book-sellers.

P.S.--Lord! 'tis the first of August,[1] 1745, a holiday that is going to be turned out of the almanack!

[Footnote 1: August 1 was the anniversary of the accession of George I.]

INVASION OF SCOTLAND BY THE YOUNG PRETENDER--FORCES ARE SAID TO BE PREPARING IN FRANCE TO JOIN HIM.

TO SIR HORACE MANN.

ARLINGTON STREET, Sept. 6, 1745.

It would have been inexcusable in me, in our present circumstances, and after all I have promised you, not to have written to you for this last month, if I had been in London; but I have been at Mount Edgumbe, and so constantly upon the road, that I neither received your letters, had time to write, or knew what to write. I came back last night, and found three packets from you, which I have no time to answer, and but just time to read. The confusion I have found, and the danger we are in, prevent my talking of anything else. The young Pretender, at the head of three thousand men, has got a march on General Cope, who is not eighteen hundred strong; and when the last accounts came away, was fifty miles nearer Edinburgh than Cope, and by this time is there. The clans will not rise for the Government: the Dukes of Argyll and Athol are come post to town, not having been able to raise a man. The young Duke of Gordon sent for his uncle, and told him he must arm their clan. "They are in arms."--"They must march against the rebels."--"They will wait on the Prince of Wales." The Duke flew in a passion; his uncle pulled out a pistol, and told him it was in vain to dispute. Lord Loudon, Lord Fortrose, and Lord Panmure have been very zealous, and have raised some men; but I look upon Scotland as gone! I think of what King William said to Duke Hamilton, when he was extolling Scotland: "My Lord, I only wish it was a hundred thousand miles off, and that you was king of it!"

There are two manifestoes published, signed Charles Prince, Regent for his father, King of Scotland, England, France, and Ireland. By one, he promises to preserve everybody in their just rights; and orders all persons who have public monies in their hands to bring it to him; and by the other dissolves the union between England and Scotland. But all this is not the worst! Notice came yesterday, that there are ten thousand men, thirty transports, and ten men-of-war at Dunkirk. Against this force we have--I don't know what--scarce fears! Three thousand Dutch we hope are by this time landed in Scotland; three more are coming hither. We have sent for ten regiments from Flanders, which may be here in a week, and we have fifteen men-of-war in the Downs. I am grieved to tell you all this; but when it is so, how can I avoid telling you? Your brother is just come in, who says he has written to you--I have not time to expiate.

My Lady O[rford] is arrived; I hear she says, only to endeavour to get a certain allowance. Her mother has sent to offer her the use of her house. She is a poor weak woman. I can say nothing to Marquis Ricardi, nor think of him; only tell him that I will when I have time.

My sister [Lady Maria Walpole] has married herself, that is, declared she will, to young Churchill. It is a foolish match; but I have nothing to do with it. Adieu! my dear Sir; excuse my haste, but you must imagine

that one is not much at leisure to write long letters--hope if you can!

THIS AND THE FOLLOWING LETTERS GIVE A LIVELY ACCOUNT OF THE PROGRESS OF THE REBELLION TILL THE RETREAT FROM DERBY, AFTER WHICH NO PARTICULAR INTEREST ATTACHES TO IT.

TO SIR HORACE MANN.

ARLINGTON STREET, Sept. 20, 1745.

One really don't know what to write to you: the accounts from Scotland vary perpetually, and at best are never very certain. I was just going to tell you that the rebels are in England; but my uncle [old Horace] is this moment come in, and says, that an express came last night with an account of their being at Edinburgh to the number of five thousand. This sounds great, to have walked through a kingdom, and taken possession of the capital! But this capital is an open town; and the castle impregnable, and in our possession. There never was so extraordinary a sort of rebellion! One can't tell what assurances of support they may have from the Jacobites in England, or from the French; but nothing of either sort has yet appeared--and if there does not, never was so desperate an enterprise. One can hardly believe that the English are more disaffected than the Scotch; and among the latter, no persons of property have joined them: both nations seem to profess a neutrality. Their money is all gone, and they subsist merely by levying contributions. But, sure, banditti can never conquer a kingdom! On the other hand, what cannot any number of men do, who meet no opposition? They have hitherto taken no place but open towns, nor have they any artillery for a siege but one-pounders. Three battalions of Dutch are landed at Gravesend, and are ordered to Lancashire: we expect every moment to hear that the rest are got to Scotland; none of our own are come yet. Lord Granville and his faction persist in persuading the King, that it is an affair of no consequence; and for the Duke of Newcastle, he is glad when the rebels make any progress, in order to confute Lord Granville's assertions. The best of our situation is, our strength at sea: the Channel is well guarded, and twelve men-of-war more are arrived from Rowley. Vernon, that simple noisy creature, has hit upon a scheme that is of great service; he has laid Folkstone cutters all round the coast, which are continually relieved, and bring constant notice of everything that stirs. I just now hear that the Duke of Bedford declares that he will be amused no longer, but will ask the King's leave to raise a regiment. The Duke of Montagu has a troop of horse ready, and the Duke of Devonshire is raising men in Derbyshire. The Yorkshiremen, headed by the Archbishop [Herring] and Lord Malton, meet the gentlemen of the county the day after to-morrow, to defend that part of England. Unless we have more ill fortune than is conceivable, or the general supineness continues, it is impossible but we must get over this. You desire me to send you news: I confine myself to tell you nothing but what you may depend upon; and leave you in a fright rather than deceive you. I confess my own apprehensions are not near so strong as they were; and if we get over this, I shall believe that we never can be hurt; for we never can be more exposed to danger. Whatever disaffection there is to the present family, it plainly does not proceed from love to the other.

My Lady O[rford] makes little progress in popularity. Neither the protection of my Lady Pomfret's prudery, nor of my Lady Townshend's libertinism, do her any service. The women stare at her, think her ugly, awkward, and disagreeable; and what is worse, the men think so too. For the height of mortification, the King has declared publicly to the Ministry, that he has been told of the great civilities which he was said to show to her at Hanover; that he protests he showed her only the common civilities due to any English lady that comes thither; that he never intended to take any particular notice of her; nor had, nor would let my Lady Yarmouth. In fact, my Lady Yarmouth peremptorily refused to

carry her to court here; and when she did go with my Lady Pomfret, the King but just spoke to her. She declares her intention of staying in England, and protests against all lawsuits and violences; and says she only asks articles of separation, and to have her allowance settled by any two arbitrators chosen by my brother and herself. I have met her twice at my Lady Townshend's, just as I used at Florence. She dresses English and plays at whist. I forgot to tell a bon-mot of Leheup on her first coming over; he was asked if he would not go and see her? He replied, "No, I never visit modest women." Adieu! my dear child! I flatter myself you will collect hopes from this letter.

DEFEAT OF COPE.

TO SIR HORACE MANN.

ARLINGTON STREET, Sept. 27, 1745.

I can't doubt but the joy of the Jacobites has reached Florence before this letter. Your two or three Irish priests, I forget their names, will have set out to take possession of abbey lands here. I feel for what you will feel, and for the insulting things that will be said to you upon the battle we lost in Scotland; but all this is nothing to what it prefaces. The express came hither on Tuesday morning, but the Papists knew it on Sunday night. Cope lay in face of the rebels all Friday; he scarce two thousand strong, they vastly superior, though we don't know their numbers. The military people say that he should have attacked them. However, we are sadly convinced that they are not such raw ragamuffins as they were represented. The rotation that has been established in that country, to give all the Highlanders the benefit of serving in the independent companies, has trained and disciplined them. Macdonald (I suppose, he from Naples), who is reckoned a very experienced able officer, is said to have commanded them, and to be dangerously wounded. One does not hear the Boy's personal valour cried up; by which I conclude he was not in the action. Our dragoons most shamefully fled without striking a blow, and are with Cope, who escaped in a boat to Berwick. I pity poor him, who with no shining abilities, and no experience, and no force, was sent to fight for a crown! He never saw a battle but that of Dettingen, where he got his red ribbon: Churchill, whose led-captain he was, and my Lord Harrington, had pushed him up to his misfortune. We have lost all our artillery, five hundred men taken—and three killed, and several officers, as you will see in the papers. This defeat has frightened everybody but those it rejoices, and those it should frighten most; but my Lord Granville still buoys up the King's spirits, and persuades him it is nothing. He uses his Ministers as ill as possible, and discourages everybody that would risk their lives and fortunes with him. Marshal Wade is marching against the rebels; but the King will not let him take above eight thousand men; so that if they come into England, another battle, with no advantage on our side, may determine our fate. Indeed, they don't seem so unwise as to risk their cause upon so precarious an event; but rather to design to establish themselves in Scotland, till they can be supported from France, and be set up with taking Edinburgh Castle, where there is to the value of a million, and which they would make a stronghold. It is scarcely victualled for a month, and must surely fall into their hands. Our coasts are greatly guarded, and London kept in awe by the arrival of the guards. I don't believe what I have been told this morning, that more troops are sent for from Flanders, and aid asked of Denmark.

Prince Charles has called a Parliament in Scotland for the 7th of October; ours does not meet till the 17th, so that even in the show of liberty and laws they are beforehand with us. With all this, we hear of no men of quality or fortune having joined him but Lord Elcho, whom you have seen at Florence; and the Duke of Peith, a silly race horsing boy, who is said to be killed in this battle. But I gather no confidence

from hence: my father always said, "If you see them come again, they will begin by their lowest people; their chiefs will not appear till the end." His prophecies verify every day!

The town is still empty; on this point only the English act contrary to their custom, for they don't throng to see a Parliament, though it is likely to grow a curiosity!...

GENERAL WADE IS MARCHING TO SCOTLAND--VIOLENT PROCLAMATION OF THE
PRETENDER.

TO SIR HORACE MANN.

ARLINGTON STREET, Oct. 21, 1745.

I had been almost as long without any of your letters as you had without mine; but yesterday I received one, dated the 5th of this month, N.S.

The rebels have not left their camp near Edinburgh, and, I suppose, will not now, unless to retreat into the Highlands. General Wade was to march yesterday from Doncaster for Scotland. By their not advancing, I conclude that either the Boy and his council could not prevail on the Highlanders to leave their own country, or that they were not strong enough, and still wait for foreign assistance, which, in a new declaration, he intimates that he still expects. One only ship, I believe, a Spanish one, is got to them with arms, and Lord John Drummond and some people of quality on board. We don't hear that the younger Boy is of the number. Four ships sailed from Corunna; the one that got to Scotland, one taken by a privateer of Bristol, and one lost on the Irish coast; the fourth is not heard of. At Edinburgh and thereabouts they commit the most horrid barbarities. We last night expected as bad here: information was given of an intended insurrection and massacre by the Papists; all the Guards were ordered out, and the Tower shut up at seven. I cannot be surprised at anything, considering the supineness of the Ministry--nobody has yet been taken up!

The Parliament met on Thursday. I don't think, considering the crisis, that the House was very full. Indeed, many of the Scotch members cannot come if they would. The young Pretender had published a declaration, threatening to confiscate the estates of the Scotch that should come to Parliament, and making it treason for the English. The only points that have been before the House, the address and the suspension of the Habeas Corpus, met with obstructions from the Jacobites. By this we may expect what spirit they will show hereafter. With all this, I am far from thinking that they are so confident and sanguine as their friends at Rome. I blame the Chutes extremely for cockading themselves: why take a part, when they are only travelling? I should certainly retire to Florence on this occasion.

You may imagine how little I like our situation; but I don't despair. The little use they made, or could make of their victory; their not having marched into England; their miscarriage at the Castle of Edinburgh; the arrival of our forces, and the non-arrival of any French or Spanish, make me conceive great hopes of getting over this ugly business. But it is still an affair wherein the chance of battles, or perhaps of one battle, may decide.

I write you but short letters, considering the circumstances of the time; but I hate to send you paragraphs only to contradict them again: I still less choose to forge events; and, indeed, am glad I have so few to tell you.

My Lady O[rford] has forced herself upon her mother, who receives her very coolly: she talks highly of her demands, and quietly of her

methods: the fruitlessness of either will, I hope, soon send her back—I am sorry it must be to you!

You mention Holdisworth:[1] he has had the confidence to come and visit me within these ten days; and (I suppose, from the overflowing of his joy) talked a great deal and quick—with as little sense as when he was more tedious.

[Footnote 1: A nonjuror, who travelled with Mr. George Pitt.--WALPOLE.]

Since I wrote this, I hear the Countess [of Orford] has told her mother, that she thinks her husband the best of our family, and me the worst—nobody so bad, except you! I don't wonder at my being so ill with her; but what have you done? or is it, that we are worse than anybody, because we know more of her than anybody does? Adieu!

GALLANT RESISTANCE OF CARLISLE--MR. PITT ATTACKS THE MINISTRY.

TO SIR HORACE MANN.

ARLINGTON STREET, _Nov._ 22, 1745.

For these two days we have been expecting news of a battle. Wade marched last Saturday from Newcastle, and must have got up with the rebels if they stayed for him, though the roads are exceedingly bad and great quantities of snow have fallen. But last night there was some notice of a body of rebels being advanced to Penryth. We were put into great spirits by an heroic letter from the Mayor of Carlisle, who had fired on the rebels and made them retire; he concluded with saying, "And so I think the town of Carlisle has done his Majesty more service than the great city of Edinburgh, or than all Scotland together." But this hero, who was grown the whole fashion for four-and-twenty hours, had chosen to stop all other letters. The King spoke of him at his _levee_ with great encomiums; Lord Stair said, "Yes, sir, Mr. Patterson has behaved very bravely." The Duke of Bedford interrupted him; "My lord, his name is not _Paterson_ ; that is a Scotch name; his name is _Patinson_ ." But, alack! the next day the rebels returned, having placed the women and children of the country in waggons in front of their army, and forcing the peasants to fix the scaling-ladders. The great Mr. Pattinson, or Patterson (for now his name may be which one pleases), instantly surrendered the town, and agreed to pay two thousand pounds to save it from pillage. Well! then we were assured that the citadel could hold out seven or eight days; but did not so many hours. On mustering the militia, there were not found above four men in a company; and for two companies, which the ministry, on a report of Lord Albemarle, who said they were to be sent from Wade's army, thought were there, and did not know were not there, there was nothing but two of invalids. Colonel Durand, the governor, fled, because he would not sign the capitulation, by which the garrison, it is said, has sworn never to bear arms against the house of Stuart. The Colonel sent two expresses, one to Wade, and another to Ligonier at Preston; but the latter was playing at whist with Lord Harrington at Petersham. Such is our diligence and attention! All my hopes are in Wade, who was so sensible of the ignorance of our governors, that he refused to accept the command, till they consented that he should be subject to no kind of orders from hence. The rebels are reckoned up at thirteen thousand; Wade marches with about twelve; but if they come southward, the other army will probably be to fight them; the Duke is to command it, and sets out next week with another brigade of Guards, the Ligonier under him. There are great apprehensions for Chester from the Flintshire-men, who are ready to rise. A quartermaster, first sent to Carlisle, was seized and carried to Wade; he behaved most insolently; and being asked by the general, how many the rebels were, replied, "Enough to beat any army you have in England." A Mackintosh has been taken, who reduces their formidability, by being

sent to raise two clans, and with orders, if they would not rise, at least to give out they had risen, for that three clans would leave the Pretender, unless joined by those two. Five hundred new rebels are arrived at Perth, where our prisoners are kept.

I had this morning a subscription-book brought me for our parish; Lord Granville had refused to subscribe. This is in the style of his friend Lord Bath, who has absented himself whenever any act of authority was to be executed against the rebels.

Five Scotch lords are going to raise regiments _a l'Angloise_! resident in London, while the rebels were in Scotland; they are to receive military emoluments for their neutrality!

The _Fox_ man-of-war of 20 guns is lost off Dunbar. One Beavor, the captain, has done us notable service: the Pretender sent to commend his zeal and activity, and to tell him, that if he would return to his allegiance, he should soon have a flag. Beavor replied, "He never treated with any but principals; that if the Pretender would come on board him, he would talk with him." I must now tell you of our great Vernon: without once complaining to the Ministry, he has written to Sir John Philipps, a distinguished Jacobite, to complain of want of provisions; yet they do not venture to recall him! Yesterday they had another baiting from Pitt, who is ravenous for the place of Secretary at War: they would give it him; but as a preliminary, he insists on a declaration of our having nothing to do with the continent. He mustered his forces, but did not notify his intention; only at two o'clock Lyttelton said at the Treasury, that there would be business at the House. The motion was, to augment our naval force, which, Pitt said, was the only method of putting an end to the rebellion. Ships built a year hence to suppress an army of Highlanders, now marching through England! My uncle [_old_ Horace] attacked him, and congratulated his country on the wisdom of the modern young men; and said he had a son of two-and-twenty, who, he did not doubt, would come over wiser than any of them. Pitt was provoked, and retorted on his negotiations and _grey-headed_ experience. At those words, my uncle, as if he had been at Bartholomew fair, snatched off his wig, and showed his grey hairs, which made the _august senate_ laugh, and put Pitt out, who, after laughing himself, diverted his venom upon Mr. Pelham. Upon the question, Pitt's party amounted but to thirty-six: in short, he has nothing left but his words, and his haughtiness, and his Lytteltons, and his Grenvilles. Adieu!

THE REBEL ARMY HAS RETREATED FROM DERBY--EXPECTATION OF A FRENCH INVASION.

TO SIR HORACE MANN.

ARLINGTON STREET, _Dec._ 9, 1745.

I am glad I did not write to you last post as I intended; I should have sent you an account that would have alarmed you, and the danger would have been over before the letter had crossed the sea. The Duke, from some strange want of intelligence, lay last week for four-and-twenty hours under arms at Stone, in Staffordshire, expecting the rebels every moment, while they were marching in all haste to Derby. The news of this threw the town into great consternation; but his Royal Highness repaired his mistake, and got to Northampton, between the Highlanders and London. They got nine thousand pounds at Derby, and had the books brought to them, and obliged everybody to give them what they had subscribed against them. Then they retreated a few miles, but returned again to Derby, got ten thousand pounds more, plundered the town, and burnt a house of the Countess of Exeter. They are gone again, and go back to Leake, in Staffordshire, but miserably harassed, and, it is said, have

left all their cannon behind them, and twenty waggons of sick. The Duke has sent General Hawley with the dragoons to harass them in their retreat, and despatched Mr. Conway to Marshal Wade, to hasten his march upon the back of them. They must either go to North Wales, where they will probably all perish, or to Scotland, with great loss. We dread them no longer. We are threatened with great preparations for a French invasion, but the coast is exceedingly guarded; and for the people, the spirit against the rebels increases every day. Though they have marched thus into the heart of the kingdom, there has not been the least symptom of a rising, nor even in the great towns of which they possessed themselves. They have got no recruits since their first entry into England, excepting one gentleman in Lancashire, one hundred and fifty common men, and two parsons, at Manchester, and a physician from York. But here in London, the aversion to them is amazing: on some thoughts of the King's going to an encampment at Finchley,[1] the weavers not only offered him a thousand men, but the whole body of the Law formed themselves into a little army, under the command of Lord Chief Justice Willes, and were to have done duty at St. James's, to guard the royal family in the King's absence.

[Footnote 1: The troops which were being collected for the Duke of Cumberland, as soon as he should arrive from the Continent, to march with against the Pretender, were in the meantime encamped on Finchley Common near London. The march of the Guards to the camp is the subject of one of Hogarth's best pictures.]

But the greatest demonstration of loyalty appeared on the prisoners being brought to town from the Soleil prize: the young man is certainly Mr. Radcliffe's son; but the mob, persuaded of his being the youngest Pretender, could scarcely be restrained from tearing him to pieces all the way on the road, and at his arrival. He said he had heard of English mobs, but could not conceive they were so dreadful, and wished he had been shot at the battle of Dettingen, where he had been engaged. The father, whom they call Lord Derwentwater, said, on entering the Tower, that he had never expected to arrive there alive. For the young man, he must only be treated as a French captive; for the father, it is sufficient to produce him at the Old Bailey, and prove that he is the individual person condemned for the last Rebellion, and so to Tyburn.

We begin to take up people, but it is with as much caution and timidity as women of quality begin to pawn their jewels; we have not ventured upon any great stone yet! The Provost of Edinburgh is in custody of a messenger, and the other day they seized an odd man, who goes by the name of Count St. Germain. He has been here these two years, and will not tell who he is, or whence, but professes that he does not go by his right name. He sings, plays on the violin wonderfully, composes, is mad, and not very sensible. He is called an Italian, a Spaniard, a Pole; a somebody that married a great fortune in Mexico, and ran away with her jewels to Constantinople; a priest, a fiddler, a vast nobleman. The Prince of Wales has had unsatiated curiosity about him, but in vain. However, nothing has been made out against him;[1] he is released; and, what convinces me that he is not a gentleman, stays here, and talks of his being taken up for a spy.

[Footnote 1: In the beginning of the year 1755, on rumours of a great armament at Brest, one Virette, a Swiss, who had been a kind of toad-eater to this St. Germain, was denounced to Lord Holdemesse for a spy; but Mr. Stanley going pretty surlily to his lordship, on his suspecting a friend of his, Virette was declared innocent, and the penitent secretary of state made him the *amende honorable* of a dinner in form. About the same time, a spy of ours was seized at Brest, but, not happening to be acquainted with Mr. Stanley, was broken upon the wheel.--WALPOLE.]

I think these accounts, upon which you may depend, must raise your

spirits, and figure in Mr. Chute's loyal journal.--But you don't get my letters: I have sent you eleven since I came to town; how many of these have you received? Adieu!

BATTLE OF CULLODEN.

TO SIR HORACE MANN.

ARLINGTON STREET, _April_ 25, 1746.

You have bid me for some time to send you good news--well! I think I will. How good would you have it? must it be a total victory over the rebels; with not only the Boy, that is here, killed, but the other, that is not here, too; their whole army put to the sword, besides an infinite number of prisoners; all the Jacobite estates in England confiscated, and all those in Scotland--what would you have done with them?--or could you be content with something much under this? how much will you abate? will you compound for Lord John Drummond, taken by accident? or for three Presbyterian parsons, who have very poor livings, stoutly refusing to pay a large contribution to the rebels? Come, I will deal as well with you as I can, and for once, but not to make a practice of it, will let you have a victory! My friend, Lord Bury, arrived this morning from the Duke, though the news was got here before him; for, with all our victory, it was not thought safe to send him through the heart of Scotland; so he was shipped at Inverness, within an hour after the Duke entered the town, kept beating at sea five days, and then put on shore at North Berwick, from whence he came post in less than three days to London; but with a fever upon him, for which he had been twice blooded but the day before the battle; but he is young, and high in spirits, and I flatter myself will not suffer from this kindness of the Duke: the King has immediately ordered him a thousand pound, and I hear will make him his own aide-de-camp. My dear Mr. Chute, I beg your pardon; I have forgot you have the gout, and consequently not the same patience to wait for the battle, with which I, knowing the particulars, postpone it.

On the 16th, the Duke, by forced marches, came up with the rebels, a little on this side Inverness--by the way, the battle is not christened yet; I only know that neither Prestonpans nor Falkirk are to be godfathers. The rebels, who fled from him after their victory, and durst not attack him, when so much exposed to them at his passage of the Spey, now stood him, they seven thousand, he ten. They broke through Barril's regiment, and killed Lord Robert Kerr, a handsome young gentleman, who was cut to pieces with above thirty wounds; but they were soon repulsed, and fled; the whole engagement not lasting above a quarter of an hour. The young Pretender escaped; Mr. Conway says, he hears, wounded: he certainly was in the rear. They have lost above a thousand men in the engagement and pursuit; and six hundred were already taken; among which latter are their French ambassador and Earl Kilmarnock. The Duke of Perth and Lord Ogilvie are said to be slain; Lord Elcho was in a salivation, and not there. Except Lord Robert Kerr, we lost nobody of note: Sir Robert Rich's eldest son has lost his hand, and about a hundred and thirty private men fell. The defeat is reckoned total, and the dispersion general; and all their artillery is taken. It is a brave young Duke! The town is all blazing round me, as I write, with fireworks and illuminations: I have some inclination to wrap up half a dozen sky-rockets, to make you drink the Duke's health. Mr. Dodington, on the first report, came out with a very pretty illumination; so pretty, that I believe he had it by him, ready for _any_ occasion....

TRIAL OF THE REBEL LORDS BALMERINO AND KILMARNOCK.

TO SIR HORACE MANN.

ARLINGTON STREET, _Aug_ 1, 1746.

I am this moment come from the conclusion of the greatest and most melancholy scene I ever yet saw! You will easily guess it was the Trials of the rebel Lords. As it was the most interesting sight, it was the most solemn and fine: a coronation is a puppet-show, and all the splendour of it idle; but this sight at once feasted one's eyes and engaged all one's passions. It began last Monday; three parts of Westminster Hall were inclosed with galleries, and hung with scarlet; and the whole ceremony was conducted with the most awful solemnity and decency, except in the one point of leaving the prisoners at the bar, amidst the idle curiosity of some crowd, and even with the witnesses who had sworn against them, while the Lords adjourned to their own House to consult. No part of the royal family was there, which was a proper regard to the unhappy men, who were become their victims. One hundred and thirty-nine Lords were present, and made a noble sight on their benches _frequent and full_! The Chancellor [Hardwicke] was Lord High Steward; but though a most comely personage with a fine voice, his behaviour was mean, curiously searching for occasion to bow to the minister [Mr. Pelham] that is no peer, and consequently applying to the other ministers, in a manner, for their orders; and not even ready at the ceremonial. To the prisoners he was peevish; and instead of keeping up to the humane dignity of the law of England, whose character it is to point out favour to the criminal, he crossed them, and almost scolded at any offer they made towards defence. I had armed myself with all the resolution I could, with the thought of their crimes and of the danger past, and was assisted by the sight of the Marquis of Lothian in weepers for his son who fell at Culloden—but the first appearance of the prisoners shocked me! their behaviour melted me! Lord Kilmarnock and Lord Cromartie are both past forty, but look younger. Lord Kilmarnock is tall and slender, with an extreme fine person: his behaviour a most just mixture between dignity and submission; if in anything to be reprehended, a little affected, and his hair too exactly dressed for a man in his situation; but when I say it is not to find fault with him, but to show how little fault there was to be found. Lord Cromartie is an indifferent figure, appeared much dejected, and rather sullen: he dropped a few tears the first day, and swooned as soon as he got back to his cell. For Lord Balmerino, he is the most natural brave old fellow I ever saw: the highest intrepidity, even to indifference. At the bar he behaved like a soldier and a man; at the intervals of form, with carelessness and humour. He pressed extremely to have his wife, his pretty Peggy, with him in the Tower. Lady Cromartie only sees her husband through the grate, not choosing to be shut up with him, as she thinks she can serve him better by her intercession without: she is big with child and very handsome: so are their daughters. When they were to be brought from the Tower in separate coaches, there was some dispute in which the axe must go—old Balmerino cried, "Come, come, put it with me." At the bar, he plays with his fingers upon the axe, while he talks with the gentleman-gaoler; and one day somebody coming up to listen, he took the blade and held it like a fan between their faces. During the trial, a little boy was near him, but not tall enough to see; he made room for the child and placed him near himself.

When the trial began, the two Earls pleaded guilty; Balmerino not guilty, saying he could prove his not being at the taking of the castle of Carlisle, as was laid in the indictment. Then the King's counsel opened, and Serjeant Skinner pronounced the most absurd speech imaginable; and mentioned the Duke of Perth, "who," said he, "I see by the papers is dead." Then some witnesses were examined, whom afterwards the old hero shook cordially by the hand. The Lords withdrew to their House, and returning, demanded of the judges, whether one point not being proved, though all the rest were, the indictment was false? to which they unanimously answered in the negative. Then the Lord High Steward asked the Peers severally, whether Lord Balmerino was guilty! All said, "guilty upon honour," and then adjourned, the prisoner having

begged pardon for giving them so much trouble. While the Lords were withdrawn, the Solicitor-General Murray (brother of the Pretender's minister) officiously and insolently went up to Lord Balmerino, and asked him, how he could give the Lords so much trouble, when his solicitor had informed him that his plea could be of no use to him? Balmerino asked the bystanders who this person was? and being told he said, "Oh, Mr. Murray! I am extremely glad to see you; I have been with several of your relations; the good lady, your mother, was of great use to us at Perth." Are not you charmed with this speech? how just it was! As he went away, he said, "They call me Jacobite; I am no more a Jacobite than any that tried me: but if the Great Mogul had set up his standard, I should have followed it, for I could not starve." The worst of his case is, that after the battle of Dumblain, having a company in the Duke of Argyll's regiment, he deserted with it to the rebels, and has since been pardoned. Lord Kilmarnock is a Presbyterian, with four earldoms in him, but so poor since Lord Wilmington's stopping a pension that my father had given him, that he often wanted a dinner. Lord Cromartie was receiver of the rents of the King's second son in Scotland, which, it was understood, he should not account for; and by that means had six-hundred a-year from the Government: Lord Elibank, a very prating, impertinent Jacobite, was bound for him in nine thousand pounds, for which the Duke is determined to sue him.

When the Peers were going to vote, Lord Foley withdrew, as too well a wisher; Lord Moray, as nephew of Lord Balmerino--and Lord Stair,--as, I believe, uncle to his great-grandfather. Lord Windsor, very affectedly, said, "I am sorry I must say, guilty upon my honour." Lord Stamford would not answer to the name of Henry, having been christened Harry--what a great way of thinking on such an occasion! I was diverted too with old Norsa, the father of my brother's concubine, an old Jew that kept a tavern; my brother [Orford], as Auditor of the Exchequer, has a gallery along one whole side of the court; I said, "I really feel for the prisoners!" old Issachar replied, "Feel for them! pray, if they had succeeded, what would have become of all us?" When my Lady Townsend heard her husband vote, she said, "I always knew my Lord was guilty, but I never thought he would own it upon his honour." Lord Balmerino said, that one of his reasons for pleading not guilty, was that so many ladies might not be disappointed of their show.

On Wednesday they were again brought to Westminster Hall, to receive sentence; and being asked what they had to say, Lord Kilmarnock, with a very fine voice, read a very fine speech, confessing the extent of his crime, but offering his principles as some alleviation, having his eldest son (his second unluckily with him), in the Duke's army, fighting for the liberties of his country at Culloden, where his unhappy father was in arms to destroy them. He insisted much on his tenderness to the English prisoners, which some deny, and say that he was the man who proposed their being put to death, when General Stapleton urged that he was come to fight, but not to butcher; and that if they acted any such barbarity, he would leave them with all his men. He very artfully mentioned Van Hoey's letter, and said how much he would scorn to owe his life to such intercession.[1] Lord Cromartie spoke much shorter, and so low, that he was not heard but by those who sat very near him; but they prefer his speech to the other. He mentioned his misfortune in having drawn in his eldest son, who is prisoner with him; and concluded with saying, "If no part of this bitter cup must pass from me, not mine, O God, but thy will be done!" If he had pleaded not guilty, there was ready to be produced against him a paper signed with his own hand, for putting the English prisoners to death.

[Footnote 1: In a subsequent letter Walpole attributes Lord Kilmarnock's complicity in the rebellion partly to the influence of his mother, the Countess of Errol, and partly to his extreme poverty. He says: "I don't know whether I told you that the man at the tennis-court protests that

he has known him dine with the man that sells pamphlets at Storey's Gate; 'and,' says he, 'he would often have been glad if I would have taken him home to dinner.' He was certainly so poor, that in one of his wife's intercepted letters she tells him she has plagued their steward for a fortnight for money, and can get but three shillings." One cannot help remembering, *l'bit eo quo vis qui zonam perdidit*. And afterwards, in relating his execution, he mentions a report that the Duke of Cumberland charging him (certainly on misinformation) with having promoted the adoption of "a resolution taken the day before the battle of Culloden" to put the English prisoners to death, "decided this unhappy man's fate" by preventing his obtaining a pardon.]

Lord Leicester went up to the Duke of Newcastle, and said, "I never heard so great an orator as Lord Kilmarnock? if I was your grace I would pardon him, and make him *paymaster*."^[1]

[Footnote 1: "*I would make him paymaster.*" The paymaster at this time was Mr. Pitt.]

That morning a paper had been sent to the lieutenant of the Tower for the prisoners; he gave it to Lord Cornwallis, the governor, who carried it to the House of Lords. It was a plea for the prisoners, objecting that the late act for regulating the trials of rebels did not take place till after their crime was committed. The Lords very tenderly and rightly sent this plea to them, of which, as you have seen, the two Earls did not make use; but old Balmerino did, and demanded council on it. The High Steward, almost in a passion, told him, that when he had been offered council, he did not accept it. Do but think on the ridicule of sending them the plea, and then denying them council on it! The Duke of Newcastle, who never let slip an opportunity of being absurd, took it up as a ministerial point, in defence of his creature the Chancellor [Hardwicke]; but Lord Granville moved, according to order, to adjourn to debate in the chamber of Parliament, where the Duke of Bedford and many others spoke warmly for their having council; and it was granted. I said *their*, because the plea would have saved them all, and affected nine rebels who had been hanged that very morning; particularly one Morgan, a poetical lawyer. Lord Balmerino asked for Forester and Wilbraham; the latter a very able lawyer in the House of Commons, who, the Chancellor said privately, he was sure would as soon be hanged as plead such a cause. But he came as council to-day (the third day), when Lord Balmerino gave up his plea as invalid, and submitted, without any speech. The High Steward [Hardwicke] then made his, very long and very poor, with only one or two good passages; and then pronounced sentence!

Great intercession is made for the two Earls: Duke Hamilton, who has never been at Court, designs to kiss the King's hand, and ask Lord Kilmarnock's life. The King is much inclined to some mercy; but the Duke, who has not so much of Caesar after a victory, as in gaining it, is for the utmost severity. It was lately proposed in the city to present him with the freedom of some company; one of the aldermen said aloud, "Then let it be of the *Butchers*!"^[1] The Scotch and his Royal Highness are not at all guarded in their expressions of each other. When he went to Edinburgh, in his pursuit of the rebels, they would not admit his guards, alleging that it was contrary to their privileges; but they rode in, sword in hand; and the Duke, very justly incensed, refused to see any of the magistrates. He came with the utmost expedition to town, in order for Flanders; but found that the Court of Vienna had already sent Prince Charles thither, without the least notification, at which both King and Duke are greatly offended. When the latter waited on his brother, the Prince carried him into a room that hangs over the wall of St. James's Park, and stood there with his arm about his neck, to charm the gazing mob.

[Footnote 1: "The Duke," says Sir Walter Scott, "was received with all the honours due to conquest; and all the incorporated bodies of the

capital, from the Guild brethren to the Butchers, desired the acceptance of the freedom of their craft, or corporation." Billy the Butcher was one of his by-names.]

Murray, the Pretender's secretary, has made ample confessions: the Earl of Traquair, and Mr. Barry, a physician, are apprehended, and more warrants are out; so much for rebels! Your friend, Lord Sandwich, is instantly going ambassador to Holland, to pray the Dutch to build more ships. I have received yours of July 19th, but you see have no more room left, only to say, that I conceive a good idea of my eagle, though the seal is a bad one. Adieu!

P.S.--I have not room to say anything to the Tesi till next post; but, unless she will sing gratis, would advise her to drop this thought.

THE BATTLE OF RANCOUX.

TO SIR HORACE MANN.

ARLINGTON STREET, _Oct._ 14, 1746.

You will have been alarmed with the news of another battle lost in Flanders, where we have no Kings of Sardinia. We make light of it; do not allow it to be a battle, but call it "the action near Liege." Then we have whittled down our loss extremely, and will not allow a man more than three hundred and fifty English slain out of the four thousand. The whole of it, as it appears to me, is, that we gave up eight battalions to avoid fighting; as at Newmarket people pay their forfeit when they foresee they should lose the race; though, if the whole army had fought, and we had lost the day, one might have hoped to have come off for eight battalions. Then they tell you that the French had four-and-twenty-pounders, and that they must beat us by the superiority of their cannon; so that to me it is grown a paradox, to war with a nation who have a mathematical certainty of beating you; or else it is still a stranger paradox, why you cannot have as large cannon as the French.[1] This loss was balanced by a pompous account of the triumphs of our invasion of Bretagne; which, in plain terms, I think, is reduced to burning two or three villages and reimparking: at least, two or three of the transports are returned with this history, and know not what is become of Lestock and the rest of the invasion. The young Pretender is landed in France, with thirty Scotch, but in such a wretched condition that his Highland Highness had no breeches.

[Footnote 1: Marshal Saxe had inspired his army with confidence that a day of battle was sure to be a day of victory, as was shown by the theatrical company which accompanied the camp. After the performance on the evening of October 10th the leading actress announced that there would be no performance on the morrow, because there was to be a battle, but on the 12th the company would have the honour of presenting "The Village Clock." (See the Editor's "France under the Bourbons," iii. 26.)]

I have received yours of the 27th of last month, with the capitulation of Genoa, and the kind conduct of the Austrians to us their allies, so extremely like their behaviour whenever they are fortunate. Pray, by the way, has there been any talk of my cousin, the Commodore, being blameable in letting slip some Spanish ships?--don't mention it as from me, but there are whispers of court-martial on him. They are all the fashion now; if you miss a post to me, I will have you tried by a court-martial. Cope is come off most gloriously, his courage ascertained, and even his conduct, which everybody had given up, justified. Folkes and Lascelles, two of his generals, are come off too; but not so happily in the opinion of the world. Oglethorpe's sentence is not yet public, but it is believed not to be favourable. He was always a

bully, and is now tried for cowardice. Some little dash of the same sort is likely to mingle with the judgment on il furibondo Matthews; though his party rises again a little, and Lestock's acquittal begins to pass for a party affair. In short, we are a wretched people, and have seen our best days!

I must have lost a letter, if you really told me of the sale of the Duke of Modena's pictures, as you think you did; for when Mr. Chute told it me, it struck me as quite new. They are out of town, good souls; and I shall not see them this fortnight; for I am here only for two or three days, to inquire after the battle, in which not one of my friends were. Adieu!

ON CONWAY'S VERSES--NO SCOTCH MAN IS CAPABLE OF SUCH DELICACY OF THOUGHT, THOUGH A SCOTCHWOMAN MAY BE--AKENSIDE'S, ARMSTRONG'S, AND GLOVER'S POEMS.

TO THE HON. H.S. CONWAY.

WINDSOR, Oct. 24, 1746.

Well, Harry, Scotland is the last place on earth I should have thought of for turning anybody poet: but I begin to forgive it half its treasons in favour of your verses, for I suppose you don't think I am the dupe of the Highland story that you tell me: the only use I shall make of it is to commend the lines to you, as if they really were a Scotchman's. There is a melancholy harmony in them that is charming, and a delicacy in the thoughts that no Scotchman is capable of, though a Scotchwoman might inspire it.[1] I beg, both for Cynthia's sake and my own, that you would continue your *De Tristibus* till I have an opportunity of seeing your muse, and she of rewarding her: Repris la musette, berger amoureux! If Cynthia has ever travelled ten miles in fairy-land, she must be wondrous content with the person and qualifications of her knight, who in future story will be read of thus: Elmedorus was tall and perfectly well made, his face oval, and features regularly handsome, but not effeminate; his complexion sentimentally brown, with not much colour; his teeth fine, and forehead agreeably low, round which his black hair curled naturally and beautifully. His eyes were black too, but had nothing of fierce or insolent; on the contrary, a certain melancholy swimmingness, that described hopeless love rather than a natural amorous languish. His exploits in war, where he always fought by the side of the renowned Paladine William of England, have endeared his memory to all admirers of true chivalry, as the mournful elegies which he poured out among the desert rocks of Caledonia in honour of the peerless lady and his heart's idol, the incomparable Cynthia, will for ever preserve his name in the flowery annals of poesy.

[Footnote 1: Walpole could not foresee the genius of Burns, that before his own death was to shed such glory on Scotland. His compliment to a Scotchwoman was an allusion to Lady Aylesbury (nee Miss Caroline Campbell), whom Conway married after her husband's death, which took place a few months after the date of this letter. Lady Aylesbury was no poetess, but his estimate of what might be accomplished by Scotch ladies was afterwards fully borne out by Lady Anne Lindsay, the authoress of "Auld Gray," and Lady Nairn.]

What a pity it is I was not born in the golden age of Louis the Fourteenth, when it was not only the fashion to write folios, but to read them too! or rather, it is a pity the same fashion don't subsist now, when one need not be at the trouble of invention, nor of turning the whole Roman history into romance for want of proper heroes. Your campaign in Scotland, rolled out and well be-epitheted, would make a pompous work, and make one's fortune; at sixpence a number, one should have all the damsels within the liberties for subscribers: whereas now,

if one has a mind to be read, one must write metaphysical poems in blank verse, which, though I own to be still easier, have not half the imagination of romances, and are dull without any agreeable absurdity. Only think of the gravity of this wise age, that have exploded "Cleopatra and Pharamond," and approve "The Pleasures of the Imagination," "The Art of Preserving Health," and "Leonidas!" I beg the age's pardon: it has done approving these poems, and has forgot them.

Adieu! dear Harry. Thank you seriously for the poem. I am going to town for the birthday, and shall return hither till the Parliament meets; I suppose there is no doubt of our meeting then.

Yours ever.

P.S.--Now you are at Stirling, if you should meet with Drummond's History of the five King Jameses, pray look it over. I have lately read it, and like it much. It is wrote in imitation of Livy; the style masculine, and the whole very sensible; only he ascribes the misfortunes of one reign to the then king's loving architecture and

In trim gardens taking pleasure.

HE HAS BOUGHT STRAWBERRY HILL.

TO THE HON. H.S. CONWAY.

TWICKENHAM, _June_ 8, 1747.

You perceive by my date that I am got into a new camp, and have left my tub at Windsor. It is a little plaything-house that I got out of Mrs. Chenevix's shop, and is the prettiest bauble you ever saw. It is set in enamelled meadows, with filigree hedges:

A small Euphrates through the piece is told,
And little finches wave their wings in gold.

Two delightful roads, that you would call dusty, supply me continually with coaches and chaises: barges as solemn as Barons of the Exchequer move under my window; Richmond Hill and Ham walks bound my prospect; but, thank God! the Thames is between me and the Duchess of Queensberry. Dowagers as plenty as flounders inhabit all around, and Pope's ghost is just now skimming under my window by a most poetical moonlight. I have about land enough to keep such a farm as Noah's, when he set up in the ark with a pair of each kind; but my cottage is rather cleaner than I believe his was after they had been cooped up together forty days. The Chenevixes had tricked it out for themselves: up two pair of stairs is what they call Mr. Chenevix's library, furnished with three maps, one shelf, a bust of Sir Isaac Newton, and a lame telescope without any glasses. Lord John Sackville _predeceased_ me here, and instituted certain games called _cricketalia_, which have been celebrated this very evening in honour of him in a neighbouring meadow.

You will think I have removed my philosophy from Windsor with my tea-things hither; for I am writing to you in all this tranquillity, while a Parliament is bursting about my ears. You know it is going to be dissolved: I am told, you are taken care of, though I don't know where, nor whether anybody that chooses you will quarrel with me because he does choose you, as that little bug the Marquis of Rockingham did; one of the calamities of my life which I have bore as abominably well as I do most about which I don't care. They say the Prince has taken up two hundred thousand pounds, to carry elections which he won't carry:--he had much better have saved it to buy the Parliament after it is chosen. A new set of peers are in embryo, to add more dignity to the silence of the House of Lords.

I made no remarks on your campaign, because, as you say, you do nothing at all; which, though very proper nutriment for a thinking head, does not do quite so well to write upon. If any one of you can but contrive to be shot upon your post, it is all we desire, shall look upon it as a great curiosity, and will take care to set up a monument to the person so slain; as we are doing by vote to Captain Cornwall, who was killed at the beginning of the action in the Mediterranean four years ago. In the present dearth of glory, he is canonized; though, poor man! he had been tried twice the year before for cowardice.

I could tell you much election news, none else; though not being thoroughly attentive to so important a subject, as to be sure one ought to be, I might now and then mistake, and give you a candidate for Durham in place of one for Southampton, or name the returning officer instead of the candidate. In general, I believe, it is much as usual--those sold in detail that afterwards will be sold in the representation--the ministers bribing Jacobites to choose friends of their own--the name of well-wishers to the present establishment, and patriots outbidding ministers that they may make the better market of their own patriotism:--in short, all England, under some name or other, is just now to be bought and sold; though, whenever we become posterity and forefathers, we shall be in high repute for wisdom and virtue. My great-great-grandchildren will figure me with a white beard down to my girdle; and Mr. Pitt's will believe him unspotted enough to have walked over nine hundred hot ploughshares, without hurting the sole of his foot. How merry my ghost will be, and shake its ears to hear itself quoted as a person of consummate prudence! Adieu, dear Harry!

Yours ever.

HIS MODE OF LIFE--PLANTING--PROPHECIES OF NEW METHODS AND NEW DISCOVERIES IN A FUTURE GENERATION.

TO THE HON. H.S. CONWAY.

STRAWBERRY HILL, Aug. 29, 1748.

Dear Harry,--Whatever you may think, a campaign at Twickenham furnishes as little matter for a letter as an abortive one in Flanders. I can't say indeed that my generals wear black wigs, but they have long full-bottomed hoods which cover as little entertainment to the full.

[Illustration: STRAWBERRY HILL, FROM THE SOUTH EAST.]

There's General my Lady Castlecomer, and General my Lady Dowager Ferris! Why, do you think I can extract more out of them than you can out of Hawley or Honeywood? Your old women dress, go to the Duke's levee, see that the soldiers cock their hats right, sleep after dinner, and soak with their led-captains till bed-time, and tell a thousand lies of what they never did in their youth. Change hats for head-clothes, the rounds for visits, and led-captains for toad-eaters, and the life is the very same. In short, these are the people I live in the midst of, though not with; and it is for want of more important histories that I have wrote to you seldom; not, I give you my word, from the least negligence. My present and sole occupation is planting, in which I have made great progress and talked very learnedly with the nurserymen, except that now and then a lettuce run to seed overturns all my botany, as I have more than once taken it for a curious West Indian flowering shrub. Then the deliberation with which trees grow, is extremely inconvenient to my natural impatience. I lament living in so barbarous an age, when we are come to so little perfection in gardening. I am persuaded that a hundred and fifty years hence it will be as common to remove oaks a hundred and fifty years old, as it is now to transplant tulip roots.[1] I have even

begun a treatise or panegyric on the great discoveries made by posterity in all arts and sciences, wherein I shall particularly descant on the great and cheap convenience of making trout-rivers--one of the improvements which Mrs. Kerwood wondered Mr. Hedges would not make at his country-house, but which was not then quite so common as it will be. I shall talk of a secret for roasting a wild boar and a whole pack of hounds alive, without hurting them, so that the whole chase may be brought up to table; and for this secret, the Duke of Newcastle's grandson, if he can ever get a son, is to give a hundred thousand pounds. Then the delightfulness of having whole groves of humming-birds, tame tigers taught to fetch and carry, pocket spying-glasses to see all that is doing in China, with a thousand other toys, which we now look upon as impracticable, and which pert posterity would laugh in one's face for staring at, while they are offering rewards for perfecting discoveries, of the principles of which we have not the least conception! If ever this book should come forth, I must expect to have all the learned in arms against me, who measure all knowledge backward: some of them have discovered symptoms of all arts in Homer; and Pineda,[2] had so much faith in the accomplishments of his ancestors, that he believed Adam understood all sciences but politics. But as these great champions for our forefathers are dead, and Boileau not alive to hitch me into a verse with Perrault, I am determined to admire the learning of posterity, especially being convinced that half our present knowledge sprung from discovering the errors of what had formerly been called so. I don't think I shall ever make any great discoveries myself, and therefore shall be content to propose them to my descendants, like my Lord Bacon,[3] who, as Dr. Shaw says very prettily in his preface to Boyle, "had the art of inventing arts:" or rather like a Marquis of Worcester, of whom I have seen a little book which he calls "A Century of Inventions,"[4] where he has set down a hundred machines to do impossibilities with, and not a single direction how to make the machines themselves.

[Footnote 1: It is worth noting that these predictions that "it will be common to remove oaks a hundred and fifty years old" has been verified many years since; at least, if not in the case of oaks, in that of large elms and ashtrees. In 1850 Mr. Paxton offered to a Committee of the House of Commons to undertake to remove the large elm which was standing on the ground proposed for the Crystal Palace of the Exhibition of 1851, and his master, the Duke of Devonshire, has since that time removed many trees of very large size from one part of his grounds to another; and similarly the "making of trout rivers" has been carried out in many places, even in our most distant colonies, by Mr. Buckland's method of raising the young fish from roe in boxes and distributing them in places where they were needed.]

[Footnote 2: Pineda was a Spanish Jesuit of the seventeenth century, and a voluminous writer.]

[Footnote 3: It is a singular thing that this most eminent man should be so constantly spoken of by a title which he never had. His first title in the peerage was Baron Verulam; his second, on a subsequent promotion, was Viscount St. Albans; yet the error is as old as Dryden, and is defended by Lord Macaulay in a sentence of pre-eminent absurdity: "Posterity has felt that the greatest of English philosophers could derive no accession of dignity from any title which power could bestow, and, in defiance of letters-patent, has obstinately refused to degrade Francis Bacon into Viscount St. Albans." But, without stopping to discuss the propriety of representing a British peerage, honestly earned, and, in his case as Lord Chancellor, necessarily conferred, as a "degradation," the mistake made is not that of continuing to call him Francis Bacon, a name by which at one time he was known, but that of calling him "Lord Bacon," a title by which he was never known for a single moment in his lifetime; while, if a great philosopher was really "degraded" by a peerage, it is hard to see how the degradation would

have been lessened by the title being Lord Bacon, which it was not, rather than Viscount St. Albans, which it was.]

[Footnote 4: The "Biographie Universelle" (art. _Newcomen_) says of the Marquis: "Longtemps avant lui [Neucomen] on avait remarque la grande force expansive de la vapeur, et on avait imagine de l'employer comme puissance. On trouve deja cette application proposee et meme executee dans un ouvrage publie en 1663, par le Marquis de Worcester, sous le titre bizarre, 'A Century of Inventions.'"]

If I happen to be less punctual in my correspondence than I intend to be, you must conclude I am writing my book, which being designed for a panegyric, will cost me a great deal of trouble. The dedication with your leave, shall be addressed to your son that is coming, or, with Lady Ailesbury's leave, to your ninth son, who will be unborn nearer to the time I am writing of; always provided that she does not bring three at once, like my Lady Berkeley.

Well! I have here set you the example of writing nonsense when one has nothing to say, and shall take it ill if you don't keep up the correspondence on the same foot. Adieu!

REJOICINGS FOR THE PEACE--MASQUERADE AT RANELAGH--MEETING OF THE PRINCES PARTY AND THE JACOBITES--PREVALENCE OF DRINKING AND GAMBLING--WHITEFIELD.

TO SIR HORACE MANN.

STRAWBERRY HILL, _May_ 3, 1749.

I am come hither for a few days, to repose myself after a torrent of diversions, and am writing to you in my charming bow-window with a tranquillity and satisfaction which, I fear, I am grown old enough to prefer to the hurry of amusements, in which the whole world has lived for this last week. We have at last celebrated the Peace, and that as much in extremes as we generally do everything, whether we have reason to be glad or sorry, pleased or angry. Last Tuesday it was proclaimed: the King did not go to St. Paul's, but at night the whole town was illuminated. The next day was what was called "a jubilee-masquerade in the Venetian manner" at Ranelagh: it had nothing Venetian in it, but was by far the best understood and the prettiest spectacle I ever saw: nothing in a fairy tale ever surpassed it. One of the proprietors, who is a German, and belongs to Court, had got my Lady Yarmouth to persuade the King to order it. It began at three o'clock, and, about five, people of fashion began to go. When you entered, you found the whole garden filled with masks and spread with tents, which remained all night _very commodely_. In one quarter, was a May-pole dressed with garlands, and people dancing round it to a tabor and pipe and rustic music, all masqued, as were all the various bands of music that were disposed in **different parts of the garden; some like huntsmen with French horns,** some like peasants, and a troop of harlequins and scaramouches in the little open temple on the mount. On the canal was a sort of gondola, adorned with flags and streamers, and filled with music, rowing about. All round the outside of the amphitheatre were shops, filled with Dresden china, japan, &c., and all the shopkeepers in mask. The amphitheatre was illuminated; and in the middle was a circular bower, composed of all kinds of firs in tubs, from twenty to thirty feet high: under them orange-trees, with small lamps in each orange, and below them all sorts of the finest auriculas in pots; and festoons of natural flowers hanging from tree to tree. Between the arches too were firs, and smaller ones in the balconies above. There were booths for tea and wine, gaming-tables and dancing, and about two thousand persons. In short, it pleased me more than anything I ever saw. It is to be once more, and probably finer as to dresses, as there has since been a subscription

masquerade, and people will go in their rich habits. The next day were the fireworks, which by no means answered the expense, the length of preparation, and the expectation that had been raised; indeed, for a week before, the town was like a country fair, the streets filled from morning to night, scaffolds building wherever you could or could not see, and coaches arriving from every corner of the kingdom. This hurry and lively scene, with the sight of the immense crowd in the Park and on every house, the guards, and the machine itself, which was very beautiful, was all that was worth seeing. The rockets, and whatever was thrown up into the air, succeeded mighty well; but the wheels, and all that was to compose the principal part, were pitiful and ill-conducted, with no changes of coloured fires and shapes: the illumination was mean, and lighted so slowly that scarce anybody had patience to wait the finishing; and then, what contributed to the awkwardness of the whole, was the right pavilion catching fire, and being burnt down in the middle of the show. The King, the Duke, and Princess Emily saw it from the Library, with their courts: the Prince and Princess, with their children, from Lady Middlesex's; no place being provided for them, nor any invitation given to the library. The Lords and Commons had galleries built for them and the chief citizens along the rails of the Mall: the Lords had four tickets a-piece, and each Commoner, at first, but two, till the Speaker bounced and obtained a third. Very little mischief was done, and but two persons killed: at Paris, there were forty killed and near three hundred wounded, by a dispute between the French and Italians in the management, who, quarrelling for precedence in lighting the fires, both lighted at once and blew up the whole. Our mob was extremely tranquil, and very unlike those I remember in my father's time, when it was a measure in the Opposition to work up everything to mischief, the Excise and the French players, the Convention and the Gin Act. We are as much now in the opposite extreme, and in general so pleased with the peace, that I could not help being struck with a passage I read lately in Pasquier, an old French author, who says, "that in the time of Francis I. the French used to call their creditors 'Des Anglois,' from the facility with which the English gave credit to them in all treaties, though they had broken so many." On Saturday we had a serenta at the Opera-house, called Peace in Europe, but it was a wretched performance. On Monday there was a subscription masquerade, much fuller than that of last year, but not so agreeable or so various in dresses. The King was well disguised in an old-fashioned English habit, and much pleased with somebody who desired him to hold their cup as they were drinking tea. The Duke had a dress of the same kind, but was so immensely corpulent that he looked like Cacofigo, the drunken captain, in "Rule a Wife and have a Wife." The Duchess of Richmond was a Lady Mayoress in the time of James I.; and Lord Delawarr, Queen Elizabeth's porter, from a picture in the guard-chamber at Kensington: they were admirable masks. Lord Rochford, Miss Evelyn, Miss Bishop, Lady Stafford, and Mrs. Pitt, were in vast beauty; particularly the last, who had a red veil, which made her look gloriously handsome. I forgot Lady Kildare. Mr. Conway was the Duke in "Don Quixote," and the finest figure I ever saw. Miss Chudleigh was Iphigenia, but so naked that you would have taken her for Andromeda; and Lady Betty Smithson [Seymour] had such a pyramid of baubles upon her head, that she was exactly the Princess of Babylon in Grammont.

You will conclude that, after all these diversions, people begin to think of going out of town--no such matter: the Parliament continues sitting, and will till the middle of June; Lord Egmont told us we should sit till Michaelmas. There are many private bills, no public ones of any fame. We were to have had some chastisement for Oxford, where, besides the late riots, the famous Dr. King,[1] the Pretender's great agent, made a most violent speech at the opening of the Ratcliffe Library. The ministry denounced judgment, but, in their old style, have grown frightened, and dropped it. However, this menace gave occasion to a meeting and union between the Prince's party and the Jacobites which Lord Egmont has been labouring all the winter. They met at the St. Alban's tavern, near Pall Mall, last Monday morning, a hundred and

twelve Lords and Commoners. The Duke of Beaufort opened the assembly with a panegyric on the stand that had been made this winter against so corrupt an administration, and hoped it would continue, and desired harmony. Lord Egmont seconded this strongly, and begged they would come up to Parliament early next winter. Lord Oxford spoke next; and then Potter with great humour, and to the great abashment of the Jacobites, said he was very glad to see this union, and from thence hoped, that if another attack like the last Rebellion should be made on the Royal Family, they would all stand by them. No reply was made to this. Then Sir Watkyn Williams spoke, Sir Francis Dashwood,[2] and Tom Pitt, and the meeting broke up. I don't know what this coalition may produce: it will require time with no better heads than compose it at present, though the great Mr. Dodington had carried to the conference the assistance of his. In France a very favourable event has happened for us, the disgrace of Maurepas,[3] one of our bitterest enemies, and the greatest promoter of their marine. Just at the beginning of the war, in a very critical period, he had obtained a very large sum for that service, but which one of the other factions, lest he should gain glory and credit by it, got to be suddenly given away to the King of Prussia.

[Footnote 1: Dr. King was Principal of St. Mary's Hall, Oxford, and one of the chief supports of the Jacobite party after 1745.]

[Footnote 2: Chancellor of the Exchequer in 1761, through the influence of the Earl of Bute. He was the owner of Medmenham Abbey, on the Thames, and as such, the President of the profligate Club whose doings were made notorious by the proceedings against Wilkes, and who, in compliment to him, called themselves the Franciscans.]

[Footnote 3: The Comte de Maurepas was the grandson of the Chancellor of France, M. de Pontchartrain. When only fourteen years old Louis had made him Secretary of State for the Marine, as a consolation to his grandfather for his dismissal; and he continued in office till the accession of Louis XVI., when he was appointed Prime Minister. He was not a man of any statesmanlike ability; but Lacretelle ascribes to him "les graces d'un esprit aimable et frivole qui avait le don d'amuser un vieillard toujours porte a un elegant badinage" (ii. 53); and in a subsequent letter speaks of him as a man of very lively powers of conversation.]

Sir Charles Williams[1] is appointed envoy to this last King: here is an epigram which he has just sent over on Lord Egmont's opposition to the Mutiny Bill:

Why has Lord Egmont 'gainst this bill
So much declamatory skill
So tediously exerted?
The reason's plain: but t'other day
He mutinied himself for pay,
And he has twice deserted.

[Footnote 1: Sir Charles Hanbury Williams had represented Monmouth in Parliament, but in 1744 was sent as ambassador to Berlin, and from thence to St. Petersburg. He was more celebrated in the fashionable world as the author of lyrical odes of a lively character.]

I must tell you a bon-mot that was made the other night at the serenata of "Peace in Europe" by Wall,[1] who is much in fashion, and a kind of Gondomar. Grossatesta, the Modenese minister, a very low fellow, with all the jackpuddinghood of an Italian, asked, "Mais qui est ce qui represente mon maitre?" Wall replied, "Mais, mon Dieu! L'abbe, ne scavez vous pas que ce n'est pas un opera boufon?" and here is another bon-mot of my Lady Townshend: we were talking of Methodists; somebody said, "Pray, Madam, is it true that Whitfield[2] has recanted?" "No, sir, he has only canted."

[Footnote 1: General Wall was the Spanish ambassador, as Gondomar had been in the reign of James I.]

[Footnote 2: Whitefield, while an undergraduate at Oxford, joined Wesley, who had recently founded a sect which soon became known as the Methodists. But, after a time, Whitefield, who was of a less moderate temper than Wesley, adopted the views known as Calvinistic, and, breaking off from the Wesleyans, established a sect more rigid and less friendly to the Church.]

If you ever think of returning to England, as I hope it will be long first, you must prepare yourself with Methodism. I really believe that by that time it will be necessary: this sect increases as fast as almost ever any religious nonsense did. Lady Fanny Shirley has chosen this way of bestowing the dregs of her beauty; and Mr. Lyttelton is very near making the same sacrifice of the dregs of all those various characters that he has worn. The Methodists love your big sinners, as proper subjects to work upon--and indeed they have a plentiful harvest--I think what you call flagrantcy was never more in fashion. Drinking is at the highest wine-mark; and gaming joined with it so violent, that at the last Newmarket meeting, in the rapidity of both, a bank-bill was thrown down, and nobody immediately claiming it, they agreed to give it to a man that was standing by....

EARTHQUAKE IN LONDON--GENERAL PANIC--MARRIAGE OF CASIMIR, KING OF POLAND.

TO SIR HORACE MANN.

ARLINGTON STREET, March 11, 1750.

Portents and prodigies are grown so frequent,
That they have lost their name.

My text is not literally true; but as far as earthquakes go towards lowering the price of wonderful commodities, to be sure we are overstocked. We have had a second, much more violent than the first; and you must not be surprised if by next post you hear of a burning mountain sprung up in Smithfield. In the night between Wednesday and Thursday last (exactly a month since the first shock), the earth had a shivering fit between one and two; but so slight that, if no more had followed, I don't believe it would have been noticed. I had been awake, and had scarce dozed again--on a sudden I felt my bolster lift up my head; I thought somebody was getting from under my bed, but soon found it was a strong earthquake, that lasted near half a minute, with a violent vibration and great roaring. I rang my bell; my servant came in, frightened out of his senses: in an instant we heard all the windows in the neighbourhood flung up. I got up and found people running into the streets, but saw no mischief done: there has been some; two old houses flung down, several chimneys, and much chinaware. The bells rung in several houses. Admiral Knowles, who has lived long in Jamaica, and felt seven there, says this was more violent than any of them: Francesco prefers it to the dreadful one at Leghorn. The wise say,[1] that if we have not rain soon, we shall certainly have more. Several people are going out of town, for it has nowhere reached above ten miles from London: they say, they are not frightened, but that it is such fine weather, "Lord! one can't help going into the country!" The only visible effect it has had, was on the Ridotto, at which, being the following night, there were but four hundred people. A parson, who came into White's the morning of earthquake the first, and heard bets laid on whether it was an earthquake or the blowing up of powder mills, went away exceedingly scandalized, and said, "I protest, they are such an impious set of people, that I believe if the last trumpet was to sound,

they would bet puppet-show against Judgment." If we get any nearer still to the torrid zone, I shall pique myself on sending you a present of cedrati and orange-flower water: I am already planning a _terreno_ for Strawberry Hill.

[Footnote 1: In an earlier letter Walpole mentions that Sir I. Newton had foretold a great alteration in the English climate in 1750.]

The Middlesex election is carried against the Court: the Prince, in a green frock (and I won't swear, but in a Scotch plaid waistcoat), sat under the Park-wall in his chair, and hallooed the voters on to Brentford. The Jacobites are so transported, that they are opening subscriptions for all boroughs that shall be vacant--this is wise! They will spend their money to carry a few more seats in a Parliament where they will never have the majority, and so have none to carry the general elections. The omen, however, is bad for Westminster; the High Bailiff went to vote for the Opposition.

I now jump to another topic; I find all this letter will be detached scraps; I can't at all contrive to hide the seams: but I don't care. I began my letter merely to tell you of the earthquake, and I don't pique myself upon doing any more than telling you what you would be glad to have told you. I told you too how pleased I was with the triumphs of another old beauty, our friend the Princess. Do you know, I have found a history that has great resemblance to hers; that is, that will be very like hers, if hers is but like it. I will tell it you in as few words as I can. Madame la Marechale l'Hopital was the daughter of a seamstress; a young gentleman fell in love with her, and was going to be married to her, but the match was broken off. An old fermier-general, who had retired into the province where this happened, hearing the story, had a curiosity to see the victim; he liked her, married her, died, and left her enough not to care for her inconstant. She came to Paris, where the Marechal de l'Hopital married her for her riches. After the Marechal's death, Casimir, the abdicated King of Poland, who was retired into France, fell in love with the Marechale, and privately married her. If the event ever happens, I shall certainly travel to Nancy, to hear her talk of _ma belle fille la Reine de France_. What pains my Lady Pomfret would take to prove that an abdicated King's wife did not take place of an English countess; and how the Princess herself would grow still fonder of the Pretender for the similitude of his fortune with that of _le Roi mon mari_! Her daughter, Mirepoix, was frightened the other night, with Mrs. Nugent's calling out, _un voleur! un voleur_! The ambadress had heard so much of robbing, that she did not doubt but _dans ce pais cy_, they robbed in the middle of an assembly. It turned out to be a _thief in the candle_! Good night!

GENERAL PANIC--SHERLOCK'S PASTORAL LETTER--PREDICTIONS OF MORE EARTHQUAKES--A GENERAL FLIGHT FROM LONDON--EPIGRAMS BY CHUTE AND WALPOLE HIMSELF--FRENCH TRANSLATION OF MILTON.

TO SIR HORACE MANN.

ARLINGTON STREET, _April_ 2, 1750.

You will not wonder so much at our earthquakes as at the effects they have had. All the women in town have taken them up upon the foot of _Judgments_ ; and the clergy, who have had no windfalls of a long season, have driven horse and foot into this opinion. There has been a shower of sermons and exhortations: Seeker, the Jesuitical Bishop of Oxford, began the mode. He heard the women were all going out of town to avoid the next shock; and so, for fear of losing his Easter offerings, he set himself to advise them to await God's good pleasure in fear and trembling. But what is more astonishing, Sherlock, who has much better sense, and much less of the Popish confessor, has been running a race

with him for the old ladies, and has written a pastoral letter, of which ten thousand were sold in two days; and fifty thousand have been subscribed for, since the two first editions.

I told you the women talked of going out of town: several families are literally gone, and many more going to-day and to-morrow; for what adds to the absurdity, is, that the second shock having happened exactly a month after the former, it prevails that there will be a third on Thursday next, another month, which is to swallow up London. I am almost ready to burn my letter now I have begun it, lest you should think I am laughing at you: but it is so true, that Arthur of White's told me last night, that he should put off the last ridotto, which was to be on Thursday, because he hears nobody would come to it. I have advised several, who are going to keep their next earthquake in the country, to take the bark for it, as it is so periodic.[1] Dick Leveson and Mr. Rigby, who had supped and stayed late at Bedford House the other night, knocked at several doors, and in a watchman's voice cried, "Past four o'clock, and a dreadful earthquake!"...

[Footnote 1: "I remember," says Addison, in the 240th *Tatler*, "when our whole island was shaken with an earthquake some years ago, that there was an impudent mountebank who sold pills, which, as he told the country people, were 'very good against an earthquake.'"]

This frantic terror prevails so much, that within these three days seven hundred and thirty coaches have been counted passing Hyde Park corner, with whole parties removing into the country. Here is a good advertisement which I cut out of the papers to-day:--

"On Monday next will be published (price 6_d.) A true and exact List of all the Nobility and Gentry who have left, or shall leave, this place through fear of another Earthquake."

Several women have made earthquake gowns; that is, warm gowns to sit out of doors all to-night. These are of the more courageous. One woman, still more heroic, is come to town on purpose: she says, all her friends are in London, and she will not survive them. But what will you think of Lady Catherine Pelham, Lady Frances Arundel, and Lord and Lady Galway, who go this evening to an inn ten miles out of town, where they are to play at brag till five in the morning, and then come back—I suppose, to look for the bones of their husbands and families under the rubbish. The prophet of all this (next to the Bishop of London) is a trooper of Lord Delawar's, who was yesterday sent to Bedlam. His *colonel* sent to the man's wife, and asked her if her husband had ever been disordered before. She cried, "Oh dear! my lord, he is not mad now; if your *lordship* would but get any *sensible* man to examine him, you would find he is quite in his right mind."...

I shall now go and show you Mr. Chute in a different light from heraldry, and in one in which I believe you never saw him. He will shine as usual; but, as a little more severely than his good-nature is accustomed to, I must tell you that he was provoked by the most impertinent usage. It is an epigram on Lady Caroline Petersham, whose present fame, by the way, is coupled with young Harry Vane.

WHO IS THIS?

Her face has beauty, we must all confess,
But beauty on the brink of ugliness:
Her mouth's a rabbit feeding on a rose;
With eyes—ten times too good for such a nose!
Her blooming cheeks—what paint could ever draw 'em?
That paint, for which no mortal ever saw 'em.
Air without shape—of royal race divine--
'Tis Emily—oh! fie!--'tis Caroline.

Do but think of my beginning a third sheet! but as the Parliament is rising, and I shall probably not write you a tolerably long letter again these eight months, I will lay in a stock of merit with you to last me so long. Mr. Chute has set me too upon making epigrams; but as I have not his art mine is almost a copy of verses: the story he told me, and is literally true, of an old Lady Bingley:

Celia now had completed some thirty campaigns,
And for new generations was hammering chains;
When whetting those terrible weapons, her eyes,
To Jenny, her handmaid, in anger she cries,
"Careless creature! did mortal e'er see such a glass!
Who that saw me in this, could e'er guess what I was!
Much you mind what I say! pray how oft have I bid you
Provide me a new one? how oft have I chid you?"
"Lord, Madam!" cried Jane, "you're so hard to be pleased!
I am sure every glassman in town I have teased:
I have hunted each shop from Pall Mall to Cheapside:
Both Miss Carpenter's man, and Miss Banks's I've tried."
"Don't tell me of those girls!--all I know, to my cost,
Is, the looking-glass art must be certainly lost!
One used to have mirrors so smooth and so bright,
They did one's eyes justice, they heightened one's white,
And fresh roses diffused o'er one's bloom--but, alas!
In the glasses made now, one detests one's own face;
They pucker one's cheeks up and furrow one's brow,
And one's skin looks as yellow as that of Miss Howe!"

After an epigram that seems to have found out the longitude, I shall tell you but one more, and that wondrous short. It is said to be made by a cow. You must not wonder; we tell as many strange stories as Baker and Livy:

A warm winter, a dry spring,
A hot summer, a new King.

Though the sting is very epigrammatic, the whole of the distich has more of the truth than becomes prophecy; that is, it is false, for the spring is wet and cold.

There is come from France a Madame Bocage,[1] who has translated Milton: my Lord Chesterfield prefers the copy to the original; but that is not uncommon for him to do, who is the patron of bad authors and bad actors. She has written a play too, which was damned, and worthy my lord's approbation. You would be more diverted with a Mrs. Holman, whose passion is keeping an assembly, and inviting literally everybody to it. She goes to the drawing-room to watch for sneezes; whips out a curtsey, and then sends next morning to know how your cold does, and to desire your company next Thursday.

[Footnote 1: Madame du Boccage published a poem in imitation of Milton, and another founded on Gesner's "Death of Abel." She also translated Pope's "Temple of Fame;" but her principal work was "La Columbiade." It was at the house of this lady, at Paris, in 1775, that Johnson was annoyed at her footman's taking the sugar in his fingers and throwing it into his coffee. "I was going," says the Doctor, "to put it aside, but hearing it was made on purpose for me, I e'en tasted Tom's fingers." She died in 1802.]

Mr. Whithed has taken my Lord Pembroke's house at Whitehall; a glorious situation, but as madly built as my lord himself was. He has bought some delightful pictures too, of Claude, Caspar and good masters, to the amount of four hundred pounds.

Good night! I have nothing more to tell you, but that I have lately seen a Sir William Boothby, who saw you about a year ago, and adores you, as all the English you receive ought to do. He is much in my favour.

DEATH OF WALPOLE'S BROTHER, AND OF THE PRINCE OF WALES--SPEECH OF THE YOUNG PRINCE--SINGULAR SERMON ON HIS DEATH.

TO SIR HORACE MANN.

ARLINGTON STREET, April 1, 1751.

How shall I begin a letter that will--that must--give you as much pain as I feel myself? I must interrupt the story of the Prince's death, to tell you of two more, much more important, God knows! to you and me! One I had prepared you for--but how will you be shocked to hear that our poor Mr. Whithed is dead as well as my brother!...

I now must mention my own misfortune. Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday mornings, the physicians and all the family of painful death_ (to alter Gray's phrase), were persuaded and persuaded me, that the bark, which took great place, would save my brother's life--but he relapsed at three o'clock on Thursday, and died last night. He ordered to be drawn and executed his will with the greatest tranquillity and satisfaction on Saturday morning. His spoils are prodigious--not to his own family! indeed I think his son the most ruined young man in England. My loss, I fear, may be considerable, which is not the only motive of my concern, though, as you know, I had much to forgive, before I could regret: but indeed I do regret. It is no small addition to my concern, to fear or foresee that Houghton and all the remains of my father's glory will be pulled to pieces! The widow-Countess immediately marries--not Richcourt, but Shirley, and triumphs in advancing her son's ruin by enjoying her own estate, and tearing away great part of his.

Now I will divert your private grief by talking to you of what is called the public. The King and Princess are grown as fond as if they had never been of different parties, or rather as people who always had been of **different. She discountenances all opposition, and he all ambition.** Prince George, who, with his two eldest brothers, is to be lodged at St. James's, is speedily to be created Prince of Wales. Ayscough, his tutor, is to be removed with her entire inclination as well as with everybody's approbation. They talk of a Regency to be established (in case of a minority) by authority of Parliament, even this session, with the Princess at the head of it. She and Dr. Lee, the only one she consults of the late cabal, very sensibly burned the late Prince's papers the moment he was dead. Lord Egmont, by seven o'clock the next morning, summoned (not very decently) the faction to his house: all was whisper! at last he hinted something of taking the Princess and her children under their protection, and something of the necessity of harmony. No answer was made to the former proposal. Somebody said, it was very likely indeed they should agree now, when the Prince could never bring it about; and so everybody went away to take care of himself. The imposthumation is supposed to have proceeded, not from his fall last year, but from a blow with a tennis-ball some years ago. The grief for the dead brother is affectedly displayed. They cried about an elegy,[1] and added, "Oh, that it were but his brother!" On 'Change they said, "Oh, that it were but the butcher[2]!"

[Footnote 1: The elegy alluded to, was probably the effusion of some Jacobite royalist. That faction could not forgive the Duke of Cumberland his excesses or successes in Scotland; and, not contented with branding the parliamentary government of the country as usurpation, indulged in frequent unfeeling and scurrilous personalities on every branch of the reigning family:

Here lies Fred,
Who was alive and is dead:
Had it been his father,
I had much rather;
Had it been his brother,
Still better than another;
Had it been his sister,
No one would have missed her;
Had it been the whole generation,
Still better for the nation:
But since 'tis only Fred,
Who was alive and is dead—
There's no more to be said.

Walpole's Memoirs of George II.]

[Footnote 2: A name given to the Duke of Cumberland for his severities to his prisoners after the battle of Culloden.]

The Houses sit, but no business will be done till after the holidays. Anstruther's affair will go on, but not with much spirit. One wants to see faces about again! Dick Lyttelton, one of the patriot officers, had collected depositions on oath against the Duke for his behaviour in Scotland, but I suppose he will now throw his papers into Hamlet's grave?

Prince George, who has a most amiable countenance, behaved excessively well on his father's death. When they told him of it, he turned pale, and laid his hand on his breast. Ayscough said, "I am afraid, Sir, you are not well!"—he replied, "I feel something here, just as I did when I saw the two workmen fall from the scaffold at Kew." Prince Edward is a very plain boy, with strange loose eyes, but was much the favourite. He is a sayer of things! Two men were heard lamenting the death in Leicester Fields: one said, "He has left a great many small children!"—"Ay," replied the other, "and what is worse, they belong to our parish!" But the most extraordinary reflections on his death were set forth in a sermon at Mayfair chapel. "He had no great parts (pray mind, this was the parson said so, not I), but he had great virtues; indeed, they degenerated into vices: he was very generous, but I hear his generosity has ruined a great many people: and then his condescension was such, that he kept very bad company."

Adieu! my dear child; I have tried, you see, to blend so much public history with our private griefs, as may help to interrupt your too great attention to the calamities in the former part of my letter. You will, with the properest good-nature in the world, break the news to the poor girl, whom I pity, though I never saw. Miss Nicoll is, I am told, extremely to be pitied too; but so is everybody that knew Whithed! Bear it yourself as well as you can!

CHANGES IN THE MINISTRY AND HOUSEHOLD--THE MISS GUNNINGS--EXTRAVAGANCE IN LONDON--LORD HARCOURT, GOVERNOR OF THE PRINCE OF WALES.

TO SIR HORACE MANN.

ARLINGTON STREET, June 18, 1751.

I send my letter as usual from the Secretary's office, but of what Secretary I don't know. Lord Sandwich last week received his dismissal, on which the Duke of Bedford resigned the next day, and Lord Trentham with him, both breaking with old Gower, who is entirely in the hands of the Pelhams, and made to declare his quarrel with Lord Sandwich (who gave away his daughter to Colonel Waldegrave) the foundation of detaching himself from the Bedfords. Your friend Lord Fane comforts Lord

Sandwich with an annuity of a thousand a-year--scarcely for his handsome behaviour to his sister; Lord Hartington is to be Master of the Horse, and Lord Albemarle Groom of the Stole; Lord Granville[1] is actually Lord President, and, by all outward and visible signs, something more--in short, if he don't overshoot himself, the Pelhams have; the King's favour to him is visible, and so much credited, that all the incense is offered to him. It is believed that Impresario Holdernesse will succeed the Bedford in the foreign seals, and Lord Halifax in those for the plantations. If the former does, you will have ample instructions to negotiate for singers and dancers! Here is an epigram made upon his directorship:

[Footnote 1: Lord Granville, known as Lord Carteret during the lifetime of his mother, was a statesman of the very highest ability, and was regarded with special favour by the King for his power of conversing in German, then a very rare accomplishment.]

That secrecy will now prevail
In politics, is certain;
Since Holdernesse, who gets the seals,
Was bred behind the curtain.

The Admirals Rowley and Boscawen are brought into the Admiralty under Lord Anson, who is advanced to the head of the board. Seamen are tractable fishes! especially it will be Boscawen's case, whose name in Cornish signifies obstinacy, and who brings along with him a good quantity of resentment to Anson. In short, the whole present system is equally formed for duration!

Since I began my letter, Lord Holdernesse has kissed hands for the seals. It is said that Lord Halifax is to be made easy, by the plantations being put under the Board of Trade. Lord Granville comes into power as boisterously as ever, and dashes at everything. His lieutenants already beat up for volunteers; but he disclaims all connexions with Lord Bath, who, he says, forced him upon the famous ministry of twenty-four hours, and by which he says he paid all his debts to him. This will soon grow a turbulent scene--it is not unpleasant to sit upon the beach and see it; but few people have the curiosity to step out to the sight. You, who knew England in other times, will find it difficult, to conceive what an indifference reigns with regard to ministers and their squabbles. The two Miss Gunnings,[1] and a late extravagant dinner at White's, are twenty times more the subject of conversation than the two brothers [Newcastle and Pelham] and Lord Granville. These are two Irish girls, of no fortune, who are declared the handsomest women alive. I think their being two so handsome and both such perfect figures is their chief excellence, for singly I have seen much handsomer women than either; however, they can't walk in the park or go to Vauxhall, but such mobs follow them that they are generally driven away. The dinner was a folly of seven young men, who bespoke it to the utmost extent of expense: one article was a tart made of duke cherries from a hot-house; and another, that they tasted but one glass out of each bottle of champagne. The bill of fare is got into print, and with good people has produced the apprehension of another earthquake. Your friend St. Leger was at the head of these luxurious heroes--he is the hero of all fashion. I never saw more dashing vivacity and absurdity, with some flashes of parts. He had a cause the other day for ducking a sharper, and was going to swear: the judge said to him, "I see, Sir, you are very ready to take an oath." "Yes, my lord," replied St. Leger, "my father was a judge."

[Footnote 1: One of the Miss Gunnings had singular fortune. She was married to two Dukes--the Duke of Hamilton, and, after his death, the Duke of Argyll. She refused a third, the Duke of Bridgewater, and she was the mother of four--two Dukes of Hamilton and two Dukes of Argyll. Her sister married the Earl of Coventry. In his "Memoirs of George III."

Walpole mentions that they were so poor while in Dublin that they could not have been presented to the Lord-Lieutenant if Peg Woffington, the celebrated actress, had not lent them some clothes.]

We have been overwhelmed with lamentable Cambridge and Oxford dirges on the Prince's death: there is but one tolerable copy; it is by a young Lord Stormont, a nephew of Murray, who is much commended. You may imagine what incense is offered to Stone by the people of Christchurch: they have hooked in, too, poor Lord Harcourt, and call him _Harcourt the Wise_! his wisdom has already disgusted the young Prince; "Sir, pray hold up your head. Sir, for God's sake, turn out your toes!" Such are Mentor's precepts!

I am glad you receive my letters; as I knew I had been punctual, it mortified me that you should think me remiss. Thank you for the transcript from _Bubb[1] de tristibus_! I will keep your secret, though I am persuaded that a man who had composed such a funeral oration on his master and himself fully intended that its flowers should not bloom and wither in obscurity.

[Footnote 1: Bubb means Mr. Bubb Doddington, afterwards Lord Melcombe, who had written Mr. Mann a letter of most extravagant lamentation on the death of the Prince of Wales. He was member for Winchelsea, and left behind him a diary, which was published some years after his death, and which throws a good deal of light on the political intrigues of the day.]

We have already begun to sell the pictures that had not found place at Houghton: the sale gives no great encouragement to proceed (though I fear it must come to that!); the large pictures were thrown away; the whole-length Vandykes went for a song! I am mortified now at having printed the catalogue. Gideon the Jew, and Blakiston the independent grocer, have been the chief purchasers of the pictures sold already—there, if you love moralizing!

Adieu! I have no more articles to-day for my literary gazette.

DESCRIPTION OF STRAWBERRY HILL--BILL TO PREVENT CLANDESTINE MARRIAGES.

TO SIR HORACE MANN.

STRAWBERRY HILL, _June_ 12, 1753.

I could not rest any longer with the thought of your having no idea of a place of which you hear so much, and therefore desired Mr. Bentley to draw you as much idea of it as the post would be persuaded to carry from Twickenham to Florence. The enclosed enchanted little landscape, then, is Strawberry Hill; and I will try to explain so much of it to you as will help to let you know whereabouts we are when we are talking to you; for it is uncomfortable in so intimate a correspondence as ours not to be exactly master of every spot where one another is writing, or reading, or sauntering. This view of the castle is what I have just finished, and is the only side that will be at all regular. Directly before it is an open grove, through which you see a field, which is bounded by a serpentine wood of all kind of trees, and flowering shrubs, and flowers. The lawn before the house is situated on the top of a small hill, from whence to the left you see the town and church of Twickenham encircling a turn of the river, that looks exactly like a seaport in miniature. The opposite shore is a most delicious meadow, bounded by Richmond Hill, which loses itself in the noble woods of the park to the end of the prospect on the right, where is another turn of the river, and the suburbs of Kingston as luckily placed as Twickenham is on the left: and a natural terrace on the brow of my hill, with meadows of my own down to the river, commands both extremities. Is not this a

tolerable prospect? You must figure that all this is perpetually enlivened by a navigation of boats and barges, and by a road below my terrace, with coaches, post-chaises, waggons, and horsemen constantly in motion, and the fields speckled with cows, horses, and sheep. Now you shall walk into the house. The bow-window below leads into a little parlour hung with a stone-colour Gothic paper and Jackson's Venetian prints, which I could never endure while they pretended, infamous as they are, to be after Titian, &c., but when I gave them this air of barbarous bas-reliefs, they succeeded to a miracle: it is impossible at first sight not to conclude that they contain the history of Attila or Tottila, done about the very aera. From hence, under two gloomy arches, you come to the hall and staircase, which it is impossible to describe to you, as it is the most particular and chief beauty of the castle. Imagine the walls covered with (I call it paper, but it is really paper painted in perspective to represent) Gothic fretwork: the lightest Gothic balustrade to the staircase, adorned with antelopes (our supporters) bearing shields; lean windows fattened with rich saints in painted glass, and a vestibule open with three arches on the landing-place, and niches full of trophies of old coats of mail, Indian shields made of rhinoceros's hides, broadswords, quivers, longbows, arrows, and spears--all _supposed_ to be taken by Sir Terry Robsart in the holy wars. But as none of this regards the enclosed drawing, I will pass to that. The room on the ground-floor nearest to you is a bedchamber, hung with yellow paper and prints, framed in a new manner, invented by Lord Cardigan; that is, with black and white borders printed. Over this is Mr. Chute's bedchamber, hung with red in the same manner. The bow-window room one pair of stairs is not yet finished; but in the tower beyond it is the charming closet where I am now writing to you. It is hung with green paper and water-colour pictures; has two windows; the one in the drawing looks to the garden, the other to the beautiful prospect; and the top of each glutted with the richest painted glass of the arms of England, crimson roses, and twenty other pieces of green, purple, and historic bits. I must tell you, by the way, that the castle, when finished, will have two-and-thirty windows enriched with painted glass. In this closet, which is Mr. Chute's college of Arms, are two presses with books of heraldry and antiquities, Madame Sevigne's Letters, and any French books that relate to her and her acquaintance. Out of this closet is the room where we always live, hung with a blue and white paper in stripes adomed with festoons, and a thousand plump chairs, couches, and luxurious settees covered with linen of the same pattern, and with a bow-window commanding the prospect, and gloomed with limes that shade half each window, already darkened with painted glass in chiaroscuro, set in deep blue glass. Under this room is a cool little hall, where we generally dine, hung with paper to imitate Dutch tiles.

I have described so much, that you will begin to think that all the accounts I used to give you of the diminutiveness of our habitation were fabulous; but it is really incredible how small most of the rooms are. The only two good chambers I shall have are not yet built: they will be an eating-room and a library, each twenty by thirty, and the latter fifteen feet high. For the rest of the house I could send it you in this letter as easily as the drawing, only that I should have nowhere to live till the return of the post. The Chinese summer-house, which you may distinguish in the distant landscape, belongs to my Lord Radnor. We pique ourselves upon nothing but simplicity, and have no carvings, gildings, paintings, inlayings, or tawdry businesses.

You will not be sorry, I believe, by this time to have done with Strawberry Hill, and to hear a little news. The end of a very dreaming session has been extremely enlivened by an accidental bill which has opened great quarrels, and those not unlikely to be attended with interesting circumstances. A bill to prevent clandestine marriages,[1] so drawn by the Judges as to clog all matrimony in general, was inadvertently espoused by the Chancellor; and having been strongly

attacked in the House of Commons by Nugent, the Speaker, Mr. Fox, and others, the last went very great lengths of severity on the whole body of the law, and on its chieftain in particular, which, however, at the last reading, he softened and explained off extremely. This did not appease: but on the return of the bill to the House of Lords, where our amendments were to be read, the Chancellor in the most personal terms harangued against Fox, and concluded with saying that "he despised his scurrility as much as his adulation and recantation." As Christian charity is not one of the oaths taken by privy-counsellors, and as it is not the most eminent virtue in either of the champions, this quarrel is not likely to be soon reconciled. There are natures whose disposition it is to patch up political breaches, but whether they will succeed, or try to succeed in healing this, can I tell you?

[Footnote 1: These clandestine marriages were often called "Fleet marriages." Lord Stanhope, describing this Act, states that "there was ever ready a band of degraded and outcast clergymen, prisoners for debt or for crime, who hovered about the verge of the Fleet prison soliciting customers, and plying, like porters, for employment.... One of these wretches, named Keith, had gained a kind of pre-eminence in infamy. On being told there was a scheme on foot to stop his lucrative traffic, he declared, with many oaths, he would still be revenged of the Bishops, that he would buy a piece of ground and outbury them!" ("History of England," c. 31).]

The match for Lord Granville, which I announced to you, is not concluded: the flames are cooled in that quarter as well as in others.

I begin a new sheet to you, which does not match with the other, for I have no more of the same paper here. Dr. Cameron is executed, and died with the greatest firmness. His parting with his wife the night before was heroic and tender: he let her stay till the last moment, when being aware that the gates of the Tower would be locked, he told her so; she fell at his feet in agonies: he said, "Madam, this was not what you promised me," and embracing her, forced her to retire: then with the same coolness looked at the window till her coach was out of sight, after which he turned about and wept. His only concern seemed to be at the ignominy of Tyburn: he was not disturbed at the dresser for his body, or at the fire to burn his bowels.[1] The crowd was so great, that a friend who attended him could not get away, but was forced to stay and behold the execution; but what will you say to the minister or priest that accompanied him? The wretch, after taking leave, went into a landau, where, not content with seeing the Doctor hanged, he let down the top of the landau for the better convenience of seeing him embowelled! I cannot tell you positively that what I hinted of this Cameron being commissioned from Prussia was true, but so it is believed. Adieu! my dear child; I think this is a very tolerable letter for summer!

[Footnote 1: "The populace," says Smollett, "though not very subject to tender emotions, were moved to compassion, and even to tears, by his behaviour at the place of execution; and many sincere well-wishers of the present establishment thought that the sacrifice of this victim, at such a juncture, could not redound either to its honour or security."]

[Illustration: GEORGE MONTAGU.]

NO NEWS FROM FRANCE BUT WHAT IS SMUGGLED--THE KING'S DELIGHT AT THE VOTE FOR THE HANOVER TROOPS--BON MOT OF LORD DENBIGH.

TO GEORGE MONTAGU, ESQ.

ARLINGTON STREET, May 19, 1756.

Nothing will be more agreeable to me than to see you at Strawberry Hill; the weather does not seem to be of my mind, and will not invite you. I believe the French have taken the sun. Among other captures, I hear the King has taken another English mistress, a Mrs. Pope, who took her degrees in gallantry some years ago. She went to Versailles with the famous Mrs. Quon: the King took notice of them; he was told they were not so rigid as all other English women are--mind, I don't give you any part of this history for authentic; you know we can have no news from France but what we run.[1] I have rambled so that I forgot what I intended to say; if ever we can have spring, it must be soon: I propose to expect you any day you please after Sunday se'nnight, the 30th: let me know your resolution, and pray tell me in what magazine is the Strawberry ballad? I should have proposed an earlier day to you, but next week the Prince of Nassau is to breakfast at Strawberry Hill, and I know your aversion to clashing with grandeur.

[Footnote 1: "During the winter England was stirred with constantly recurring alarms of a French invasion.... Addresses were moved in both Houses entreating or empowering the King to summon over for our defence some of his Hanoverian troops, and also some of hired Hessians--an ignominious vote, but carried by large majorities" (Lord Stanhope, "History of England," c. 22).]

As I have already told you one mob story of a King, I will tell you another: they say, that the night the Hanover troops were voted, he sent Schutz for his German cook, and said, "Get me a very good supper; get me all de varieties; I don't mind expense."

I tremble lest his Hanoverians should be encamped at Hounslow; Strawberry would become an inn; all the Misses would breakfast there, to go and see the camp!

My Lord Denbigh is going to marry a fortune, I forget her name; my Lord Gower asked him how long the honey-moon would last? He replied, "Don't tell me of the honey-moon; it is harvest moon with me." Adieu!

VICTORY OF THE KING OF PRUSSIA AT LOWOSITZ--SINGULAR RACE--QUARREL OF THE PRETENDER WITH THE POPE.

TO SIR HORACE MANN.

STRAWBERRY HILL, Oct. 17, 1756.

Lentulus (I am going to tell you no old Roman tale; he is the King of Prussia's aid-de-camp) arrived yesterday, with ample confirmation of the victory in Bohemia.[1]--Are not you glad that we have got a victory that we can at least call Cousin? Between six and seven thousand Austrians were killed: eight Prussian squadrons sustained the acharnement, which is said to have been extreme, of thirty-two squadrons of Austrians: the pursuit lasted from Friday noon till Monday morning; both our countrymen, Brown and Keith, performed wonders--we seem to flourish much when transplanted to Germany--but Germans don't make good manure here! The Prussian King writes that both Brown and Piccolomini are too strongly intrenched to be attacked. His Majesty ran to this victory; not a la Molwitz. He affirms having found in the King of Poland's cabinet ample justification of his treatment of Saxony--should not one query whether he had not these proofs in his hands antecedent to the cabinet? The Dauphiness[2] is said to have flung herself at the King of France's feet and begged his protection for her father; that he promised "qu'il le rendroit au centuple au Roi de Prusse."

[Footnote 1: On the 1st of the month Frederic II. had defeated the Austrian general, Marshal Brown, at Lowositz. It was the first battle of the Seven Years' War, and was of great political importance as leading

to the capture of Dresden and of laying all Saxony at the mercy of the conqueror. "A la Molwitz" is an allusion to the first battle in the war of the Austrian Succession, April 10, 1741, in which Frederic showed that he was not what Voltaire and Mr. Pitt called "a heaven-born general;" since on the repulse of his cavalry he gave up all for lost, and rode from the field, to learn at night that, after his flight, his second in command, the veteran Marshal Schwerin, had rallied the broken squadrons, and had obtained a decisive victory.]

[Footnote 2: The Dauphiness was the daughter of Augustus, King of Poland and Elector of Saxony.]

Peace is made between the courts of Kensington and Kew:[1] Lord Bute, who had no visible employment at the latter, and yet whose office was certainly no sinecure, is to be Groom of the Stole to the Prince of Wales; which satisfies. The rest of the family will be named before the birthday—but I don't know how, as soon as one wound is closed, another breaks out! Mr. Fox, extremely discontent at having no power, no confidence, no favour (all entirely engrossed by the old monopolist), has asked leave to resign. It is not yet granted. If Mr. Pitt will—or can, accept the seals, probably Mr. Fox will be indulged,—if Mr. Pitt will not, why then, it is impossible to tell you what will happen. Whatever happens on such an emergency, with the Parliament so near, with no time for considering measures, with so bad a past, and so much worse a future, there certainly is no duration or good in prospect. Unless the King of Prussia will take our affairs at home as well as abroad to nurse, I see no possible recovery for us—and you may believe, when a doctor like him is necessary, I should be full as willing to die of the distemper.

[Footnote 1: "The courts of Kensington and Kew"—in other words, of the King and the Prince of Wales and his mother, to whom George II. was not very friendly. A scandal, which had no foundation, imputed to the Princess undue intimacy with the Earl of Bute, who, however, did stand high in her good graces, and who probably was indebted to them for his appointment in the next reign to the office of Prime Minister, for which he had no qualification whatever.]

Well! and so you think we are undone!—not at all; if folly and extravagance are symptoms of a nation's being at the height of their glory, as after-observers pretend that they are forerunners of its ruin, we never were in a more flourishing situation. My Lord Rockingham and my nephew Lord Orford have made a match of five hundred pounds, between five turkeys and five geese, to run from Norwich to London. Don't you believe in the transmigration of souls? And are not you convinced that this race is between Marquis Sardanapalus and Earl Heliogabalus? And don't you pity the poor Asiatics and Italians who comforted themselves on their resurrection with their being geese and turkeys?

Here's another symptom of our glory! The Irish Speaker Mr. Ponsonby has been reposing himself at Newmarket: George Selwyn, seeing him toss about bank-bills at the hazard-table said, "How easily the Speaker passes the money-bills!"

You, who live at Florence among vulgar vices and tame slavery, will stare at these accounts. Pray be acquainted with your own country, while it is in its lustre. In a regular monarchy the folly of the Prince gives the tone; in a downright tyranny, folly dares give itself no airs; it is in a wanton overgrown commonwealth that whim and debauchery intrigue best together. Ask me which of these governments I prefer—oh! the last—only I fear it is the least durable.

I have not yet thanked you for your letter of September 18th, with the accounts of the Genoese treaty and of the Pretender's quarrel with the Pope—it is a squabble worthy a Stuart. Were he, here, as absolute as

any Stuart ever wished to be, who knows with all his bigotry but he might favour us with a reformation and the downfall of the mass? The ambition of making a Duke of York vice-chancellor of holy church would be as good a reason for breaking with holy church, as Harry the Eighth's was for quarrelling with it, because it would not excuse him from going to bed to his sister after it had given him leave.

I wish I could tell you that your brother mends! indeed I don't think he does: nor do I know what to say to him; I have exhausted both arguments and entreaties, and yet if I thought either would avail, I would gladly recommence them. Adieu!

MINISTERIAL NEGOTIATIONS--LOSS OF MINORCA--DISASTER IN NORTH AMERICA.

TO SIR HORACE MANN.

ARLINGTON STREET, Nov. 4, 1756.

I desired your brother last week to tell you that it was in vain for me to write while everything was in such confusion. The chaos is just as far from being dispersed now; I only write to tell you what has been its motions. One of the Popes, I think, said soon after his accession, he did not think it had been so easy to govern. What would he have thought of such a nation as this, engaged in a formidable war, without any government at all, literally, for above a fortnight! The foreign ministers have not attempted to transact any business since yesterday fortnight. For God's sake, what do other countries say of us?--but hear the progress of our interministerium.

When Mr. Fox had declared his determination of resigning, great offers were sent to Mr. Pitt; his demands were much greater, accompanied with a total exclusion of the Duke of Newcastle. Some of the latter's friends would have persuaded him, as the House of Commons is at his devotion, to have undertaken the government against both Pitt and Fox; but fears preponderated. Yesterday se'nnight his grace declared his resolution of retiring, with all that satisfaction of mind which must attend a man whom not one man of sense will trust any longer. The King sent for Mr. Fox, and bid him try if Mr. Pitt would join him. The latter, without any hesitation, refused. In this perplexity the King ordered the Duke of Devonshire to try to compose some Ministry for him, and sent him to Pitt, to try to accommodate with Fox. Pitt, with a list of terms a little modified, was ready to engage, but on condition that Fox should have no employment in the cabinet. Upon this plan negotiations have been carrying on for this week. Mr. Pitt and Mr. Legge, whose whole party consists of from twelve to sixteen persons, exclusive of Leicester House (of that presently), concluded they were entering on the government as Secretary of State and Chancellor of the Exchequer: but there is so great unwillingness to give it up totally into their hands, that all manner of expedients have been projected to get rid of their proposals, or to limit their power. Thus the case stands at this instant: the Parliament has been put off for a fortnight, to gain time; the Lord knows whether that will suffice to bring on any sort of temper! In the meantime the government stands still; pray Heaven the war may too! You will wonder how fifteen or sixteen persons can be of such importance. In the first place, their importance has been conferred on them, and has been notified to the nation by these concessions and messages; next, Minorca^[1] is gone; Oswego gone;^[2] the nation is in a ferment; some very great indiscretions in delivering a Hanoverian soldier from prison by a warrant from the Secretary of State have raised great difficulties; instructions from counties, boroughs, especially from the City of London, in the style of 1641, and really in the spirit of 1715 and 1745, have raised a great flame; and lastly, the countenance of Leicester House, which Mr. Pitt is supposed to have, and which Mr. Legge thinks he has, all these tell Pitt that he may command such numbers without doors

as may make the majorities within the House tremble.

[Footnote 1: Minorca had been taken by the Duc de Richelieu; Admiral Byng, after an indecisive action with the French fleet, having adopted the idea that he should not be able to save it, for which, as is too well known, he was condemned to death by a court-martial.]

[Footnote 2: "_Oswego gone_" "A detachment of the enemy was defeated by Colonel Broadstreet on the river Onondaga; on the other hand, the small forts of Ontario and Oswego were reduced by the French" (Lord Stanhope, "History of England," c. 33).]

Leicester House[1] is by some thought inclined to more pacific measures. Lord Bute's being established Groom of the Stole has satisfied. They seem more occupied in disobliging all their new court than in disturbing the King's. Lord Huntingdon, the new Master of the Horse to the Prince, and Lord Pembroke, one of his Lords, have not been spoken to. Alas! if the present storms should blow over, what seeds for new! You must guess at the sense of this paragraph, which it is difficult, at least improper, to explain to you; though you could not go into a coffee-house here where it would not be interpreted to you. One would think all those little politicians had been reading the Memoirs of the minority of Louis XIV.

[Footnote 1: Leicester House was the London residence of the young Prince of Wales.]

There has been another great difficulty: the season obliging all camps to break up, the poor Hanoverians have been forced to continue soaking in theirs. The county magistrates have been advised that they are not obliged by law to billet foreigners on public-houses, and have refused. Transports were yesterday ordered to carry away the Hanoverians! There are eight thousand men taken from America; for I am sure we can spare none from hence. The negligence and dilatoriness of the ministers at home, the wickedness of our West Indian governors, and the little-minded quarrels of the regulars and irregular forces, have reduced our affairs in that part of the world to a most deplorable state. Oswego, of ten times more importance even than Minorca, is so annihilated that we cannot learn the particulars.

My dear Sir, what a present and future picture have I given you! The details are infinite, and what I have neither time, nor, for many reasons, the imprudence to send by the post: your good sense will but too well lead you to develop them. The crisis is most melancholy and alarming. I remember two or three years ago I wished for more active times, and for events to furnish our correspondence. I think I could write you a letter almost as big as my Lord Clarendon's History. What a bold man is he who shall undertake the administration! How much shall we be obliged to him! How mad is he, whoever is ambitious of it! Adieu!

THE KING OF PRUSSIA'S VICTORIES--VOLTAIRE'S "UNIVERSAL HISTORY."

TO THE EARL OF STRAFFORD.

STRAWBERRY HILL, _July_ 4, 1757.

My Dear Lord,--It is well I have not obeyed you sooner, as I have often been going to do: what a heap of lies and contradictions I should have sent you! What joint ministries and sole ministries! What acceptances and resignations!--Viziers and bowstrings never succeeded one another quicker. Luckily I have stayed till we have got an administration that will last a little more than for ever. There is such content and harmony in it, that I don't know whether it is not as perfect as a plan which I formed for Charles Stanhope, after he had plagued me for two days for

news. I told him the Duke of Newcastle was to take orders, and have the reversion of the bishopric of Winchester; that Mr. Pitt was to have a regiment, and go over to the Duke; and Mr. Fox to be chamberlain to the Princess, in the room of Sir William Irby. Of all the new system I believe the happiest is Offley; though in great humility he says he only takes the bedchamber _to accommodate_. Next to him in joy is the Earl of Holderness—who has not got the garter. My Lord Waldegrave has; and the garter by this time I believe has got fifty spots.

Had I written sooner, I should have told your lordship, too, of the King of Prussia's triumphs^[1]--but they are addled too! I hoped to have had a few bricks from Prague to send you towards building Mr. Bentley's design, but I fear none will come from thence this summer. Thank God, the happiness of the menagerie does not depend upon administrations or victories! The happiest of beings in this part of the world is my Lady Suffolk: I really think her acquisition and conclusion of her law-suit will lengthen her life ten years. You may be sure I am not so satisfied, as Lady Mary [Coke] has left Sudbroke.

[Footnote 1: On the 6th of May Frederic defeated the Austrian army under Prince Charles of Lorraine and Marshal Brown in the battle of Prague. Brown was killed, as also was the Prussian Marshal, Schwerin; indeed, the King lost eighteen thousand men--nearly as many as had fallen on the side of the enemy; and the Austrian disaster was more than retrieved by the great victory of Kolin, gained by Marshal Daun, June 18th, to which Walpole probably alludes when he says Frederic's "triumphs are addled."]

Are your charming lawns burnt up like our humble hills? Is your sweet river as low as our deserted Thames?--I am wishing for a handful or two of those floods that drowned me last year all the way from Wentworth Castle. I beg my best compliments to my lady, and my best wishes that every pheasant egg and peacock egg may produce as many colours as a harlequin-jacket.

Tuesday, July 5th.

Luckily, my good lord, my conscience had saved its distance. I had writ the above last night, when I received the honour of your kind letter this morning. You had, as I did not doubt, received accounts of all our strange histories. For that of the pretty Countess [of Coventry], I fear there is too much truth in all you have heard: but you don't seem to know that Lord Corydon and Captain Corydon his brother have been most abominable. I don't care to write scandal; but when I see you, I will tell you how much the chits deserve to be whipped. Our favourite general [Conway] is at his camp: Lady Ailesbury don't go to him these three weeks. I expect the pleasure of seeing her and Miss Rich and Fred. Campbell here soon for a few days. I don't wonder your lordship likes St. Philippe better than Torcy:^[1] except a few passages interesting to Englishmen, there cannot be a more dry narration than the latter. There is an addition of seven volumes of Universal History to Voltaire's Works, which I think will charm you: I almost like it the best of his works. It is what you have seen extended, and the Memoirs of Louis XIV. _refondues_ in it. He is a little tiresome with contradicting La Beaumelle and Voltaire, one remains with scarce a fixed idea about that time. I wish they would produce their authorities and proofs; without which, I am grown to believe neither. From mistakes in the English part, I suppose there are great ones in the more distant histories; yet altogether it is a fine work. He is, as one might believe, worst informed on the present times.--He says eight hundred persons were put to death for the last Rebellion--I don't believe a quarter of the number were: and he makes the first Lord Derwentwater--who, poor man! was in no such high-spirited mood--bring his son, who by the way was not above a year and a half old, upon the scaffold to be sprinkled with his blood.--However, he is in the right to expect to be believed: for he

believes all the romances in Lord Anson's Voyage, and how Admiral Almanzor made one man-of-war box the ears of the whole empire of China!--I know nothing else new but a new edition of Dr. Young's Works. If your lordship thinks like me, who hold that even in his most frantic rhapsodies there are innumerable fine things, you will like to have this edition. Adieu, once more, my best lord!

[Footnote 1: Torcy had been Secretary of State in the time of Louis XIV., and was the diplomatist who arranged the details of the First Partition Treaty with William III.]

_HIS OWN "ROYAL AND NOBLE AUTHORS." _

TO THE REV. HENRY ZOUCH.[1]

[Footnote 1: Mr. Zouch was the squire and vicar of Sandhill, in Yorkshire.]

STRAWBERRY HILL, _August_ 3, 1758.

Sir,--I have received, with much pleasure and surprise, the favour of your remarks upon my Catalogue; and whenever I have the opportunity of being better known to you, I shall endeavour to express my gratitude for the trouble you have given yourself in contributing to perfect a work, which, notwithstanding your obliging expressions, I fear you found very little worthy the attention of so much good sense and knowledge, Sir, as you possess.

I am extremely thankful for all the information you have given me; I had already met with a few of the same lights as I have received, Sir, from you, as I shall mention in their place. The very curious accounts of Lord Fairfax were entirely new and most acceptable to me. If I decline making use of one or two of your hints, I believe I can explain my reasons to your satisfaction. I will, with your leave, go regularly through your letter.

As Caxton[1] laboured in the monastery of Westminster, it is not at all unlikely that he should wear the habit, nor, considering how vague our knowledge of that age is, impossible but he might enter the order.

[Footnote 1: Mr. Zouch had expressed a doubt whether a portrait of a man in a clerical garb could possibly be meant for Caxton, and Mr. Cole and three of Walpole's literary correspondents suggested that it was probably a portrait of Jehan de Jeonville, Provost of Paris.]

I have met with Henry's institution of a Christian, and shall give you an account of it in my next edition. In that, too, I shall mention, that Lord Cobham's allegiance professed at his death to Richard II., probably means to Richard and his right heirs whom he had abandoned for the house of Lancaster. As the article is printed off, it is too late to say anything more about his works.

In all the old books of genealogy you will find, Sir, that young Richard Duke of York was solemnly married to a child of his own age, Anne Mowbray, the heiress of Norfolk, who died young as well as he.

The article of the Duke of Somerset is printed off too; besides, I should imagine the letter you mention not to be of his own composition, for, though not illiterate, he certainly could not write anything like classic Latin. I may, too, possibly have inclusively mentioned the very letter; I have not Ascham's book, to see from what copy the letter was taken, but probably from one of those which I have said is in Bennet Library.

The Catalogue of Lord Brooke's works is taken from the volume of his works; such pieces of his as I found doubted, particularly the tragedy of Cicero, I have taken notice of as doubtful.

In my next edition you will see, Sir, a note on Lord Herbert, who, besides being with the King at York, had offended the peers by a speech in his Majesty's defence. Mr. Wolsley's preface I shall mention, from your information. Lord Rochester's letters to his son are letters to a child, bidding him mind his book and his grandmother. I had already been told, Sir, what you tell me of Marchmont Needham.

Matthew Clifford I have altered to Martin, as you prescribed; the blunder was my own, as well as a more considerable one, that of Lord Sandwich's death--which was occasioned by my supposing, at first, that the translation of Barba was made by the second Earl, whose death I had marked in the list, and forgot to alter, after I had writ the account of the father. I shall take care to set this right, as the second volume is not yet begun to be printed.

Lord Halifax's Maxims I have already marked down, as I shall Lord Dorset's share in Pompey.

The account of the Duke of Wharton's death I had from a very good hand--Captain Willoughby; who, in the convent where the Duke died, saw a picture of him in the habit. If it was a Bernardine convent, the gentleman might confound them; but, considering that there is no life of the Duke but bookseller's trash, it is much more likely that they mistook.

I have no doubts about Lord Belhaven's speeches; but unless I could verify their being published by himself, it were contrary to my rule to insert them.

If you look, Sir, into Lord Clarendon's account of Montrose's death, you will perceive that there is no probability of the book of his actions being composed by himself.

I will consult Sir James Ware's book on Lord Totness's translation; and I will mention the Earl of Cork's Memoirs.

Lord Leppington is the Earl of Monmouth, in whose article I have taken notice of his Romulus and Tarquin.

Lord Berkeley's book I have actually got, and shall give him an article.

There is one more passage, Sir, in your letter, which I cannot answer, without putting you to new trouble--a liberty which all your indulgence cannot justify me in taking; else I would beg to know on what authority you attribute to Laurence Earl of Rochester[1] the famous preface to his father's history, which I have always heard ascribed to Atterbury, Smallridge, and Aldridge.[2] The knowledge of this would be an additional favour; it would be a much greater, Sir, if coming this way, you would ever let me have the honour of seeing a gentleman to whom I am so much obliged.

[Footnote 1: The Earl of Rochester was the second son of the Earl of Clarendon. He was Lord Treasurer under James II., but was dismissed because he refused to change his religion (Macaulay's "History of England," c. 6).]

[Footnote 2: Atterbury was the celebrated Bishop of Rochester, Smallridge was Bishop of Bristol, and Aldridge (usually written Aldrich) was Dean of Christchurch, Oxford, equally well known for his treatise on Logic and his five reasons for drinking--

Good wine, a friend, or being dry;
Or lest you should be by and by,
Or any other reason why--]

__HIS "ROYAL AND NOBLE AUTHORS"--LORD CLARENDON--SIR R. WALPOLE AND LORD BOLINGBROKE--THE DUKE OF LEEDS._

TO THE REV. HENRY ZOUCH.

STRAWBERRY HILL, _Oct._ 21, 1758.

Sir,--Every letter I receive from you is a new obligation, bringing me new information: but, sure, my Catalogue was not worthy of giving you so much trouble. Lord Fortescue is quite new to me; I have sent him to the press. Lord Dorset's[1] poem it will be unnecessary to mention separately, as I have already said that his works are to be found among those of the minor poets.

[Footnote 1: Lord Dorset, Lord Chamberlain under Charles II., author of the celebrated ballad "To all you ladies now on land," and patron of Dryden and other literary men, was honourably mentioned as such by Macaulay in c. 8 of his "History," and also for his refusal, as Lord-Lieutenant of Essex, to comply with some of James's illegal orders.]

I don't wonder, Sir, that you prefer Lord Clarendon to Polybius[1]; nor can two authors well be more unlike: the _former_ wrote a general history in a most obscure and almost unintelligible style; the _latter_, a portion of private history, in the noblest style in the world. Whoever made the comparison, I will do them the justice to believe that they understood bad Greek better than their own language in its elevation. For Dr. Jortin's[2] Erasmus, which I have very nearly finished, it has given me a good opinion of the author, and he has given me a very bad one of his subject. By the Doctor's labour and impartiality, Erasmus appears a begging parasite, who had parts enough to discover truth, and not courage enough to profess it: whose vanity made him always writing; yet his writings ought to have cured his vanity, as they were the most abject things in the world. _Good Erasmus's honest mean_ was alternate time-serving. I never had thought much about him, and now heartily despise him.

[Footnote 1: "_You prefer Lord Clarendon to Polybius._" It is hard to understand this sentence. Lord Clarendon did _not_ write a general history, but an account of a single event, "The Great Rebellion." It was Polybius who wrote a "Universal History," of which, however, only five books have been preserved, the most interesting portion of which is a narrative of Hannibal's invasion of Italy and march over the Alps in the Second Punic War.]

[Footnote 2: Dr. Jortin was Archdeacon of London; and, among other works, had recently published a life of the celebrated Erasmus, the mention of whom by Pope, which Walpole presently quotes, is not very unfairly interpreted by Walpole.]

When I speak my opinion to you, Sir, about what I dare say you care as little for as I do, (for what is the merit of a mere man of letters?) it is but fit I should answer you as sincerely on a question about which you are so good as to interest yourself. That my father's life is likely to be written, I have no grounds for believing. I mean I know nobody that thinks of it. For, myself, I certainly shall not, for many reasons, which you must have the patience to hear. A reason to me myself is, that I think too highly of him, and too meanly of myself, to presume I am equal to the task. They who do not agree with me in the former part of my position, will undoubtedly allow the latter part. In the next place,

the very truths that I should relate would be so much imputed to partiality, that he would lose of his due praise by the suspicion of my prejudice. In the next place, I was born too late in his life to be acquainted with him in the active part of it. Then I was at school, at the university, abroad, and returned not till the last moments of his administration. What I know of him I could only learn from his own mouth in the last three years of his life; when, to my shame, I was so idle, and young, and thoughtless, that I by no means profited of his leisure as I might have done; and, indeed, I have too much impartiality in my nature to care, if I could, to give the world a history, collected solely from the person himself of whom I should write. With the utmost veneration for his truth, I can easily conceive, that a man who had lived a life of party, and who had undergone such persecution from party, should have had greater bias than he himself could be sensible of. The last, and that a reason which must be admitted, if all the others are not--his papers are lost. Between the confusion of his affairs, and the indifference of my elder brother to things of that sort, they were either lost, burnt, or what we rather think, were stolen by a favourite servant of my brother, who proved a great rogue, and was dismissed in my brother's life; and the papers were not discovered to be missing till after my brother's death. Thus, Sir, I should want vouchers for many things I could say of much importance. I have another personal reason that discourages me from attempting this task, or any other, besides the great reluctance that I have to being a voluminous author. Though I am by no means the learned man you are so good as to call me in compliment; though, on the contrary, nothing can be more superficial than my knowledge, or more trifling than my reading,--yet, I have so much strained my eyes, that it is often painful to me to read even a newspaper by daylight. In short, Sir, having led a very dissipated life, in all the hurry of the world of pleasure, I scarce ever read but by candlelight, after I have come home late at nights. As my eyes have never had the least inflammation or humour, I am assured I may still recover them by care and repose. I own I prefer my eyes to anything I could ever read, much more to anything I could write. However, after all I have said, perhaps I may now and then, by degrees, throw together some short anecdotes of my father's private life and particular story, and leave his public history to more proper and more able hands, if such will undertake it. Before I finish on this chapter, I can assure you he did forgive my Lord Bolingbroke^[1]--his nature was forgiving: after all was over, and he had nothing to fear or disguise, I can say with truth, that there were not three men of whom he ever dropped a word with rancour. What I meant of the clergy not forgiving Lord Bolingbroke, alluded not to his doctrines, but to the direct attack and war he made on the whole body. And now, Sir, I will confess my own weakness to you. I do not think so highly of that writer, as I seem to do in my book; but I thought it would be imputed to prejudice in me, if I appeared to undervalue an author of whom so many persons of sense still think highly. My being Sir Robert Walpole's son warped me to praise, instead of censuring Lord Bolingbroke. With regard to the Duke of Leeds,^[2] I think you have misconstrued the decency of my expression. I said, Burnet ^[3] had treated him severely; that is, I chose that Burnet should say so, rather than myself. I have never praised where my heart condemned. Little attentions, perhaps, to worthy descendants, were excusable in a work of so extensive a nature, and that approached so near to these times. I may, perhaps, have an opportunity, at one day or other of showing you some passages suppressed on these motives, which yet I do not intend to destroy.

[Footnote 1: Sir R. Walpole was so far from having any personal quarrel with Bolingbroke, that he took off so much of his outlawry as banished him, though he would not allow him to take his seat in the House of Peers.]

[Footnote 2: This celebrated statesman was originally Sir Thomas Osborne. On the dissolution of the Cabal Ministry he was raised to the

peerage as Earl of Danby, and was appointed Lord Treasurer. An attempt to impeach him, which was prompted by Louis XIV., was baffled by Charles. Under William III. he was appointed President of the Council, being the recognised leader of the Tory section of the Ministry; and in the course of the reign he was twice promoted--first to be Marquis of Carmarthen, and subsequently to be Duke of Leeds.]

[Footnote 3: Burnet, the Bishop of Salisbury, to whose "Memoirs of His Own Time" all subsequent historians are greatly indebted. He accompanied William to England as his chaplain.]

Crew,[1] Bishop of Durham, was as abject a tool as possible. I would be very certain he is an author before I should think him worth mentioning. If ever you should touch on Lord Willoughby's sermon, I should be obliged for a hint of it. I actually have a printed copy of verses by his son, on the marriage of the Princess Royal; but they are so ridiculously unlike measure, and the man was so mad and so poor, that I determined not to mention him.

[Footnote 1: Crew was Bishop of Durham. He is branded by Macaulay (c. 6) as "mean, vain, and cowardly." He accepted a seat on James's Ecclesiastical Commission, and when "some of his friends represented to him the risk which he ran by sitting on an illegal tribunal, he was not ashamed to answer that he could not live out of the royal smile."]

If these details, Sir, which I should have thought interesting to no mortal but myself, should happen to amuse you, I shall be glad; if they do not, you will learn not to question a man who thinks it his duty to satisfy the curiosity of men of sense and honour, and who, being of too little consequence to have secrets, is not ambitious of the less consequence of appearing to have any.

P.S.--I must ask you one question, but to be answered entirely at your leisure. I have a play in rhyme called "Saul," said to be written by a peer. I guess Lord Orrery. If ever you happen to find out, be so good to tell me.

WALPOLE'S MONUMENT TO SIR HORACE'S BROTHER--ATTEMPTED ASSASSINATION OF THE KING OF PORTUGAL--COURTESY OF THE DUC D'AIGUILLON TO HIS ENGLISH PRISONERS.

TO SIR HORACE MANN.

STRAWBERRY HILL, Oct. 24, 1758.

It is a very melancholy present I send you here, my dear Sir; yet, considering the misfortune that has befallen us, perhaps the most agreeable I could send you. You will not think it the bitterest tear you have shed when you drop one over this plan of an urn inscribed with the name of your dear brother, and with the testimonial of my eternal affection to him! This little monument is at last placed over the pew of your family at Linton [in Kent], and I doubt whether any tomb was ever erected that spoke so much truth of the departed, and flowed from so much sincere friendship in the living. The thought was my own, adopted from the antique columbaria, and applied to Gothic. The execution of the design was Mr. Bentley's, who alone, of all mankind, could unite the grace of Grecian architecture and the irregular lightness and solemnity of Gothic. Kent and many of our builders sought this, but have never found it. Mr. Chute, who has as much taste as Mr. Bentley, thinks this little sketch a perfect model. The soffite is more beautiful than anything of either style separate. There is a little error in the inscription; it should be Horatius Walpole posuit. The urn is of marble, richly polished; the rest of stone. On the whole, I think there is simplicity and decency, with a degree of ornament that destroys

neither.

What do you say in Italy on the assassination of the King of Portugal?[1] Do you believe that Portuguese subjects lift their hand against a monarch for gallantry? Do you believe that when a slave murders an absolute prince, he goes a walking with his wife the next morning and murders her too? Do you believe the dead King is alive? and that the Jesuits are as wrongfully suspected of this assassination as they have been of many others they have committed? If you do believe this, and all this, you are not very near turning Protestants. It is scarce talked of here, and to save trouble, we admit just what the Portuguese Minister is ordered to publish. The King of Portugal murdered, throws us two hundred years back—the King of Prussia not murdered, carries us two hundred years forward again.

[Footnote 1: The Duke of Aveiro was offended with the King of Portugal for interfering to prevent his son's marriage, and, in revenge, he plotted his assassination. He procured the co-operation of some other nobles, especially the Marquis and Marchioness of Tavora, and also of some of the chief Jesuits in the country, who promised absolution to any assassin. The attempt was made on September 3rd, when the King was fired at and severely wounded. The conspirators were all convicted and executed, and the Jesuits were expelled from the country.]

Another King, I know, has had a little blow: the Prince de Soubise has beat some Isenbourgs and Oberges, and is going to be Elector of Hanover this winter. There has been a great sickness among our troops in the other German army; the Duke of Marlborough has been in great danger, and some officers are dead. Lord Frederick Cavendish is returned from France. He confirms and adds to the amiable accounts we had received of the Duc d'Aiguillon's[1] behaviour to our prisoners. You yourself, the pattern of attentions and tenderness, could not refine on what he has done both in good-nature and good-breeding: he even forbid any ringing of bells or rejoicings wherever they passed—but how your representative blood will curdle when you hear of the absurdity of one of your countrymen: the night after the massacre at St. Cas, the Duc d'Aiguillon gave a magnificent supper of eighty covers to our prisoners—a Colonel Lambert got up at the bottom of the table, and asking for a bumper, called out to the Duc, "My Lord Duke, here's the Roy de France!" You must put all the English you can crowd into the accent. My Lord Duke was so confounded at this preposterous compliment, which it was impossible for him to return, that he absolutely sank back into his chair and could not utter a syllable: our own people did not seem to feel more.

[Footnote 1: The Duc d'Aiguillon was governor of Brittany when the disastrous attempt of the Duke of Marlborough on St. Cast was repulsed. But he did not get much credit for the defeat. Lacretable mentions that: "Les Bretons qui le considerent comme leur tyran pretendent qu'il l'etait tenu cache pendant le combat" (iii. 345). He was subsequently prosecuted on charges of peculation and subornation, which the Parliament declared to be fully established, but Mme. de Barri persuaded Louis to cancel their resolution.]

You will read and hear that we have another expedition sailing, somewhither in the West Indies. Hobson, the commander, has in his whole life had but one stroke of a palsy, so possibly may retain half of his understanding at least. There is a great tranquillity at home, but I should think not promising duration. The disgust in the army on the late frantic measures will furnish some warmth probably to Parliament—and if the French should think of returning our visits, should you wonder? There are even rumours of some stirring among your little neighbours at Albano—keep your eye on them—if you could discover anything in time, it would do you great credit. Apropos to them, I will send you an epigram that I made the other day on Mr. Chute's asking why Taylor the

oculist called himself Chevalier?[1]

[Footnote 1: Walpole was proud of the epigram, for the week before he had sent it to Lady Hervey. It was--

Why Taylor the quack calls himself Chevalier
'Tis not easy a reason to render,
Unless blinding eyes that he thinks to make clear
Demonstrates he's but a _Pretender_.

Le Chevalier was the name commonly given in courtesy by both parties to Prince Charles Edward in 1745. Colonel Talbot says: "'Well, I never thought to have been so much indebted to the Pretend--' 'To the Prince,' said Waverley, smiling. 'To the Chevalier,' said the Colonel; 'it is a good travelling name which we may both freely use'" ("Waverley," c. 55).]

A NEW EDITION OF LUCAN--COMPARISON OF "PHARSALEA"--CRITICISM ON THE POET, WITH THE AENEID--HELVETIUS'S WORK, "DE L'ESPRIT."

TO THE REV. HENRY ZOUCH.

ARLINGTON STREET, _Dec._ 9, 1758.

Sir,--I have desired Mr. Whiston to convey to you the second edition of my Catalogue, not so complete as it might have been, if great part had not been printed before I received your remarks, but yet more correct than the first sketch with which I troubled you. Indeed, a thing of this slight and idle nature does not deserve to have much more pains employed upon it.

I am just undertaking an edition of Lucan, my friend Mr. Bentley having in his possession his father's notes and emendations on the first seven books. Perhaps a partiality for the original author concurs a little with this circumstance of the notes, to make me fond of printing, at Strawberry Hill, the works of a man who, alone of all the classics, was thought to breathe too brave and honest a spirit for the perusal of the Dauphin and the French. I don't think that a good or bad taste in poetry is of so serious a nature, that I should be afraid of owning too, that, with that great judge Corneille, and with that, perhaps, _no_ judge Heinsius, I prefer Lucan to Virgil. To speak fairly, I prefer great sense, to poetry with little sense. There are hemistichs in Lucan that go to one's soul and one's heart;--for a mere epic poem, a fabulous tissue of uninteresting battles that don't teach one even to fight, I know nothing more tedious. The poetic images, the versification and language of the Aeneid are delightful; but take the story by itself, and can anything be more silly and unaffecting? There are a few gods without power, heroes without character, heaven-directed wars without justice, inventions without probability, and a hero who betrays one woman with a kingdom that he might have had, to force himself upon another woman and another kingdom to which he had no pretensions, and all this to show his obedience to the gods! In short, I have always admired his numbers so much, and his meaning so little, that I think I should like Virgil better if I understood him less.

Have you seen, Sir, a book which has made some noise--"Helvetius de l'Esprit"[1]? The author is so good and moral a man, that I grieve he should have published a system of as relaxed morality as can well be imagined: 'tis a large quarto, and in general a very superficial one. His philosophy may be new in France, but it greatly exhausted here. He tries to imitate Montesquieu,[2] and has heaped common-places upon common-places, which supply or overwhelm his reasoning; yet he has often wit, happy allusions, and sometimes writes finely: there is merit enough to give an obscure man fame; flimsiness enough to depreciate a

great man. After his book was licensed, they forced him to retract it by a most abject recantation. Then why print this work? If zeal for his system pushed him to propagate it, did not he consider that a recantation would hurt his cause more than his arguments could support it?

[Footnote 1: Helvetius was the son of the French king's physician. His book was condemned by the Parliament of Paris as derogatory to the nature of man.]

[Footnote 2: Montesquieu was President of the Parliament of Bordeaux. He was a voluminous writer, his most celebrated work being his "L'Esprit des Lois." Burke described him as "A genius not born in every country, or every time: with a Herculean robustness of mind; and nerves not to be broken by labour."]

We are promised Lord Clarendon in February from Oxford, but I hear shall have the surreptitious edition from Holland much sooner.

You see, Sir, I am a sceptic as well as Helvetius, but of a more moderate complexion. There is no harm in telling mankind that there is not so much divinity in the Aeneid as they imagine; but, even if I thought so, I would not preach that virtue and friendship are mere names, and resolvable into self-interest; because there are numbers that would remember the grounds of the principle, and forget what was to be engrafted on it. Adieu!

__STATE OF THE HOUSE OF COMMONS.__

TO THE HON. H.S. CONWAY.

ARLINGTON STREET, __Jan.__ 19, 1759.

I hope the treaty of Sluys[1] advances rapidly. Considering that your own court is as new to you as Monsieur de Bareil and his, you cannot be very well entertained: the joys of a Dutch fishing town and the incidents of a cartel will not compose a very agreeable history. In the mean time you do not lose much; though the Parliament is met, no politics are come to town; one may describe the House of Commons like the price of stocks—Debates, nothing done. Votes, under par. Patriots, no price. Oratory, books shut. Love and war are as much at a stand; neither the Duchess of Hamilton, nor the expeditions are gone off yet. Prince Edward has asked to go to Quebec, and has been refused. If I was sure they would refuse me, I would ask to go thither too. I should not dislike about as much laurel as I could stick in my window at Christmas.

[Footnote 1: Treaty of Sluys. Conway was engaged at Sluys negotiating with the French envoy, M. de Bareil, for an exchange of prisoners.]

We are next week to have a serenata at the Opera-house for the King of Prussia's birthday; it is to begin, "Viva Georgio, e Frederigo viva!" It will, I own, divert me to see my Lord Temple whispering __for__ this alliance, on the same bench on which I have so often seen him whisper __against__ all Germany. The new opera pleases universally, and I hope will yet hold up its head. Since Vanneschi is cunning enough to make us sing __the roast beef of old Germany__, I am persuaded it will revive; politics are the only hot-bed for keeping such a tender plant as Italian music alive in England.

You are so thoughtless about your dress, that I cannot help giving you a little warning against your return. Remember, everybody that comes from abroad is __cense__ to come from France, and whatever they wear at their first reappearance immediately grows the fashion. Now if, as is very likely, you should through inadvertence change hats with a master of a

Dutch smack, Offley will be upon the watch, will conclude you took your pattern from M. de Bareil, and in a week's time we shall all be equipped like Dutch skippers. You see I speak very disinterestedly; for, as I never wear a hat myself, it is indifferent to me what sort of hat I don't wear. Adieu! I hope nothing in this letter, if it is opened, will affect the conferences, nor hasten our rupture with Holland. Lest it should, I send it to Lord Holderness's office; concluding, like Lady Betty Waldegrave, that the Government never suspect what they send under their own covers.

ROBERTSON'S "HISTORY OF SCOTLAND"--COMPARISON OF RAMSAY AND REYNOLDS AS PORTRAIT-PAINTERS--SIR DAVID'S "HISTORY OF THE GOWRIE CONSPIRACY."

TO SIR DAVID DALRYMPLE.

STRAWBERRY HILL, Feb. 25, 1759.

I think, Sir, I have perceived enough of the amiable benignity of your mind, to be sure that you will like to hear the praises of your friend.^[1] Indeed, there is but one opinion about Mr. Robertson's "History [of Scotland]." I don't remember any other work that ever met universal approbation. Since the Romans and the Greeks, who have now an exclusive charter for being the best writers in every kind, he is the historian that pleases me best; and though what he has been so indulgent as to say of me ought to shut my mouth, I own I have been unmeasured in my commendations. I have forfeited my own modesty rather than not do justice to him. I did send him my opinion some time ago, and hope he received it. I can add, with the strictest truth, that he is regarded here as one of the greatest men that this island has produced. I say island, but you know, Sir, that I am disposed to say Scotland. I have discovered another very agreeable writer among your countrymen, and in a profession where I did not look for an author; it is Mr. Ramsay, the painter, whose pieces being anonymous, have been overlooked. He has a great deal of genuine wit, and a very just manner of reasoning. In his own walk, he has great merit. He and Mr. Reynolds are our favourite painters, and two of the very best we ever had. Indeed, the number of good has been very small, considering the numbers there are. A very few years ago there were computed two thousand portrait-painters in London; I do not exaggerate the computation, but diminish it; though I think it must have been exaggerated. Mr. Reynolds and Mr. Ramsay can scarce be rivals; their manners are so different. The former is bold, and has a kind of tempestuous colouring, yet with dignity and grace; the latter is all delicacy. Mr. Reynolds seldom succeeds in women; Mr. Ramsay is formed to paint them.

[Footnote 1: Sir David was himself a historical writer of some importance. Macaulay was greatly indebted to his "Memoirs of Great Britain and Ireland from the Restoration to the Battle of La Hogue." The secret history and object of the strange attempt on James VI. (afterwards James I. of England) have been discussed by many writers, but without any of them succeeding in any very clear or certain elucidation of the transaction.]

I fear I neglected, Sir, to thank you for your present of the history of the "Conspiracy of the Gowries"; but I shall never forget all the obligations I have to you. I don't doubt but in Scotland you approve what is liked here almost as much as Mr. Robertson's History; I mean the marriage of Colonel Campbell and the Duchess of Hamilton. If her fortune is singular, so is her merit. Such uncommon noise as her beauty made has not at all impaired the modesty of her behaviour. Adieu!

WRITERS OF HISTORY: GOODALL, HUME, ROBERTSON--QUEEN CHRISTINA.

TO SIR DAVID DALRYMPLE.

STRAWBERRY HILL, _July_ 11, 1759.

You will repent, Sir, I fear, having drawn such a correspondent upon yourself. An author flattered and encouraged is not easily shaken off again; but if the interests of my book did not engage me to trouble you, while you are so good as to write me the most entertaining letters in the world, it is very natural for me to lay snares to inveigle more of them. However, Sir, excuse me this once, and I will be more modest for the future in trespassing on your kindness. Yet, before I break out on my new wants, it will be but decent, Sir, to answer some particulars of your letter.

I have lately read Mr. Goodall's[1] book. There is certainly ingenuity in parts of his defence; but I believe one seldom thinks a defence _ingenious_ without meaning that it is unsatisfactory. His work left me fully convinced of what he endeavoured to disprove; and showed me, that the piece you mention is not the only one that he has written against moderation.

[Footnote 1: Mr. Goodall had published an Essay on the letters put forward as written by Queen Mary to Bothwell, branding them as forgeries. The question of their genuineness has been examined with great acuteness by more than one subsequent writer, and the arguments against their genuineness are certainly very strong.]

I have lately got Lord Cromerty's "Vindication of the legitimacy of King Robert [the Third]," and his "Synopsis Apocalyptica," and thank you much, Sir, for the notice of any of his pieces. But if you expect that his works should lessen my esteem for the writers of Scotland, you will please to recollect, that the letter which paints Lord Cromerty's pieces in so ridiculous a light, is more than a counterbalance in favour of the writers of your country; and of all men living, Sir, you are the last who will destroy my partiality for Scotland.

There is another point, Sir, on which, with all your address, you will persuade me as little. Can I think that we want writers of history while Mr. Hume and Mr. Robertson are living? It is a truth, and not a compliment, that I never heard objections made to Mr. Hume's History without endeavouring to convince the persons who found fault with it, of its great merit and beauty; and for what I saw of Mr. Robertson's work, it is one of the purest styles, and of the greatest impartiality, that I ever read. It is impossible for me to recommend a subject to him; because I cannot judge of what materials he can obtain. His present performance will undoubtedly make him so well known and esteemed, that he will have credit to obtain many new lights for a future history; but surely those relating to his own country will always lie most open to him. This is much my way of thinking with regard to myself. Though the Life of Christina[1] is a pleasing and a most uncommon subject, yet, totally unacquainted as I am with Sweden and its language, how could I flatter myself with saying anything new of her? And when original letters and authentic papers shall hereafter appear, may not they contradict half one should relate on the authority of what is already published? for though Memoirs _written_ nearest to the time are likely to be the truest, those _published_ nearest to it are generally the falsest.

[Footnote 1: Queen Christina of Sweden was the daughter and heiress of the great Gustavus Adolphus. After a time she abdicated the throne and lived for some time in Paris, where she acted in one respect as if still possessed of royal authority, actually causing her equerry, Monaldeschi, to be hung in one of her sitting-rooms.]

But, indeed, Sir, I am now making you only civil excuses; the real one

is, I have no kind of intention of continuing to write. I could not expect to succeed again with so much luck,—indeed, I think it so,—as I have done; it would mortify me more now, after a little success, to be despised, than it would have done before; and if I could please as much as I should wish to do, I think one should dread being a voluminous author. My own idleness, too, bids me desist. If I continued, I should certainly take more pains than I did in my Catalogue; the trouble would not only be more than I care to encounter, but would probably destroy what I believe the only merit of my last work, the ease. If I could incite you to tread in steps which I perceive you don't condemn, and for which it is evident you are so well qualified, from your knowledge, the grace, facility, and humour of your expression and manner, I shall have done a real service, where I expected at best to amuse.

THE BATTLE OF MINDEN--LORD G. SACKVILLE.

TO THE HON. H.S. CONWAY.

ARLINGTON STREET, _Aug._ 14, 1759.

I am here in the most unpleasant way in the world, attending poor Mrs. Leneve's death-bed, a spectator of all the horrors of tedious suffering and clear sense, and with no one soul to speak to—but I will not tire you with a description of what has quite worn me out.

Probably by this time you have seen the Duke of Richmond or Fitzroy—but lest you should not, I will tell you all I can learn, and a wonderful history it is. Admiral Byng was not more unpopular than Lord George Sackville.[1] I should scruple repeating his story if Betty and the waiters at Arthur's did not talk of it publicly, and thrust Prince Ferdinand's orders into one's hand.

[Footnote 1: Lord George was brought to court-martial for disobedience of orders, and most deservedly cashiered—a sentence which was, not very becomingly, overlooked some years afterwards, when, having changed his name to Germaine on succeeding to a large fortune, and having become a member of the House of Commons, he was made a Secretary of State by Lord North.]

You have heard, I suppose, of the violent animosities that have reigned for the whole campaign between him and Lord Granby—in which some other warm persons have been very warm too. In the heat of the battle, the Prince, finding thirty-six squadrons of French coming down upon our army, sent Ligonier to order our thirty-two squadrons, under Lord George, to advance. During that transaction, the French appeared to waver; and Prince Ferdinand, willing, as it is supposed, to give the honour to the British horse of terminating the day, sent Fitzroy to bid Lord George bring up only the British cavalry. Ligonier had but just delivered his message, when Fitzroy came with his.—Lord George said, "This can't be so—would he have me break the line? here is some mistake." Fitzroy replied, he had not argued upon the orders, but those were the orders. "Well!" said Lord George, "but I want a guide." Fitzroy said, he would be his guide. Lord George, "Where is the Prince?" Fitzroy, "I left him at the head of the left wing, I don't know where he is now." Lord George said he would go seek him, and have this explained. Smith then asked Fitzroy to repeat the orders to him; which being done, Smith went and whispered Lord George, who says he then bid Smith carry up the cavalry. Smith is come, and says he is ready to answer anybody any question. Lord George says, Prince Ferdinand's behaviour to him has been most infamous, has asked leave to resign his command, and to come over, which is granted. Prince Ferdinand's behaviour is summed up in the enclosed extraordinary paper: which you will doubt as I did, but which is certainly genuine. I doubted, because, in the military, I thought direct disobedience of orders was punished with an immediate arrest, and

because the last paragraph seemed to me very foolish. The going out of the way to compliment Lord Granby with what he would have done, seems to take off a little from the compliments paid to those that have done something; but, in short, Prince Ferdinand or Lord George, one of them, is most outrageously in the wrong, and the latter has much the least chance of being thought in the right.

The particulars I tell you, I collected from the most accurate authorities.--I make no comments on Lord George, it would look like a little dirty court to you; and the best compliment I can make you, is to think, as I do, that you will be the last man to enjoy this revenge.

You will be sorry for poor M'Kinsey and Lady Betty, who have lost their only child at Turin. Adieu!

ADMIRAL BOSCAWEN'S VICTORY--DEFEAT OF THE KING OF PRUSSIA--LORD G. SACKVILLE.

TO SIR HORACE MANN.

ARLINGTON STREET, Sept. 13, 1759.

With your unathletic constitution I think you will have a greater weight of glory to represent than you can bear. You will be as epuise as Princess Craon with all the triumphs over Niagara, Ticonderoga, Crown-point, and such a parcel of long names. You will ruin yourself in French horns, to exceed those of Marshal Botta, who has certainly found out a pleasant way of announcing victories. Besides, all the West Indies, which we have taken by a panic, there is Admiral Boscawen has demolished the Toulon squadron, and has made you Viceroy of the Mediterranean. I really believe the French will come hither now, for they can be safe nowhere else. If the King of Prussia should be totally undone in Germany,[1] we can afford to give him an appanage, as a younger son of England, of some hundred thousand miles on the Ohio. Sure universal monarchy was never so put to shame as that of France! What a figure do they make! They seem to have no ministers, no generals, no soldiers! If anything could be more ridiculous than their behaviour in the field, it would be in the cabinet! Their invasion appears not to have been designed against us, but against their own people, who, they fear, will mutiny, and to quiet whom they disperse expresses, with accounts of the progress of their arms in England. They actually have established posts, to whom people are directed to send their letters for their friends in England. If, therefore, you hear that the French have established themselves at Exeter or at Norwich, don't be alarmed, nor deceive the poor women who are writing to their husbands for English baubles.

[Footnote 1: Frederic the Great had sustained a severe defeat at Hochkirch in October, 1758, and a still more terrible one in August of this year from Marshals Laudon and Soltikof at Kunersdorf. It seemed so irreparable that for a moment he even contemplated putting an end to his life; but he was saved from the worst consequences of the blow by jealousies which sprang up between the Austrian and Russian commanders, and preventing them from profiting by their victory as they might have done.]

We have lost another Princess, Lady Elizabeth.[1] She died of an inflammation in her bowels in two days. Her figure was so very unfortunate, that it would have been difficult for her to be happy, but her parts and application were extraordinary. I saw her act in "Cato" at eight years old, (when she could not stand alone, but was forced to lean against the side-scene,) better than any of her brothers and sisters. She had been so unhealthy, that at that age she had not been taught to read, but had learned the part of Lucia by hearing the others study

their parts. She went to her father and mother, and begged she might act. They put her off as gently as they could--she desired leave to repeat her part, and when she did, it was with so much sense, that there was no denying her.

[Footnote 1: Second daughter of Frederick, Prince of Wales.--WALPOLE.]

I receive yours of August 25. To all your alarms for the King of Prussia I subscribe. With little Brandenburg he could not exhaust all the forces of Bohemia, Hungary, Austria, Muscovy, Siberia, Tartary, Sweden, &c., &c., &c.--but not to politicize too much, I believe the world will come to be fought for somewhere between the North of Germany and the back of Canada, between Count Daun and Sir William Johnson.[1]

[Footnote 1: Our General in America--WALPOLE.]

You guessed right about the King of Spain; he is dead, and the Queen Dowager may once more have an opportunity of embroiling the little of Europe that remains unembroiled.

Thank you, my dear Sir, for the Herculaneum and Caserta that you are sending me. I wish the watch may arrive safe, to show you that I am not insensible to all your attentions for me, but endeavour, at a great distance, to imitate you in the execution of commissions.

I would keep this letter back for a post, that I might have but one trouble of sending you Quebec too; but when one has taken so many places, it is not worth while to wait for one more.

Lord George Sackville, the hero of all conversation, if one can be so for not being a hero, is arrived. He immediately applied for a Court-Martial, but was told it was impossible now, as the officers necessary are in Germany. This was in writing from Lord Holderness--but Lord Ligonier in words was more squab--"If he wanted a Court-Martial, he might go seek it in Germany." All that could be taken from him, is, his regiment, above two thousand pounds a year: commander in Germany at ten pounds a day, between three and four thousand pounds: lieutenant-general of the ordnance, one thousand five hundred pounds: a fort, three hundred pounds. He remains with a patent place in Ireland of one thousand two hundred pounds, and about two thousand pounds a year of his own and wife's. With his parts and ambition it cannot end here; he calls himself ruined, but when the Parliament meets, he will probably attempt some sort of revenge.

They attribute, I don't know with what grounds, a sensible kind of plan to the French; that De la Clue was to have pushed for Ireland, Thurot for Scotland, and the Brest fleet for England--but before they lay such great plans, they should take care of proper persons to execute them.[1]

[Footnote 1: De la Clue and the French were this year making unusual efforts to establish a naval superiority over us, which they never had done, and never will do. As is mentioned in this letter, one powerful fleet was placed under De la Clue, another under Conflans, and a strong squadron under Commodore Thurot. De la Clue, however, for many weeks kept close in Toulon, resisting every endeavour of Boscawen to tempt him out, till the English admiral was compelled to retire to Gibraltar for the repair of some of his ships. De la Clue, not knowing which way he had gone, thought he could steal through the Straits to join Conflans, according to his original orders. But Boscawen caught him off Cape Lagos, and gave him a decisive defeat, capturing five sail of the line, and among them the flagship *L'Ocean* (80). Before the end of the year Hawke almost destroyed the fleet of Conflans, capturing five and driving the rest on shore; while Thurot, who at first had a gleam of success, making one or two descents on the northern coast of Ireland, and even capturing Carrickfergus, had, in the end, worse fortune than either of

his superior officers, being overtaken at the mouth of Belfast Lough by Captain Elliott with a squadron of nearly equal force, when the whole of the French squadron was taken and he himself was killed (the Editor's "History of the British Navy," c. 12).]

I cannot help smiling at the great objects of our letters. We never converse on a less topic than a kingdom. We are a kind of citizens of the world, and battles and revolutions are the common incidents of our neighbourhood. But that is and must be the case of distant correspondences: Kings and Emperesses that we never saw, are the only persons we can be acquainted with in common. We can have no more familiarity than the *Daily Advertiser* would have if it wrote to the *Florentine Gazette*. Adieu! My compliments to any monarch that lives within five hundred miles of you.

A YEAR OF TRIUMPHS.

TO GEORGE MONTAGU, ESQ.

STRAWBERRY HILL, *_Oct._ 21, 1759.*

Your pictures shall be sent as soon as any of us go to London, but I think that will not be till the Parliament meets. Can we easily leave the remains of such a year as this? It is still all gold.[1] I have not dined or gone to bed by a fire till the day before yesterday. Instead of the glorious and ever-memorable year 1759, as the newspapers call it, I call it this ever-warm and victorious year. We have not had more conquest than fine weather: one would think we had plundered East and West Indies of sunshine. Our bells are worn threadbare with ringing for victories. I believe it will require ten votes of the House of Commons before people will believe it is the Duke of Newcastle that has done this, and not Mr. Pitt. One thing is very fatiguing--all the world is made knights or generals. Adieu! I don't know a word of news less than the conquest of America. Adieu! yours ever.

[Footnote 1: The immediate cause of this exultation was the battle (September 14th) and subsequent capture of Quebec. On the other side of the world Colonel Forde had inflicted severe defeats on the French and Dutch, and had taken Masulipatam; and besides these triumphs there were our naval successes mentioned in the last letter, and the battle of Minden.]

P.S.--You shall hear from me again if we take Mexico or China before Christmas.

2nd P.S.--I had sealed my letter, but break it open again, having forgot to tell you that Mr. Cowslade has the pictures of Lord and Lady Cutts, and is willing to sell them.

FRENCH BANKRUPTCY--FRENCH EPIGRAM.

TO GEORGE MONTAGU, ESQ.

ARLINGTON STREET, *_Nov._ 8, 1759.*

Your pictures will set out on Saturday; I give you notice, that you may inquire for them. I did not intend to be here these three days, but my Lord Bath taking the trouble to send a man and horse to ask me to dinner yesterday, I did not know how to refuse; and besides, as Mr. Bentley said to me, "you know he was an old friend of your father."

The town is empty, but is coming to dress itself for Saturday. My Lady Coventry showed George Selwyn her clothes; they are blue, with spots of

silver, of the size of a shilling, and a silver trimming, and cost--my lord will know what. She asked George how he liked them; he replied, "Why, you will be change for a guinea."

I find nothing talked of but the French bankruptcy;[1] Sir Robert Brown, I hear--and am glad to hear--will be a great sufferer. They put gravely into the article of bankrupts in the newspaper, "Louis le Petit, of the city of Paris, peace-breaker, dealer, and chapman;" it would have been still better if they had said, "Louis Bourbon of petty France." We don't know what is become of their Monsieur Thurot, of whom we had still a little mind to be afraid. I should think he would do like Sir Thomas Hanmer, make a faint effort, beg pardon of the Scotch for their disappointment, and retire. Here are some pretty verses just arrived.

Pourquoi le baton a Soubise,
Puisque Chevert est le vainqueur?[2]
C'est de la cour une meprise,
Ou bien le but de la faveur.
Je ne vois rien la qui m'etonne,
Repond aussitot un railleur;
C'est a l'aveugle qu'on le donne,
Et non pas au conducteur.

[Footnote 1: In 1759 M. Bertin was Finance Minister--the fourth who had held that office in four years; and among his expedients for raising money he had been compelled to have recourse to the measure of stopping the payment of the interest on a large portion of the National Debt.]

[Footnote 2: "_Chevert est le vainqueur._" He was one of the most brilliant officers in the French army. It was he who, under the orders of Saxe, surprised Prague in 1744, and it was to him that Marechal d'Estrees was principally indebted for his victory of Hastenbeck.]

Lady Meadows has left nine thousand pounds in reversion after her husband to Lord Sandwich's daughter. _Apropos_ to my Lady Meadows's maiden name, a name I believe you have sometimes heard; I was diverted t'other day with a story of a lady of that name,[1] and a lord, whose initial is no farther from hers than he himself is sometimes supposed to be. Her postillion, a lad of sixteen, said, "I am not such a child but I can guess something: whenever my Lord Lyttelton comes to my lady, she orders the porter to let in nobody else, and then they call for a pen and ink, and say they are going to write history." Is not this _finesse_ so like him? Do you know that I am persuaded, now he is parted, that he will forget he is married, and propose himself in form to some woman or other.

[Footnote 1: Mrs. Montagu was the foundress of "The Blue-stocking Club." She was the authoress of three "Dialogues of the Dead," to which Walpole is alluding here, and which she published with some others by Lord Lyttelton.]

When do you come? if it is not soon, you will find a new town. I stared to-day at Piccadilly like a country squire; there are twenty new stone houses: at first I concluded that all the grooms, that used to live there, had got estates, and built palaces. One young gentleman, who was getting an estate, but was so indiscreet as to step out of his way to rob a comrade, is convicted, and to be transported; in short, one of the waiters at Arthur's. George Selwyn says, "What a horrid idea he will give of us to the people in Newgate!"

I was still more surprised t'other day, than at seeing Piccadilly, by receiving a letter from the north of Ireland from a clergyman, with violent encomiums on my "Catalogue of Noble Authors"--and this when I thought it quite forgot. It puts me in mind of the queen[1] that sunk at Charing Cross and rose at Queenhithe.

[Footnote 1: Queen Eleanor, wife of Edward I., who erected the cross at Charing, and others at the different places where her body had stopped on the way from the North to Westminster.]

Mr. Chute has got his commission to inquire about your Cutts, but he thinks the lady is not your grandmother. You are very ungenerous to hoard tales from me of your ancestry: what relation have I spared? If your grandfathers were knaves, will your bottling up their bad blood mend it? Do you only take a cup of it now and then by yourself, and then come down to your parson, and boast of it, as if it was pure old metheglin? I sat last night with the Mater Gracchorum--oh! 'tis a Mater Jagorum; if her descendants taste any of her black blood, they surely will make as wry faces at it as the servant in Don John does when the ghost decants a corpse. Good night! I am just returning to Strawberry, to husband my two last days and to avoid all the pomp of the birthday. Oh! I had forgot, there is a Miss Wynne coming forth, that is to be handsomer than my Lady Coventry; but I have known one threatened with such every summer for these seven years, and they are always addled by winter!

HE LIVES AMONGST ROYALTY--COMMOTIONS IN IRELAND.

TO GEORGE MONTAGU, ESQ.

ARLINGTON STREET, _Jan._ 7, 1760.

You must not wonder I have not written to you a long time; a person of my consequence! I am now almost ready to say, _We_, instead of _I_. In short, I live amongst royalty--considering the plenty, that is no great wonder. All the world lives with them, and they with all the world. Princes and Princesses open shops, in every corner of the town, and the whole town deals with them. As I have gone to one, I chose to frequent all, that I might not be particular, and seem to have views; and yet it went so much against me, that I came to town on purpose a month ago for the Duke's levee, and had engaged Brand to go with me--and then could not bring myself to it. At last, I went to him and Princess Emily yesterday. It was well I had not flattered myself with being still in my bloom; I am grown so old since they saw me, that neither of them knew me. When they were told, he just spoke to me (I forgive him; he is not out of my debt, even with that): she was exceedingly gracious, and commended Strawberry to the skies. To-night, I was asked to their party at Norfolk House. These parties are wonderfully select and dignified: one might sooner be a knight of Malta than qualified for them; I don't know how the Duchess of Devonshire, Mr. Fox, and I, were forgiven some of our ancestors. There were two tables at loo, two at whist, and a quadrille. I was commanded to the Duke's loo; he was sat down: not to make him wait, I threw my hat upon the marble table, and broke four pieces off a great crystal chandelier. I stick to my etiquette, and treat them with great respect; not as I do my friend, the Duke of York. But don't let us talk any more of Princes. My Lucan appears to-morrow; I must say it is a noble volume. Shall I send it to you--or won't you come and fetch it?

There is nothing new of public, but the violent commotions in Ireland,[1] whither the Duke of Bedford still persists in going. Aeolus to quell a storm!

[Footnote 1: "In 1759 reports that a Legislative Union was contemplated led to some furious Protestant riots in Dublin. The Chancellor and some of the Bishops were violently attacked. A judge in a law case warned the Roman Catholics that 'the laws did not presume a Papist to exist in the kingdom'; nor could they breathe without the connivance of the Government" (Lecky, "History of England," ii. 436). Gray, in a letter to

Dr. Wharton, mentions that they forced their way into the House of Lords, and "placed an old woman on the throne, and called for pipes and tobacco." He especially mentions the Bishops of Killaloe and Waterford as exposed to ardent ill-treatment, and concludes: "The notion that had possessed the crowd was that an union was to be voted between the two nations, and they should have no more Parliaments in Dublin."]

I am in great concern for my old friend, poor Lady Harry Beauclerc; her lord dropped down dead two nights ago, as he was sitting with her and all their children. Admiral Boscawen is dead by this time. Mrs. Osborn^[1] and I are not much afflicted: Lady Jane Coke too is dead, exceedingly rich; I have not heard her will yet.

[Footnote 1: Boscawen had been a member of the court martial which had found Admiral Byng guilty. Mrs. Osborn was Byng's sister.]

If you don't come to town soon, I give you warning, I will be a lord of the bedchamber, or a gentleman usher. If you will, I will be nothing but what I have been so many years--my own and yours ever.

SEVERITY OF THE WEATHER--SCARCITY IN GERMANY--A PARTY AT PRINCE EDWARD'S--CHARLES TOWNSEND'S COMMENTS ON LA FONTAINE.

TO GEORGE MONTAGU, ESQ.

ARLINGTON STREET, Jan. 14, 1760.

How do you contrive to exist on your mountain in this rude season? Sure you must be become a snowball! As I was not in England in forty-one, I had no notion of such cold. The streets are abandoned; nothing appears in them: the Thames is almost as solid. Then think what a campaign must be in such a season! Our army was under arms for fourteen hours on the twenty-third, expecting the French; and several of the men were frozen when they should have dismounted. What milksops the Marlboroughs and Turennes, the Blakes and the Van Tromps appear now, who whipped into winter quarters and into port, the moment their noses looked blue. Sir Cloudesley Shovel said that an admiral would deserve to be broke, who kept great ships out after the end of September, and to be shot if after October. There is Hawke in the bay weathering this winter, after conquering in a storm. For my part, I scarce venture to make a campaign in the Opera-house; for if I once begin to freeze, I shall be frozen through in a moment. I am amazed, with such weather, such ravages, and distress, that there is anything left in Germany, but money; for thither, half the treasure of Europe goes: England, France, Russia, and all the Empress can squeeze from Italy and Hungary, all is sent thither, and yet the wretched people have not subsistence. A pound of bread sells at Dresden for eleven-pence. We are going to send many more troops thither; and it is so much the fashion to raise regiments, that I wish there were such a neutral kind of beings in England as abbes,^[1] that one might have an excuse for not growing military mad, when one has turned the heroic corner of one's age. I am ashamed of being a young rake, when my seniors are covering their grey toupees with helmets and feathers, and accoutering their pot-bellies with cuirasses and martial masquerade habits. Yet rake I am, and abominably so, for a person that begins to wrinkle reverently. I have sat up twice this week till between two and three with the Duchess of Grafton, at loo, who, by the way, has got a pam-child this morning, and on Saturday night I supped with Prince Edward at my Lady Rochford's, and we stayed till half an hour past three. My favour with that Highness continues, or rather increases. He makes everybody make suppers for him to meet me, for I still hold out against going to court. In short, if he were twenty years older, or I could make myself twenty years younger, I might carry him to Campden House, and be as impertinent as ever my Lady Churchill was; but, as I dread being ridiculous, I shall give my Lord Bute no uneasiness. My Lady

Maynard, who divides the favour of this tiny court with me, supped with us. Did you know she sings French ballads very prettily? Lord Rochford played on the guitar, and the Prince sung; there were my two nieces, and Lord Waldegrave, Lord Huntingdon, and Mr. Morrison the groom, and the evening was pleasant; but I had a much more agreeable supper last night at Mrs. Clive's, with Miss West, my niece Cholmondeley, and Murphy, the writing actor, who is very good company, and two or three more. Mrs. Cholmondeley is very lively; you know how entertaining the Clive is, and Miss West is an absolute original.

[Footnote 1: French chroniclers remark that the title Abbe had long since ceased in France to denote the possession of any ecclesiastical preferment, but had become a courteous denomination of unemployed ecclesiastics; and they compare it to the use of the term "Esquire" in England.]

There is nothing new, but a very dull pamphlet written by Lord Bath, and his chaplain Douglas, called a "Letter to Two Great Men." It is a plan for the peace, and much adopted by the City, and much admired by all who are too humble to judge for themselves.

I was much diverted the other morning with another volume on birds by Edwards, who has published four or five. The poor man, who is grown very old and devout, begs God to take from him the love of natural philosophy; and having observed some heterodox proceedings among bantam cocks, he proposes that all schools of girls and boys should be promiscuous, lest, if separated, they should learn wayward passions. But what struck me most were his dedications, the last was to God; this is to Lord Bute, as if he was determined to make his fortune in one world or the other.

Pray read Fontaine's fable of the lion grown old; don't it put you in mind of anything? No! not when his shaggy majesty has borne the insults of the tiger and the horse, &c., and the ass comes last, kicks out his only remaining fang, and asks for a blue bridle? Apropos, I will tell you the turn Charles Townshend gave to this fable. "My lord," said he, "has quite mistaken the thing; he soars too high at first: people often miscarry by not preceding by degrees; he went and at once asked for my Lord Carlisle's garter--if he would have been contented to ask first for my Lady Carlisle's garter, I don't know but he would have obtained it!" Adieu!

CAPTURE OF CARRICKFERGUS.

TO SIR HORACE MANN.

ARLINGTON STREET, Feb. 28, 1760.

The next time you see Marshal Botta, and are to act King of Great Britain, France, and Ireland, you must abate about a hundredth thousandth part of the dignity of your crown. You are no more monarch of all Ireland, than King O'Neil, or King Macdermoch is. Louis XV. is sovereign of France, Navarre, and Carrickfergus. You will be mistaken if you think the peace is made, and that we cede this Hibernian town, in order to recover Minorca, or to keep Quebec and Louisbourg. To be sure, it is natural you should think so: how should so victorious and heroic a nation cease to enjoy any of its possessions, but to save Christian blood? Oh! I know you will suppose there has been another insurrection, and that it is King John of Bedford, and not King George of Brunswick, that has lost this town. Why, I own you are a great politician, and see things in a moment--and no wonder, considering how long you have been employed in negotiations; but for once all your sagacity is mistaken. Indeed, considering the total destruction of the maritime force of France, and that the great mechanics and mathematicians of this age have

not invented a flying bridge to fling over the sea and land from the coast of France to the north of Ireland, it was not easy to conceive how the French should conquer Carrickfergus--and yet they have. But how I run on! not reflecting that by this time the old Pretender must have hobbled through Florence on his way to Ireland, to take possession of this scrap of his recovered domains; but I may as well tell you at once, for to be sure you and the loyal body of English in Tuscany will slip over all this exordium to come to the account of so extraordinary a revolution. Well, here it is. Last week Monsieur Thurot--oh! now you are au fait!--Monsieur Thurot, as I was saying, landed last week in the isle of Islay, the capital province belonging to a great Scotch King, who is so good as generally to pass the winter with his friends here in London. Monsieur Thurot had three ships, the crews of which burnt two ships belonging to King George, and a house belonging to his friend the King of Argyll--pray don't mistake; by his friend, I mean King George's, not Thurot's friend. When they had finished this campaign, they sailed to Carrickfergus, a poorish town, situate in the heart of the Protestant cantons. They immediately made a moderate demand of about twenty articles of provisions, promising to pay for them; for you know it is the way of modern invasions to make them cost as much as possible to oneself, and as little to those one invades. If this was not complied with, they threatened to burn the town, and then march to Belfast, which is much richer. We were sensible of this civil proceeding, and not to be behindhand, agreed to it; but somehow or other this capitulation was broken; on which a detachment (the whole invasion consists of one thousand men) attack the place. We shut the gates, but after the battle of Quebec, it is impossible that so great a people should attend to such trifles as locks and bolts, accordingly there were none--and as if there were no gates neither, the two armies fired through them--if this is a blunder, remember I am describing an Irish war. I forgot to give you the numbers of the Irish army. It consisted of four companies--indeed they consisted but of seventy-two men, under Lieut.-colonel Jennings, a wonderful brave man--too brave, in short, to be very judicious. Unluckily our ammunition was soon spent, for it is not above a year that there have been any apprehensions for Ireland, and as all that part of the country are most protestantly loyal, it was not thought necessary to arm people who would fight till they die for their religion. When the artillery was silenced, the garrison thought the best way of saving the town was by flinging it at the heads of the besiegers; accordingly they poured volleys of brickbats at the French, whose commander, Monsieur Flobert, was mortally knocked down, and his troops began to give way. However, General Jennings thought it most prudent to retreat to the castle, and the French again advanced. Four or five raw recruits still bravely kept the gates, when the garrison, finding no more gunpowder in the castle than they had had in the town, and not near so good a brick-kiln, sent to desire to surrender. General Thurot accordingly made them prisoners of war, and plundered the town.

THE BALLAD OF "HARDYKNUTE"--MR. HOME'S "SIEGE OF AQUILEIA"--"TRISTRAM SHANDY"--BISHOP WARBURTON'S PRAISE OF IT.

TO SIR DAVID DALRYMPLE.

STRAWBERRY HILL, April 4, 1760.

Sir,--As I have very little at present to trouble you with myself, I should have deferred writing till a better opportunity, if it were not to satisfy the curiosity of a friend; a friend whom you, Sir, will be glad to have made curious, as you originally pointed him out as a likely person to be charmed with the old Irish poetry you sent me. It is Mr. Gray, who is an enthusiast about those poems, and begs me to put the following queries to you; which I will do in his own words, and I may say truly, Poeta loquitur.

"I am so charmed with the two specimens of Erse poetry, that I cannot help giving you the trouble to inquire a little farther about them, and should wish to see a few lines of the original, that I may form some slight idea of the language, the measure, and the rhythm.

"Is there anything known of the author or authors, and of what antiquity are they supposed to be?

"Is there any more to be had of equal beauty, or at all approaching to it?

"I have been often told, that the poem called Hardyknute^[1] (which I always admired and still admire) was the work of somebody that lived a few years ago. This I do not at all believe, though it has evidently been retouched in places by some modern hand; but, however, I am authorised by this report to ask, whether the two poems in question are certainly antique and genuine. I make this inquiry in quality of an antiquary, and am not otherwise concerned about it; for if I were sure that any one now living in Scotland had written them, to divert himself and laugh at the credulity of the world, I would undertake a journey into the Highlands only for the pleasure of seeing him."

[Footnote 1: "Hardyknute" was an especial favourite of Sir W. Scott. In his "Life of Mr. Lockhart" he mentions having found in one of his books a mention that "he was taught 'Hardyknute' by heart before he could read the ballad itself; it was the first poem he ever learnt, the last he should ever forget" (c. 2). And in the very last year of his life, while at Malta, in a discussion on ballads in general, "he greatly lamented his friend Mr. Frere's heresy in not esteeming highly enough that of 'Hardyknute.' He admitted that it was not a veritable old ballad, but 'just old enough,' and a noble imitation of the best style." In fact, it was the composition of a lady, Mrs. Hachet, of Wardlaw.]

You see, Sir, how easily you may make our greatest southern bard travel northward to visit a brother. The young translator has nothing to do but to own a forgery, and Mr. Gray is ready to pack up his lyre, saddle Pegasus, and set out directly. But seriously, he, Mr. Mason, my Lord Lyttelton, and one or two more, whose taste the world allows, are in love with your Erse elegies: I cannot say in general they are so much admired—but Mr. Gray alone is worth satisfying.

The "Siege of Aquileia," of which you ask, pleased less than Mr. Home's other plays.^[1] In my own opinion, "Douglas" far exceeds both the other. Mr. Home seems to have a beautiful talent for painting genuine nature and the manners of his country. There was so little of nature in the manners of both Greeks and Romans, that I do not wonder at his success being less brilliant when he tried those subjects; and, to say the truth, one is a little weary of them. At present, nothing is talked of, nothing admired, but what I cannot help calling a very insipid and tedious performance: it is a kind of novel, called "The Life and Opinions of Tristram Shandy;"^[2] the great humour of which consists in the whole narration always going backwards. I can conceive a man saying that it would be droll to write a book in that manner, but have no notion of his persevering in executing it. It makes one smile two or three times at the beginning, but in recompense makes one yawn for two hours. The characters are tolerably kept up, but the humour is for ever attempted and missed. The best thing in it is a Sermon, oddly coupled with a good deal of coarseness, and both the composition of a clergyman. The man's head, indeed, was a little turned before, now topsy-turvy with his success and fame. Dodsley has given him six hundred and fifty pounds for the second edition and two more volumes (which I suppose will reach backwards to his great-great-grandfather); Lord Fauconberg, a donative of one hundred and sixty pounds a-year; and Bishop Warburton^[3] gave him a purse of gold and this compliment (which happened to be a contradiction), "that it was quite an original composition, and in the

true Cervantic vein:" the only copy that ever was an original, except in painting, where they all pretend to be so. Warburton, however, not content with this, recommended the book to the bench of bishops, and told them Mr. Sterne, the author, was the English Rabelais. They had never heard of such a writer. Adieu!

[Footnote 1: "_Mr. Home's other plays_" Mr. Home was a Presbyterian minister. His first play was "The Tragedy of Douglas," which D'Israeli describes as a drama which, "by awakening the piety of domestic affections with the nobler passions, would elevate and purify the mind;" and proceeds, with no little indignation, to relate how nearly it cost the author dear. The "Glasgow divines, with the monastic spirit of the darkest ages, published a paper, which I abridge for the contemplation of the reader, who may wonder to see such a composition written in the eighteenth century: 'On Wednesday, February 2, 1757, the Presbytery of Glasgow came to the following resolution: They, having seen a printed paper intituled an admonition and exhortation of the reverend Presbytery of Edinburgh, which, among other evils prevailing, observed the following _melancholy_ but _notorious_ facts, that one who is a minister of the Church of Scotland did _himself_ write and compose _a stage play_, intituled 'The Tragedy of Douglas,' and got it to be acted at the theatre of Edinburgh; and that he, with several other ministers of the Church, were present, and _some_ of them _oftener than once_, at the acting of the said play before a numerous audience. The presbytery being _deeply affected_ with this new and strange appearance, do publish these sentiments,'" &c., &c.--sentiments with which I will not disgust the reader.]

[Footnote 2: Walpole's criticism is worth preserving as a singular proof how far prejudice can obscure the judgement of a generally shrewd observer, and it is the more remarkable since he selects as its especial fault the failure of the author's attempts at humour; while all other critics, from Macaulay to Thackeray, agree in placing it among those works in which the humour is most conspicuous and most attractive. Even Johnson, when Boswell once, thinking perhaps that his "illustrious friend" might be offended with its occasional coarseness, pronounced Sterne to be "a dull fellow," was at once met with, "Why no, Sir."]

[Footnote 3: Bishop Warburton was Bishop of Gloucester, a prelate whose vast learning was in some degree tarnished by unepiscopal violence of temper. He was a voluminous author; his most important work being an essay on "The Divine Legation of Moses." In one of his letters to Garrick he praises "Tristram Shandy" highly, priding himself on having recommended it to all the best company in town.]

ERSE POETRY--"THE DIALOGUES OF THE DEAD"--"THE COMPLETE ANGLER."

TO SIR DAVID DALRYMPLE.

June 20, 1760.

I am obliged to you, Sir, for the volume of Erse poetry: all of it has merit; but I am sorry not to see in it the six descriptions of night with which you favoured me before, and which I like as much as any of the pieces. I can, however, by no means agree with the publisher, that they seem to be parts of an heroic poem; nothing to me can be more unlike. I should as soon take all the epitaphs in Westminster Abbey, and say it was an epic poem on the History of England. The greatest part are evidently elegies; and though I should not expect a bard to write by the rules of Aristotle, I would not, on the other hand, give to any work a title that must convey so different an idea to every common reader. I could wish, too, that the authenticity had been more largely stated. A man who knows Dr. Blair's character will undoubtedly take his word; but the gross of mankind, considering how much it is the fashion to be

sceptical in reading, will demand proofs, not assertions.

I am glad to find, Sir, that we agree so much on "The Dialogues of the Dead;"[1] indeed, there are very few that differ from us. It is well for the author, that none of his critics have undertaken to ruin his book by improving it, as you have done in the lively little specimen you sent me. Dr. Brown has writ a dull dialogue, called "Pericles and Aristides," which will have a different effect from what yours would have. One of the most objectionable passages in Lord Lyttelton's book is, in my opinion, his apologising for the _moderate_ government of Augustus. A man who had exhausted tyranny in the most lawless and unjustifiable excesses is to be excused, because, out of weariness or policy, he grows less sanguinary at last!

[Footnote 1: "The Dialogues of the Dead" were by Lord Lyttelton. In an earlier letter Walpole pronounces them "not very lively or striking."]

There is a little book coming out, that will amuse you. It is a new edition of Isaac Walton's "Complete Angler,"[1] full of anecdotes and historic notes. It is published by Mr. Hawkins,[2] a very worthy gentleman in my neighbourhood, but who, I could wish, did not think angling so very _innocent_ an amusement. We cannot live without destroying animals, but shall we torture them for our sport--sport in their destruction? I met a rough officer at his house t'other day, who said he knew such a person was turning Methodist; for, in the middle of conversation, he rose, and opened the window to let out a moth. I told him I did not know that the Methodists had any principle so good, and that I, who am certainly not on the point of becoming one, always did so too. One of the bravest and best men I ever knew, Sir Charles Wager, I have often heard declare he never killed a fly willingly. It is a comfortable reflection to me, that all the victories of last year have been gained since the suppression of the Bear Garden and prize-fighting; as it is plain, and nothing else would have made it so, that our valour did not singly and solely depend upon these two Universities. Adieu!

[Footnote 1: "The Complete Angler" is one of those rare books which retain its popularity 250 years after its publication--not for the value of its practical instructions to fishermen, for in this point of view it is valueless (Walton himself being only a worm or livebait fisherman, and the chapters on fly-fishing being by Cotton), but for its healthy tone and love of country scenery and simple country amusements which are seldom more attractively displayed.]

[Footnote 2: Afterwards Sir John Hawkins, the executor and biographer of Dr. Johnson.]

VISITS IN THE MIDLAND COUNTIES--WHICHNOVRE--SHEFFIELD--THE NEW ART OF PLATING--CHATSWORTH--HADDON HALL--HARDWICKE--APARTMENTS OF MARY QUEEN OF SCOTS--NEWSTEAD--ALTHORP.

TO GEORGE MONTAGU, ESQ.

ARLINGTON STREET, _Sept._ 1, 1760.

I was disappointed at your not being at home as I returned from my expedition.

My tour has been extremely agreeable. I set out with winning a good deal at Loo at Ragley; the Duke of Grafton was not so successful, and had some high words with Pam. I went from thence to Offley's at Whichnovre[1], the individual manor of the flitch of bacon, which has been growing rusty for these thirty years in his hall. I don't wonder; I have no notion that one could keep in good humour with one's wife for a year and a day, unless one was to live on the very spot, which is one of

the sweetest scenes I ever saw. It is the brink of a high hill; the Trent wiggles through at the foot; Lichfield and twenty other churches and mansions decorate the view. Mr. Anson has bought an estate [Shugborough] close by, whence my Lord used to cast many a wishful eye, though without the least pretensions even to a bit of lard.

[Footnote 1: The manor of Whichnovre, near Lichfield, is held (like the better-known Dunmow, in Essex) on the singular custom of the Lord of the Manor "keeping ready, all times of the year but Lent, one bacon-flyke hanging in his hall, to be given to every man or woman who demanded it a year and a day after marriage, upon their swearing that they would not have changed for none other, fairer nor fouler, richer nor poorer, nor for no other descended of great lineage sleeping nor waking at no time."]

I saw Lichfield Cathedral, which has been rich, but my friend Lord Brooke and his soldiery treated poor St. Chad^[1] with so little ceremony, that it is in a most naked condition. In a niche at the very summit they have crowded a statue of Charles the Second, with a special pair of shoe-strings, big enough for a weathercock. As I went to Lord Strafford's I passed through Sheffield, which is one of the foulest towns in England in the most charming situation; there are two-and-twenty thousand inhabitants making knives and scissors: they remit eleven thousand pounds a week to London. One man there has discovered the art of plating copper with silver; I bought a pair of candlesticks for two guineas that are quite pretty. Lord Strafford has erected the little Gothic building, which I got Mr. Bentley to draw; I took the idea from Chichester Cross. It stands on a high bank in the menagerie, between a pond and a vale, totally bowered over with oaks. I went with the Straffords to Chatsworth and stayed there four days; there were Lady Mary Coke, Lord Besborough and his daughters, Lord Thomond, Mr. Boufoy, the Duke, the old Duchess, and two of his brothers. Would you believe that nothing was ever better humoured than the ancient Grace? She stayed every evening till it was dark in the skittle-ground, keeping the score; and one night, that the servants had a ball for Lady Dorothy's birthday, we fetched the fiddler into the drawing-room, and the dowager herself danced with us! I never was more disappointed than at Chatsworth,^[2] which, ever since I was born, I have condemned. It is a glorious situation; the vale rich in corn and verdure, vast woods hang down the hills, which are green to the top, and the immense rocks only serve to dignify the prospect. The river runs before the door, and serpentine more than you can conceive in the vale. The Duke is widening it, and will make it the middle of his park; but I don't approve an idea they are going to execute, of a fine bridge with statues under a noble cliff. If they will have a bridge (which by the way will crowd the scene), it should be composed of rude fragments, such as the giant of the Peak would step upon, that he might not be wetshod. The expense of the works now carrying on will amount to forty thousand pounds. A heavy quadrangle of stables is part of the plan, is very cumbrous, and standing higher than the house, is ready to overwhelm it. The principal front of the house is beautiful, and executed with the neatness of wrought plate; the inside is most sumptuous, but did not please me; the heathen gods, goddesses, Christian virtues, and allegoric gentlefolks, are crowded into every room, as if Mrs. Holman had been in heaven and invited everybody she saw. The great apartment is first; painted ceilings, inlaid floors, and unpainted wainscots make every room sombre. The tapestries are fine, but not fine enough, and there are few portraits. The chapel is charming. The great jet d'eau I like, nor would I remove it; whatever is magnificent of the kind in the time it was done, I would retain, else all gardens and houses wear a tiresome resemblance. I except that absurdity of a cascade tumbling down marble steps, which reduces the steps to be of no use at all. I saw Haddon, an abandoned old castle of the Rutlands, in a romantic situation, but which never could have composed a tolerable dwelling. The Duke sent Lord John [Cavendish] with me to Hardwicke, where I was again disappointed; but I

will not take relations from others; they either don't see for themselves, or can't see for me. How I had been promised that I should be charmed with Hardwicke,^[3] and told that the Devonshires ought to have established there! never was I less charmed in my life. The house is not Gothic, but of that betweenity, that intervined when Gothic declined and Paladian was creeping in--rather, this is totally naked of either. It has vast chambers--aye, vast, such as the nobility of that time delighted in, and did not know how to furnish. The great apartment is exactly what it was when the Queen of Scots was kept there. Her council-chamber, the council-chamber of a poor woman, who had only two secretaries, a gentleman-usher, an apothecary, a confessor, and three maids, is so outrageously spacious, that you would take it for King David's, who thought, contrary to all modern experience, that in the multitude of counsellors there is wisdom. At the upper end is the state, with a long table, covered with a sumptuous cloth, embroidered and embossed with gold,--at least what was gold; so are all the tables. Round the top of the chamber runs a monstrous frieze, ten or twelve feet deep, representing stag-hunting in miserable plastered relief. The next is her dressing-room, hung with patch-work on black velvet; then her state bedchamber. The bed has been rich beyond description, and now hangs in costly golden tatters. The hangings, part of which they say her Majesty worked, are composed of figures as large as life, sewed and embroidered on black velvet, white satin, &c., and represent the virtues that were necessary for her, or that she was forced to have, as Patience and Temperance, &c. The fire-screens are particular; pieces of yellow velvet, fringed with gold, hang on a cross-bar of wood, which is fixed on the top of a single stick, that rises from the foot. The only furniture which has any appearance of taste are the table and cabinets, which are all of oak, richly carved. There is a private chamber within, where she lay, her arms and style over the door; the arras hangs over all the doors; the gallery is sixty yards long, covered with bad tapestry, and wretched pictures of Mary herself, Elizabeth in a gown of sea-monsters, Lord Darnley, James the Fifth and his Queen, curious, and a whole history of Kings of England, not worth sixpence a-piece. There is an original of old Bess of Hardwicke herself, who built the house. Her estates were then reckoned at sixty thousand pounds a-year, and now let for two hundred thousand pounds. Lord John Cavendish told me, that the tradition in the family is, that it had been prophesied to her that she should never die as long as she was building; and that at last she died in a hard frost, when the labourers could not work. There is a fine bank of old oaks in the park over a lake; nothing else pleased me there. However, I was so diverted with this old beldam and her magnificence, that I made this epitaph for her:--

Four times the nuptial bed she warm'd,
 And every time so well perform'd,
 That when death spoil'd each husband's billing,
 He left the widow every shilling.
 Fond was the dame, but not dejected;
 Five stately mansions she erected
 With more than royal pomp, to vary
 The prison of her captive Mary.
 When Hardwicke's towers shall bow their head,
 Nor mass be more in Worksop said;
 When Bolsover's fair fame shall tend
 Like Olcotes, to its mouldering end;
 When Chatsworth tastes no Ca'ndish bounties,
 Let fame forget this costly countess.

[Footnote 1: Scott alludes to Lord Brooke's violation of St. Chad's Cathedral in "Marmion," whose tomb

Was levelled when fanatic Brooke
 The fair cathedral stormed and took,
 But thanks to Heaven and good St. Chad

A guerdon meet the spoiler had (c. vi. 36).

And the poet adds in a note that Lord Brooke himself, "who commanded the assailants, was shot with a musket-ball through the visor of his helmet; and the royalists remarked that he was killed by a shot fired from St. Chad's Cathedral on St. Chad's Day, and received his wound in the very eye with which, he had said, he hoped to see the ruin of all the cathedrals in England."]

[Footnote 2: "_Disappointed with Chatsworth._" In a letter, however, to Lord Strafford three days afterwards he says: "Chatsworth surpassed his expectations; there is such richness and variety of prospect."]

[Footnote 3: Hardwicke was one of what Home calls "the gentleman's houses," to which the unfortunate Queen was removed between the times of her detention at Tutbury and Fotheringay. It is not mentioned by Burton.]

As I returned, I saw Newstead[1] and Althorpe: I like both. The former is the very abbey. The great east window of the church remains, and connects with the house; the hall entire, the refectory entire, the cloister untouched, with the ancient cistern of the convent, and their arms on it; a private chapel quite perfect. The park, which is still charming, has not been so much unprofaned; the present Lord has lost large sums, and paid part in old oaks, five thousand pounds of which have been cut near the house. In recompense he has built two baby forts, to pay his country in castles for the damage done to the navy, and planted a handful of Scotch firs, that look like ploughboys dressed in old family liveries for a public day. In the hall is a very good collection of pictures, all animals; the refectory, now the great drawing-room, is full of Byrons; the vaulted roof remaining, but the windows have new dresses making for them by a Venetian tailor. Althorpe has several very fine pictures by the best Italian hands, and a gallery of all one's acquaintance by Vandyke and Lely. I wonder you never saw it; it is but six miles from Northampton. Well, good night; I have writ you such a volume, that you see I am forced to page it. The Duke [of Cumberland] has had a stroke of the palsy, but is quite recovered, except in some letters, which he cannot pronounce; and it is still visible in the contraction of one side of his mouth. My compliments to your family.

[Footnote 1: Newstead, since Walpole's time immortalised as the seat of the illustrious Byron. Evelyn had compared it, for its situation, to Fontainebleau, and particularly extolled "the front of a glorious Abbey Church" and its "brave woods and streams;" and Byron himself has given an elaborate description of it under the name of "Norman Abbey," not overlooking its woods:

It stood embosomed in a happy valley
Crowned by high woodlands, where the Druid-oak
Stood like Caractacus in act to rally
His host, with broad arms, 'gainst the thunderstroke--

nor the streams:

Before the mansion lay a lucid lake
Broad as transparent, deep, and freshly fed
By a river, which its softened way did take
In currents through the calmer waters spread
Around--

nor the abbey front:

A glorious remnant of the Gothic pile
While yet the church was Rome's, stood half apart

In a grand arch, which once screened many an angle.

("Don Juan," xiii. 56-59.)]

_GENTLEMAN'S DRESS--INFLUENCE OF LORD BUTE--ODE BY LORD MIDDLESEX--G.
SELWYN'S QUOTATION._

TO GEORGE MONTAGU, ESQ.

ARLINGTON STREET, _April_ 16, 1761.

You are a very mule; one offers you a handsome stall and manger in Berkeley Square, and you will not accept it. I have chosen your coat, a claret colour, to suit the complexion of the country you are going to visit; but I have fixed nothing about the lace. Barrett had none of gauze, but what were as broad as the Irish Channel. Your tailor found a very reputable one at another place, but I would not determine rashly; it will be two or three-and-twenty shillings the yard; you might have a very substantial real lace, which would wear like your buffet, for twenty. The second order of gauzes are frippery, none above twelve shillings, and those tarnished, for the species is out of fashion. You will have time to sit in judgment upon these important points; for Hamilton your secretary told me at the Opera two nights ago, that he had taken a house near Bushy, and hoped to be in my neighbourhood for four months.

I was last night at your plump Countess's, who is so shrunk, that she does not seem to be composed of above a dozen hassocs. Lord Guildford rejoiced mightily over your preferment. The Duchess of Argyle was playing there, not knowing that the great Pam was just dead, to wit, her brother-in-law. He was abroad in the morning, was seized with a palpitation after dinner and was dead before the surgeon could arrive. There's the crown of Scotland too fallen upon my Lord Bute's head! [1] Poor Lord Edgumbe is still alive, and may be so for some days; the physicians, who no longer ago than Friday se'nnight persisted that he had no dropsy, in order to prevent his having Ward, on Monday last proposed that Ward should be called in, and at length they owned they thought the mortification begun. It is not clear it is yet; at times he is in his senses, and entirely so, composed, clear, and rational; talks of his death, and but yesterday, after such a conversation with his brother, asked for a pencil to amuse himself with drawing. What parts, genius, and agreeableness thrown away at a hazard table, and not permitted the chance of being saved by the villainy of physicians!

[Footnote 1: Lord Bute used his influence in favour of Scotchmen with so little moderation that he raised a prejudice against the whole nation, which found a vent in Wilkes's _North Briton_ and Churchill's bitter and powerful satire, "The Prophecy of Famine."]

You will be pleased with the Anacreontic, written by Lord Middlesex upon Sir Harry Bellendine: I have not seen anything so antique for ages; it has all the fire, poetry, and simplicity of Horace.

Ye sons of Bacchus, come and join
In solemn dirge, while tapers shine
Around the grape-embossed shrine
Of honest Harry Bellendine.

Pour the rich juice of Bourdeaux's wine,
Mix'd with your falling tears of brine,
In full libation o'er the shrine
Of honest Harry Bellendine.

Your brows let ivy chaplets twine,
While you push round the sparkling wine,
And let your table be the shrine
Of honest Harry Bellendine.

He died in his vocation, of a high fever, after the celebration of some orgies. Though but six hours in his senses, he gave a proof of his usual good humour, making it his last request to the sister Tuffons to be reconciled; which they are. His pretty villa, in my neighbourhood, I fancy he has left to the new Lord Lorn. I must tell you an admirable bon mot of George Selwyn, though not a new one; when there was a malicious report that the eldest Tufon was to marry Dr. Duncan, Selwyn said, "How often will she repeat that line of Shakspeare,

Wake Duncan with this knocking--would thou couldst!"

I enclose the receipt from your lawyer. Adieu!

CAPTURE OF BELLEISLE--GRAY'S POEMS--HOGARTH'S VANITY.

TO GEORGE MONTAGU, ESQ.

ARLINGTON STREET, May 5, 1761.

We have lost a young genius, Sir William Williams; an express from Belleisle, arrived this morning, brings nothing but his death. He was shot very unnecessarily, riding too near a battery; in sum, he is a sacrifice to his own rashness, and to ours. For what are we taking Belleisle?[1] I rejoiced at the little loss we had on landing; for the glory, I leave it the common council. I am very willing to leave London to them too, and do pass half the week at Strawberry, where my two passions, lilacs and nightingales, are in full bloom. I spent Sunday as if it were Apollo's birthday; Gray and Mason were with me, and we listened to the nightingales till one o'clock in the morning. Gray has translated two noble incantations from the Lord knows who, a Danish Gray, who lived the Lord knows when. They are to be enchased in a history of English bards, which Mason and he are writing; but of which the former has not written a word yet, and of which the latter, if he rides Pegasus at his usual footpace, will finish the first page two years hence.

[Footnote 1: Belleisle was of no value to us to keep; but Pitt sent an expedition against it, that in any future treaty of peace he might be able to exchange it for Minorca.]

But the true frantic Oestus resides at present with Mr. Hogarth; I went t'other morning to see a portrait he is painting of Mr. Fox. Hogarth told me he had promised, if Mr. Fox would sit as he liked, to make as good a picture as Vandyke or Rubens could. I was silent--"Why now," said he, "you think this very vain, but why should not one speak truth?" This truth was uttered in the face of his own Sigismonda, which is exactly a maudlin street-walker, tearing off the trinkets that her keeper had given her, to fling at his head. She has her father's picture in a bracelet on her arm, and her fingers are bloody with the heart, as if she had just bought a sheep's pluck in St. James's Market. As I was going, Hogarth put on a very grave face, and said, "Mr. Walpole, I want to speak to you." I sat down, and said, I was ready to receive his commands. For shortness, I will mark this wonderful dialogue by initial letters.

H. I am told you are going to entertain the town with something in our way. W. Not very soon, Mr. Hogarth. H. I wish you would let me have it, to correct; I should be very sorry to have you expose yourself to censure; we painters must know more of those things than other people.

W. Do you think nobody understands painting but painters? H. Oh! so far from it, there's Reynolds, who certainly has genius; why, but t'other day he offered a hundred pounds for a picture, that I would not hang in my cellar; and indeed, to say truth, I have generally found, that persons who had studied painting least were the best judges of it; but what I particularly wished to say to you was about Sir James Thornhill (you know he married Sir James's daughter): I would not have you say anything against him; there was a book published some time ago, abusing him, and it gave great offence. He was the first that attempted history in England, and, I assure you, some Germans have said that he was a very great painter. W. My work will go no lower than the year one thousand seven hundred, and I really have not considered whether Sir J. Thornhill will come within my plan or not; if he does, I fear you and I shall not agree upon his merits. H. I wish you would let me correct it; besides, I am writing something of the same kind myself; I should be sorry we should clash. W. I believe it is not much known what my work is, very few persons have seen it. H. Why, it is a critical history of painting, is not it? W. No, it is an antiquarian history of it in England; I bought Mr. Vertue's MSS., and, I believe, the work will not give much offence; besides, if it does, I cannot help it; when I publish anything, I give it to the world to think of it as they please. H. Oh! if it is an antiquarian work, we shall not clash; mine is a critical work; I don't know whether I shall ever publish it. It is rather an apology for painters. I think it is owing to the good sense of the English that they have not painted better. W. My dear Mr. Hogarth, I must take my leave of you, you now grow too wild--and I left him. If I had stayed, there remained nothing but for him to bite me. I give you my honour this conversation is literal, and, perhaps, as long as you have known Englishmen and painters, you never met with anything so distracted. I had consecrated a line to his genius (I mean, for wit) in my Preface; I shall not erase it; but I hope nobody will ask me if he is not mad. Adieu!

INTENDED MARRIAGE OF THE KING--BATTLES IN GERMANY--CAPTURE OF PONDICHERRY--BURKE.

TO GEORGE MONTAGU, ESQ.

STRAWBERRY HILL, July 22, 1761.

For my part, I believe Mademoiselle Scuderi[1] drew the plan of this year. It is all royal marriages, coronations, and victories; they come tumbling so over one another from distant parts of the globe, that it looks just like the handywork of a lady romance writer, whom it costs nothing but a little false geography to make the Great Mogul in love with a Princess of Mecklenburgh, and defeat two marshals of France[2] as he rides post on an elephant to his nuptials. I don't know where I am. I had scarce found Mecklenburg Strelitz with a magnifying-glass before I am whisked to Pondicherry--well, I take it, and raze it. I begin to grow acquainted with Colonel Coote,[3] and figure him packing up chests of diamonds, and sending them to his wife against the King's wedding--thunder go to the Tower guns, and behold, Broglie and Soubise are totally defeated; if the mob have not much stronger heads and quicker conceptions than I have, they will conclude my Lord Granby is become nabob. How the deuce in two days can one digest all this? Why is not Pondicherry in Westphalia? I don't know how the Romans did, but I cannot support two victories every week. Well, but you will want to know the particulars. Broglie and Soubise united, attacked our army on the **15th, but were repulsed; the next day, the Prince Mahomet Alli Cawn--no**, no, I mean Prince Ferdinand, returned the attack, and the French threw down their arms and fled, run over my Lord Harcourt, who was going to fetch the new Queen; in short, I don't know how it was, but Mr. Conway is safe, and I am as happy as Mr. Pitt himself. We have only lost a Lieutenant-colonel Keith; Colonel Marlay and Harry Townshend are

wounded.

[Footnote 1: Middle. Scuderi and her brother were writers of romances of enormous length, and, in their time, of great popularity (see D'Israeli's account of them, "Curiosities of Literature," i. 105).]

[Footnote 2: "_Defeat two French marshals_"--they were Marechal de Broglie and the Prince de Soubise. The action, which, however, was of but little importance, is called by Lacretelle "Le Combat de Fillingshausen."]

[Footnote 3: Colonel Eyre Coote, the best soldier next to Clive himself that India had yet seen, had defeated the French Governor, Count Lally, at Wandewash in January, 1760; and the capture of Pondicherry was one important fruit of the victory.]

I could beat myself for not having a flag ready to display on my round tower, and guns mounted on all my battlements. Instead of that, I have been foolishly trying on my new pictures upon my gallery. However, the oratory of our Lady of Strawberry shall be dedicated next year on the anniversary of Mr. Conway's safety. Think with his intrepidity, and delicacy of honour wounded, what I had to apprehend; you shall absolutely be here on the sixteenth of next July. Mr. Hamilton tells me your King does not set out for his new dominions till the day after the Coronation; if you will come to it, I can give you a very good place for the procession; where, is a profound secret, because, if known, I should be teased to death, and none but my first friends shall be admitted. I dined with your secretary [Single-speech Hamilton] yesterday; there were Garrick and a young Mr. Burke^[1]--who wrote a book in the style of Lord Bolingbroke, that was much admired. He is a sensible man, but has not worn off his authorism yet, and thinks there is nothing so charming as writers, and to be one. He will know better one of these days. I like Hamilton's little Marly; we walked in the great _allee_, and drank tea in the arbour of treillage; they talked of Shakspeare and Booth, of Swift and my Lord Bath, and I was thinking of Madame Sevigne. Good night--I have a dozen other letters to write; I must tell my friends how happy I am--not as an Englishman, but as a cousin.

[Footnote 1: Mr. Burke's book was "A Vindication of Natural Society," and was regarded as a very successful imitation of the style of Lord Bolingbroke.]

ARRIVAL OF THE PRINCESS OF MECKLENBURGH--THE ROYAL WEDDING--THE QUEEN'S APPEARANCE AND BEHAVIOUR.

TO SIR HORACE MANN.

ARLINGTON STREET, _Sept._ 10, 1761.

When we least expected the Queen, she came, after being ten days at sea, but without sickness for above half-an-hour. She was gay the whole voyage, sung to her harpsichord, and left the door of her cabin open. They made the coast of Suffolk last Saturday, and on Monday morning she landed at Harwich; so prosperously has his Majesty's chief eunuch, as they have made the Tripoline ambassador call Lord Anson, executed his commission. She lay that night at your old friend Lord Abercorn's, at Witham [in Essex]; and, if she judged by her host, must have thought she was coming to reign in the realm of taciturnity. She arrived at St. James's a quarter after three on Tuesday the 8th. When she first saw the Palace she turned pale: the Duchess of Hamilton smiled. "My dear Duchess," said the Princess, "_you_ may laugh; you have been married twice; but it is no joke to me." Is this a bad proof of her sense? On the journey they wanted her to curl her toupet. "No, indeed," said she, "I think it looks as well as those of the ladies who have been sent for

me: if the King would have me wear a periwig, I will; otherwise I shall let myself alone." The Duke of York gave her his hand at the garden-gate: her lips trembled, but she jumped out with spirit. In the garden the King met her; she would have fallen at his feet; he prevented and embraced her, and led her into the apartments, where she was received by the Princess of Wales and Lady Augusta: these three princesses only dined with the King. At ten the procession went to chapel, preceded by unmarried daughters of peers, and peeresses in plenty. The new Princess was led by the Duke of York and Prince William; the Archbishop married them; the King talked to her the whole time with great good humour, and the Duke of Cumberland gave her away. She is not tall, nor a beauty; pale, and very thin; but looks sensible; and is genteel. Her hair is darkish and fine; her forehead low, her nose very well, except the nostrils spreading too wide; her mouth has the same fault, but her teeth are good. She talks a good deal, and French tolerably; possesses herself, is frank, but with great respect to the King. After the ceremony, the whole company came into the drawing-room for about ten minutes, but nobody was presented that night. The Queen was in white and silver; an endless mantle of violet-coloured velvet, lined with ermine, and attempted to be fastened on her shoulder by a bunch of large pearls, dragged itself and almost the rest of her clothes halfway down her waist. On her head was a beautiful little tiara of diamonds; a diamond necklace, and a stomacher of diamonds, worth three score thousand pounds, which she is to wear at the Coronation too. Her train was borne by the ten bridesmaids, Lady Sarah Lenox,[1] Lady Caroline Russell, Lady Caroline Montagu, Lady Harriot Bentinck, Lady Anne Hamilton, Lady Essex Kerr (daughters of Dukes of Richmond, Bedford, Manchester, Portland, Hamilton, and Roxburgh); and four daughters of the Earls of Albemarle, Brook, Harcourt, and Ilchester--Lady Elizabeth Keppel, Louisa Greville, Elizabeth Harcourt, and Susan Fox Strangways: their heads crowned with diamonds, and in robes of white and silver. Lady Caroline Russell is extremely handsome; Lady Elizabeth Keppel very pretty; but with neither features nor air, nothing ever looked so charming as Lady Sarah Lenox; she has all the glow of beauty peculiar to her family. As supper was not ready, the Queen sat down, sung, and played on the harpsichord to the Royal Family, who all supped with her in private. They talked of the different German dialects; the King asked if the Hanoverian was not pure--"Oh, no, Sir," said the Queen; "it is the worst of all."--She will not be unpopular.

[Footnote 1: Lady Sarah Lennox, in an account of a theatrical performance at Holland House in a previous letter, is described by Walpole as "more beautiful than you can conceive." The King himself admired her so greatly that he is believed to have had serious thoughts of choosing her to be his queen. She afterwards married Major G. Napier, and became the mother of Sir William and Sir Charles Napier.]

The Duke of Cumberland told the King that himself and Lady Augusta were sleepy. The Queen was very averse to leave the company, and at last articulated that nobody should accompany her but the Princess of Wales and her own two German women, and that nobody should be admitted afterwards but the King--they did not retire till between two and three.

The next morning the King had a levee. He said to Lord Hardwicke, "It is a very fine day:" that old gossip replied, "Yes, Sir, and it was a very fine night." Lord Bute had told the King that Lord Orford had betted his having a child before Sir James Lowther, who had been married the night before to Lord Bute's eldest daughter; the King told Lord Orford he should be glad to go his halves. The bet was made with Mr. Rigby. Somebody asked the latter how he could be so bad a courtier as to bet against the King? He replied, "Not at all a bad courtier; I betted Lord Bute's daughter against him."

After the King's Levee there was a Drawing-room; the Queen stood under the throne: the women were presented to her by the Duchess of Hamilton,

and then the men by the Duke of Manchester; but as she knew nobody, she was not to speak. At night there was a ball, drawing-rooms yesterday and to-day, and then a cessation of ceremony till the Coronation, except next Monday, when she is to receive the address of the Lord Mayor and Aldermen, sitting on the throne attended by the bridesmaids. A ridiculous circumstance happened yesterday; Lord Westmoreland, not very young nor clear-sighted, mistook Lady Sarah Lenox for the Queen, kneeled to her, and would have kissed her hand if she had not prevented him. People think that a Chancellor of Oxford was naturally attracted by the blood of Stuart. It is as comical to see Kitty Dashwood, the famous old beauty of the Oxfordshire Jacobites, living in the palace as Duenna to the Queen. She and Mrs. Boughton, Lord Lyttelton's ancient Delia, are revived again in a young court that never heard of them. There, I think, you could not have had a more circumstantial account of a royal wedding from the Heralds' Office. Adieu!

Yours to serve you,

HORACE SANDFORD.

Mecklenburgh King-at-Arms.

THE CORONATION AND SUBSEQUENT GAIETIES.

TO THE COUNTESS OF AILESURY.

STRAWBERRY HILL, _Sept._ 27, 1761.

You are a mean, mercenary woman. If you did not want histories of weddings and coronations, and had not jobs to be executed about muslins, and a bit of china, and counterband goods, one should never hear of you. When you don't want a body, you can frisk about with greffiers and burgomasters, and be as merry in a dyke as my lady frog herself. The moment your curiosity is agog, or your cambric seized, you recollect a good cousin in England, and, as folks said two hundred years ago, begin to write "upon the knees of your heart." Well! I am a sweet-tempered creature, I forgive you.

[Illustration: THE LIBRARY, STRAWBERRY HILL]

My heraldry was much more offended at the Coronation with the ladies that did walk, than with those that walked out of their place; yet I was not so _perilously_ angry as my Lady Cowper, who refused to set a foot with my Lady Macclesfield; and when she was at last obliged to associate with her, set out on a round trot, as if she designed to prove the antiquity of her family by marching as lustily as a maid of honour of Queen Gwiniver. It was in truth a brave sight. The sea of heads in Palace-yard, the guards, horse and foot, the scaffolds, balconies, and procession exceeded imagination. The Hall, when once illuminated, was noble; but they suffered the whole parade to return into it in the dark, that his Majesty might be surprised with the quickness with which the sconces caught fire. The Champion acted well; the other Paladins had neither the grace nor alertness of Rinaldo. Lord Effingham and the Duke of Bedford were but untoward knights errant; and Lord Talbot had not much more dignity than the figure of General Monk in the Abbey. The habit of the peers is unbecoming to the last degree; but the peeresses made amends for all defects. Your daughter Richmond, Lady Kildare, and Lady Pembroke were as handsome as the Graces. Lady Rochford, Lady Holderness, and Lady Lyttelton looked exceedingly well in that their day; and for those of the day before, the Duchess of Queensbury, Lady Westmoreland and Lady Albemarle were surprising. Lady Harrington was noble at a distance, and so covered with diamonds, that you would have thought she had bid somebody or other, like Falstaff, _rob me the Exchequer_. Lady Northampton was very magnificent too, and looked

prettier than I have seen her of late. Lady Spencer and Lady Bolingbroke were not the worst figures there. The Duchess of Ancaster [Mistress of the Robes] marched alone after the Queen with much majesty; and there were two new Scotch peeresses that pleased everybody, Lady Sutherland and Lady Dunmore. _Per contra_, were Lady P----, who had put a wig on, and old E----, who had scratched hers off; Lady S----, the Dowager E----, and a Lady Say and Sele, with her tresses coal-black, and her hair coal-white. Well! it was all delightful, but not half so charming as its being over. The gabble one heard about it for six weeks before, and the fatigue of the day, could not well be compensated by a mere puppet-show; for puppet-show it was, though it cost a million. The Queen is so gay that we shall not want sights; she has been at the Opera, the Beggar's Opera and the Rehearsal, and two nights ago carried the King to Ranelagh.

Some of the peeresses were so fond of their robes, that they graciously exhibited themselves for a whole day before to all the company their servants could invite to see them. A maid from Richmond begged leave to stay in town because the Duchess of Montrose was only to be seen from two to four. The Heralds were so ignorant of their business, that, though pensioned for nothing but to register lords and ladies, and what belongs to them, they advertised in the newspaper for the Christian names and places of abode of the peeresses. The King complained of such omissions and of the want of precedent; Lord Effingham, the Earl Marshal, told him, it was true there had been great neglect in that office, but he had now taken such care of registering directions, that _next coronation_ would be conducted with the greatest order imaginable. The King was so diverted with this _flattering_ speech that he made the earl repeat it several times.

On this occasion one saw to how high-water-mark extravagance is risen in England. At the Coronation of George II. my mother gave forty guineas for a dining-room, scaffold, and bedchamber. An exactly parallel apartment, only with rather a worse view, was this time set at three hundred and fifty guineas--a tolerable rise in thirty-three years! The platform from St. Margaret's Roundhouse to the church-door, which formerly let for forty pounds, went this time for two thousand four hundred pounds. Still more was given for the inside of the Abbey. The prebends would like a Coronation every year. The King paid nine thousand pounds for the hire of jewels; indeed, last time, it cost my father fourteen hundred to bejewel my Lady Orford.

A COURT BALL--PAMPHLETS ON MR. PITT--A SONG BY GRAY.

TO THE COUNTESS OF AILESURY.

ARLINGTON STREET, _Nov._ 28, 1761.

Dear Madam,--You are so bad and so good, that I don't know how to treat you. You give me every mark of kindness but letting me hear from you. You send me charming drawings the moment I trouble you with a commission, and you give Lady Cecilia [Johnston] commissions for trifles of my writing, in the most obliging manner. I have taken the latter off her hands. The Fugitive Pieces, and the "Catalogue of Royal and Noble Authors" shall be conveyed to you directly. Lady Cecilia and I agree how we lament the charming suppers there, every time we pass the corner of Warwick Street! We have a little comfort for your sake and our own, in believing that the campaign is at an end, at least for this year--but they tell us, it is to recommence here or in Ireland. You have nothing to do with that. Our politics, I think, will soon be as warm as our war. Charles Townshend is to be lieutenant-general to Mr. Pitt. The Duke of Bedford is privy seal; Lord Thomond, cofferer; Lord George Cavendish, comptroller.

Diversions, you know, Madam, are never at high-water mark before Christmas; yet operas flourish pretty well: those on Tuesdays are removed to Mondays, because the Queen likes the burlettas, and the King cannot go on Tuesdays, his post-days. On those nights we have the middle front box, railed in, where Lady Mary [Coke] and I sit in triste state like a Lord Mayor and Lady Mayoress. The night before last there was a private ball at court, which began at half an hour after six, lasted till one, and finished without a supper. The King danced the whole time with the Queen,--Lady Augusta with her four younger brothers. The other performers were: the two Duchesses of Ancaster and Hamilton, who danced little; Lady Effingham and Lady Egremont, who danced much; the six maids of honour; Lady Susan Stewart, as attending Lady Augusta; and Lady Caroline Russel, and Lady Jane Stuart, the only women not of the family. Lady Northumberland is at Bath; Lady Weymouth lies in; Lady Bolingbroke was there in waiting, but in black gloves, so did not dance. The men, besides the royals, were Lords March and Eglintoun, of the bedchamber; Lord Cantelupe, vice-chamberlain; Lord Huntingdon; and four strangers, Lord Mandeville, Lord Northampton, Lord Suffolk, and Lord Grey. No sitters-by, but the Princess, the Duchess of Bedford, and Lady Bute.

If it had not been for this ball, I don't know how I should have furnished a decent letter. Pamphlets on Mr. Pitt[1] are the whole conversation, and none of them worth sending cross the water: at least I, who am said to write some of them, think so; by which you may perceive I am not much flattered with the imputation. There must be new personages, at least, before I write on any side.--Mr. Pitt and the Duke of Newcastle! I should as soon think of informing the world that Miss Chudleigh is no vestal. You will like better to see some words which Mr. Gray has writ, at Miss Speed's request, to an old air of Geminiani; the thought is from the French.

I.

Thyrsis, when we parted, swore
Ere the spring he would return.
Ah! what means yon violet flower,
And the bud that decks the thorn!
'Twas the lark that upward sprung,
'Twas the nightingale that sung.

II.

Idle notes! untimely green!
Why this unavailing haste!
Western gales and skies serene
Speak not always winter past.
Cease my doubts, my fears to move;
Spare the honour of my love.

Adieu, Madam, your most faithful servant.

[Footnote 1: Mr. Pitt had lately resigned the office of Secretary of State, on being outvoted in the Cabinet, which rejected his proposal to declare war against Spain; and he had accepted a pension of L3,000 a year and a peerage for his wife--acts which Walpole condemns in more than one letter, and which provoked comments in many quarters.]

DEATH OF THE CZARINA ELIZABETH--THE COCK-LANE GHOST--RETURN TO ENGLAND
OF LADY MARY WORTLEY._

TO SIR HORACE MANN.

ARLINGTON STREET, _Jan._ 29, 1762.

I wish you joy, sir minister; the Czarina [Elizabeth] is dead. As we conquered America in Germany,^[1] I hope we shall overrun Spain by this burial at Petersburg. Yet, don't let us plume ourselves too fast; nothing is so like a Queen as a King, nothing so like a predecessor as a successor. The favourites of the Prince Royal of Prussia, who had suffered so much for him, were wofully disappointed, when he became the present glorious Monarch; they found the English maxim true, that the King never dies; that is, the dignity and passions of the Crown never die. We were not much less defeated of our hopes on the decease of Philip V. The Grand Duke^[2] [Peter III.] has been proclaimed Czar at the army in Pomerania; he may love conquest like that army, or not know it is conquering, like his aunt. However, we cannot suffer more by this event. I would part with the Empress Queen, on no better a prospect.

[Footnote 1: "We conquered America in Germany." This is a quotation from a boastful speech of Mr. Pitt's on the conquest of Canada.]

[Footnote 2: The Grand Duke (Peter III.) was married, for his misfortune, to Catharine, a princess of Anhalt-Zerbzt, whose lover, Count Orloff, murdered him before the end of the summer, at his wife's command; and in August she assumed the government, and was crowned with all due solemnity as Czarina or Empress. Walpole had some reason for saying that "nothing was so like a predecessor as a successor," since in character Elizabeth closely resembled Catharine.]

We have not yet taken the galleons, nor destroyed the Spanish fleet. Nor have they enslaved Portugal, nor you made a triumphant entry into Naples. My dear sir, you see how lucky you were not to go thither; you don't envy Sir James Grey, do you? Pray don't make any categorical demands to Marshal Botta,^[1] and be obliged to retire to Leghorn, because they are not answered. We want allies; preserve us our friend the Great Duke of Tuscany. I like your answer to Botta exceedingly, but I fear the Court of Vienna is shame-proof. The Apostolic and Religious Empress is not a whit a better Christian, not a jot less a woman, than the late Russian Empress, who gave such proofs of her being a woman.

[Footnote 1: Marshal Botta was the Commander-in-chief in Tuscany.]

We have a mighty expedition on the point of sailing; the destination not disclosed. The German War loses ground daily; however, all is still in embryo. My subsequent letters are not likely to be so barren, and indecisive. I write more to prove there is nothing, than to tell you anything.

You were mistaken, I believe, about the Graftons; they do not remove from Turin, till George Pitt arrives to occupy their house there. I am really anxious about the fate of my letter to the Duchess [of Grafton]; I should be hurt if it had miscarried; she would have reason to think me very ungrateful.

I have given your letter to Mr. Thomas Pitt; he has been very unfortunate since his arrival--has lost his favourite sister in child-bed. Lord Tavistock, I hear, has written accounts of you that give me much pleasure.

I am ashamed to tell you that we are again dipped into an egregious scene of folly. The reigning fashion is a ghost^[1]--a ghost, that would not pass muster in the paltriest convent in the Apennine. It only knocks and scratches; does not pretend to appear or to speak. The clergy give it their benediction; and all the world, whether believers or infidels, go to hear it. I, in which number you may guess, go to-morrow; for it is as much the mode to visit the ghost as the Prince of Mecklenburgh, who is just arrived. I have not seen him yet, though I have left my name for him. But I will tell you who is come too--Lady Mary Wortley.^[2] I went last night to visit her; I give you my honour, and you who know her,

would credit me without it, the following is a faithful description. I found her in a little miserable bedchamber of a ready-furnished house, with two tallow candles, and a bureau covered with pots and pans. On her head, in full of all accounts, she had an old black-laced hood, wrapped entirely round, so as to conceal all hair or want of hair. No handkerchief, but up to her chin a kind of horseman's riding-coat, calling itself a *pet-en-l'air*, made of a dark green (green I think it had been) brocade, with coloured and silver flowers, and lined with furs; boddice laced, a foul dimity petticoat sprig'd, velvet muffeteens on her arms, grey stockings and slippers. Her face less changed in twenty years than I could have imagined; I told her so, and she was not so tolerable twenty years ago that she needed have taken it for flattery, but she did, and literally gave me a box on the ear. She is very lively, all her senses perfect, her languages as imperfect as ever, her avarice greater. She entertained me at first with nothing but the dearness of provisions at Helvoet. With nothing but an Italian, a French, and a Prussian, all men servants, and something she calls an *_old_ secretary*, but whose age till he appears will be doubtful; she receives all the world, who go to homage her as Queen Mother,[3] and crams them into this kennel. The Duchess of Hamilton, who came in just after me, was so astonished and diverted, that she could not speak to her for laughing. She says that she has left all her clothes at Venice. I really pity Lady Bute; what will the progress be of such a commencement!

[Footnote 1: It was known as the Cock-lane Ghost. A girl in that lane asserted that she was nightly visited by a ghost, who could reveal a murder, and who gave her tokens of his (or its) presence by knocks and scratches, which were audible to others in the room besides herself; and at last she went so far as to declare that the ghost had promised to attend a witness, who might be selected, into the vault under the Church of St. John's, Clerkenwell, where the body of the supposed victim was buried. Her story caused such excitement, that at last Dr. Johnson, Dr. Douglas (afterwards Bishop of Salisbury), and one or two other gentlemen, undertook an investigation of the affair, which proved beyond all doubt that it was a trick, though they could not discover how it was performed, nor could they make the girl confess; and Johnson wrote an account of their investigations and verdict, which was published in *_The Gentleman's Magazine_* and the newspapers of the day (Boswell's "Life of Johnson," ann. 1763).]

[Footnote 2: Lady Mary Wortley was a daughter of the Duke of Kingston and wife of Mr. Wortley, our ambassador at Constantinople. She was the most accomplished lady of the eighteenth century. Christian Europe is indebted to her for the introduction of the practice of inoculation for the smallpox, of which she heard during her residence in Turkey, and of the efficacy of which she was so convinced that she caused her own children to be inoculated; and, by publishing its success in their case, she led to its general adoption. It saved innumerable lives in the eighteenth century, and was, in fact, the parent of the vaccination which has superseded it, and which is merely inoculation with matter derived from another source, the cow. She was also an authoress of considerable repute for lyric odes and *_vers de societe_*, &c., and, above all, for her letters, most of which are to her daughter, Lady Bute (as Mme. de Sevigne's are to her daughter, Mme. de Grignan), and which are in no respect inferior to those of the French lady in sprightly wit, while in the variety of their subjects they are far superior, as giving the account of Turkish scenery and manners, and also of those of other countries which her husband visited on various diplomatic missions, while Mme. de Sevigne's are for the greater part confined to the gossip of the coteries of Paris. Her works occupy five volumes; but what we have is but a small part of what we might have had. D'Israeli points out that "we have lost much valuable literature by the illiberal or malignant descendants of learned and ingenious persons. Many of Lady Mary Wortley Montague's letters have been destroyed, I am informed, by

her daughters, who imagined that the family honours were lowered by the addition of those of literature. Some of her best letters, recently published, were found buried in an old trunk. It would have mortified her ladyship's daughter to have heard that her mother was the Sevigne of Britain" ("Curiosities of Literature," i. 54); and, as will be seen in a subsequent letter (No. 67), Walpole corroborates D'Israeli. Lady Mary was at one time a friend and correspondent of Pope, who afterwards, for some unknown reason, quarrelled with her, and made her the subject of some of the most disgraceful libels that ever proceeded from even his pen.]

[Footnote 3: She was mother of Lady Bute, wife of the Prime Minister.--WALPOLE.]

The King of France has avowed a natural son,[1] and given him the estate which came from Marshal Belleisle, with the title of Comte de Gisors. The mother I think is called Matignon or Maquignon. Madame Pompadour was the Bathsheba that introduced this Abishag. Adieu, my dear sir!

[Footnote 1: This was a false report.--WALPOLE.]

_HIS OWN "ANECDOTES OF PAINTING"--HIS PICTURE OF THE WEDDING OF HENRY VII.--BURNET'S COMPARISON OF TIBERIUS AND CHARLES II.--ADDISON'S "TRAVELS." _

TO THE REV. HENRY ZOUCH.

ARLINGTON STREET, _March_ 20, 1762.

I am glad you are pleased, Sir, with my "Anecdotes of Painting;" but I doubt you praise me too much: it was an easy task when I had the materials collected, and I would not have the labours of forty years, which was Vertue's case, depreciated in compliment to the work of four months, which is almost my whole merit. Style is become, in a manner, a mechanical affair, and if to much ancient lore our antiquaries would add a little modern reading, to polish their language and correct their prejudices, I do not see why books of antiquities should not be made as amusing as writings on any other subject. If Tom Heame had lived in the world, he might have writ an agreeable history of dancing; at least, I am sure that many modern volumes are read for no reason but for their being penned in the dialect of the age.

I am much beholden to you, dear Sir, for your remarks; they shall have their due place whenever the work proceeds to a second edition, for that the nature of it as a record will ensure to it. A few of your notes demand a present answer: the Bishop of Imola pronounced the nuptial benediction at the marriage of Henry VII., which made me suppose him the person represented.[1]

[Footnote 1: In a previous letter Walpole mentions that Vertue (the engraver) had disputed the subject of this picture, because the face of the King did not resemble other pictures of him; but Walpole was convinced of the correctness of his description of it, because it does resemble the face on Henry's shillings, "which are more authentic than pictures."]

Burnet, who was more a judge of characters than statues, mentions the resemblance between Tiberius and Charles II.; but, as far as countenances went, there could not be a more ridiculous prepossession; Charles had a long face, with very strong lines, and a narrowish brow; Tiberius a very square face, and flat forehead, with features rather delicate in proportion. I have examined this imaginary likeness, and see no kind of foundation for it. It is like Mr. Addison's Travels,[1] of which it was so truly said, he might have composed them without stirring

out of England. There are a kind of naturalists who have sorted out the qualities of the mind, and allotted particular turns of features and complexions to them. It would be much easier to prove that every form has been endowed with every vice. One has heard much of the vigour of Burnet himself; yet I dare to say, he did not think himself like Charles II.

[Footnote 1: It is Fielding who, in his "Voyage to Lisbon," gave this character to Addison's "Travels."]

I am grieved, Sir, to hear that your eyes suffer; take care of them; nothing can replace the satisfaction they afford: one should hoard them, as the only friend that will not be tired of one when one grows old, and when one should least choose to depend on others for entertainment. I most sincerely wish you happiness and health in that and every other instance.

BIRTH OF THE PRINCE OF WALES--THE CZARINA--VOLTAIRE'S HISTORICAL CRITICISMS--IMMENSE VALUE OF THE TREASURES BROUGHT OVER IN THE "HERMIONE."

TO SIR HORACE MANN.

ARLINGTON STREET, _Aug._ 12, 1762.

A Prince of Wales [George IV.] was born this morning; the prospect of your old neighbour [the Pretender] at Rome does not improve; the House of Hanover will have numbers in its own family sufficient to defend their crown--unless they marry a Princess of Anhalt Zerst. What a shocking tragedy that has proved already! There is a manifesto arrived to-day that makes one shudder! This northern Athaliah, who has the modesty not to name her murdered _husband_ in that light, calls him _her neighbour_; and, as if all the world were savages, like Russians, pretends that he died suddenly of a distemper that never was expeditious; mocks Heaven with pretensions to charity and piety; and heaps the additional inhumanity on the man she has dethroned and assassinated, of imputing his death to a judgment from Providence. In short, it is the language of usurpation and blood, counselled and apologised for by clergymen! It is Brunehault[1] and an archbishop!

[Footnote 1: Brunehault (in modern English histories called Brunhild) was the wife of Sigebert, King of Austrasia (that district of France which lies between the Meuse and the Rhine) and son of Clotaire I. The "Biographie Universelle" says of her: "This Princess, attractive by her beauty, her wit, and her carriage, had the misfortune to possess a great ascendancy over her husband, and to have lost sight of the fact that even sovereigns cannot always avenge themselves with impunity." Her sister, Galswith, the wife of Chilperic, King of Neustria, between the Loire and the Meuse, had been assassinated by Fredegonde, and Brunehault, determined to avenge her, induced Sigebert to make war on Chilperic, who had married Fredegonde. He gained a victory; but Fredegonde contrived to have him also assassinated, and Brunehault became Fredegonde's prisoner. But Murovee, son of Chilperic, fell in love with her, and married her, and escaping from Rouen, fled into Austrasia. At last, in 595, Fredegonde died, and Brunehault subdued the greater part of Neustria, and ruled with great but unscrupulous energy. She encouraged St. Augustine in his mission to England; she built hospitals and churches, earning by her zeal in such works a letter of panegyric from Pope Gregory the Great. But, old as she was, she at the same time gave herself up to a life of outrageous license. It was not, however, her dissolute life which proved fatal to her, but the design which she showed to erect a firm monarchy in Austrasia and Neustria, by putting down the overgrown power of the nobles. They raised an army to attack her; she was defeated, and with four of her great-grandchildren,

the sons of her grandson, King Theodoric, who had been left to her guardianship, fell into the hands of the nobles, who put her to death with every circumstance of cruelty and indignity. (See Kitchin's "History of France," i. 91.)]

I have seen Mr. Keith's first despatch; in general, my account was tolerably correct; but he does not mention Ivan. The conspiracy advanced by one of the gang being seized, though for another crime; they thought themselves discovered. Orloff, one of them, hurried to the Czarina, and told her she had no time to lose. She was ready for anything; nay, marched herself at the head of fourteen thousand men and a train of artillery against her husband, but not being the only Alecto in Muscovy, she had been aided by a Princess Daschkaw, a nymph under twenty, and sister to the Czar's mistress. It was not the latter, as I told you, but the Chancellor's wife, who offered up the order of St. Catherine. I do not know how my Lord Buckingham [the English Minister at St. Petersburg] feels, but unless to conjure up a tempest against this fury of the north, nothing could bribe me to set my foot in her dominions. Had she been priestess of the Scythian Diana, she would have sacrificed her brother by choice. It seems she does not degenerate; her mother was ambitious and passionate for intrigues; she went to Paris, and dabbled in politics with all her might.

The world had been civilising itself till one began to doubt whether ancient histories were not ancient legends. Voltaire had unpoisoned half the victims to the Church and to ambition. Oh! there never was such a man as Borgia^[1]; the league seemed a romance. For the honour of poor historians, the assassinations of the Kings of France and Portugal, majesties still living in spite of Damien and the Jesuits, and the dethronement and murder of the Czar, have restored some credibility to the annals of former ages. Tacitus recovers his character by the edition of Petersburg.

[Footnote 1: Borgia, the father, was Pope Sextus VI.; Caesar Borgia was the son—both equally infamous for their crimes, and especially their murders by poison.]

We expect the definitive courier from Paris every day. Now it is said that they ask time to send to Spain. What? to ask leave to desert them! The Spaniards, not so expeditious in usurpation as the Muscovites, have made no progress in Portugal. Their absurd manifestoes appeared too soon. The Czarina and Princess Daschkaw stay till the stroke is struck. Really, my dear Sir, your Italy is growing unfashionably innocent,—if you don't take care, the Archbishop of Novgorod will deserve, by his crimes, to be at the head of the _Christian_ Church.^[1] I fear my friend, good Benedict, infected you all with his virtues.

[Footnote 1: That is, Pope Benedict XIV.]

You see how this Russian revolution has seized every cell in my head—a Prince of Wales is passed over in a line, the peace in another line. I have not even told you that the treasure of the _Hermione_,^[1] reckoned eight hundred thousand pounds, passed the end of my street this morning in one-and-twenty waggons. Of the Havannah I could tell you nothing if I would; people grow impatient at not hearing from thence. Adieu!

[Footnote 1: In August, 1761, Sir G. Pocock took Havannah, the capital of Cuba. In September Commodore Cornish and Colonel Draper took Manilla, the principal of the Philippine Islands; and the treasures found in Manilla alone exceeded the sum here mentioned by Walpole, and yet did not equal those brought home from the Havannah, as Walpole mentions in a subsequent letter.]

You see I am a punctual correspondent when Empresses commit murders.

NEGOTIATIONS FOR PEACE--CHRISTENING OF THE PRINCE OF WALES.

TO THE HON. H.S. CONWAY.

STRAWBERRY HILL, _Sept._ 9, 1762.

Nondum laurus erat, longoque decentia crine
Tempora cingebat de qualibet arbore Phoebus.[1]

[Footnote 1: The quotation is from Ovid, Met. i. 450.]

This is a hint to you, that as Phoebus, who was certainly your superior, could take up with a chestnut garland, or any crown he found, you must have the humility to be content without laurels, when none are to be had: you have hunted far and near for them, and taken true pains to the last in that old nursery-garden Germany, and by the way have made me shudder with your last journal: but you must be easy with _qualibet_ other _arbore_; you must come home to your own plantations. The Duke of Bedford is gone in a fury to make peace,[1] for he cannot be even pacific with temper; and by this time I suppose the Duke de Nivernois is unpacking his portion of olive _dans la rue de Suffolk Street_. I say, I suppose--for I do not, like my friends at Arthur's, whip into my post-chaise to see every novelty. My two sovereigns, the Duchess of Grafton and Lady Mary Coke, are arrived, and yet I have seen neither Polly nor Lucy. The former, I hear, is entirely French; the latter as absolutely English.

[Footnote 1: "On the 6th of September the Duke of Bedford embarked as ambassador from England; on the 12th the Duc de Nivernois landed as ambassador from France. Of these two noblemen, Bedford, though well versed in affairs, was perhaps by his hasty temper in some degree disqualified for the profession of a Temple or a Gondomar; and Nivernois was only celebrated for his graceful manners and his pretty songs" (Lord Stanhope, "History of England," c. 38).]

Well! but if you insist on not doffing your cuirass, you may find an opportunity of wearing it. The storm thickens. The City of London are ready to hoist their standard; treason is the bon-ton at that end of the town; seditious papers pasted up at every corner: nay, my neighbourhood is not unfashionable; we have had them at Brentford and Kingston. The Peace is the cry;[1] but to make weight, they throw in all the abusive ingredients they can collect. They talk of your friend the Duke of Devonshire's resigning; and, for the Duke of Newcastle, it puts him so much in mind of the end of Queen Anne's time, that I believe he hopes to be Minister again for another forty years.

[Footnote 1: "_The Peace is the cry._" This was the peace of Paris, not absolutely concluded till February of the next year. The conditions in our favour were so inadequate to our successes in the war, that the treaty caused general indignation; so great, indeed, that Lord Bute, the Prime Minister, was afraid to face the meeting of Parliament, and resigned his office, in which he was succeeded by Mr. George Grenville. It was the subject of severe, but not undeserved comment in the celebrated _North Briton_, No. 45, by Wilkes.]

In the mean time, there are but dark news from the Havannah; the _Gazette_, who would not fib for the world, says, we have lost but four officers; the World, who is not quite so scrupulous, says, our loss is heavy.--But what shocking notice to those who have _Harry Conways_ there! The _Gazette_ breaks off with saying, that they were to storm the next day! Upon the whole, it is regarded as a preparative to worse news.

Our next monarch [George IV.] was christened last night, George Augustus Frederick; the Princess, the Duke of Cumberland, and Duke of

Mecklenburgh, sponsors; the ceremony performed by the Bishop of London. The Queen's bed, magnificent, and they say in taste, was placed in the great drawing-room: though she is not to see company in form, yet it looks as if they had intended people should have been there, as all who presented themselves were admitted, which were very few, for it had not been notified; I suppose to prevent too great a crowd: all I have heard named, besides those in waiting, were the Duchess of Queensberry, Lady Dalkeith, Mrs. Grenville, and about four more ladies.

TREASURES FROM THE HAVANNAH--THE ROYAL VISIT TO ETON--DEATH OF LADY MARY--CONCEALMENT OF HER WORKS--VOLTAIRE'S "UNIVERSAL HISTORY."

TO SIR HORACE MANN.

STRAWBERRY HILL, _Oct._ 3, 1762.

I am now only the peace in your debt, for here is the Havannah. Here it is, following despair and accompanied by glory, riches, and twelve ships-of-the-line; not all in person, for four are destroyed. The booty--that is an undignified term--I should say, the plunder, or the spoils, which is a more classic word for such heroes as we are, amounts to at least a million and a half. Lord Albemarle's share will be about L140,000. I wish I knew how much that makes in _talents_ or _great sesterces_. What to me is better than all, we have lost but sixteen hundred men; _but_, alas! Most of the sick recovered! What an affecting object my Lady Albemarle would make in a triumph, surrounded by her three victorious sons; for she had three at stake! My friend Lady Hervey,[1] too, is greatly happy; her son Augustus distinguished himself particularly, brought home the news, and on his way took a rich French ship going to Newfoundland with military stores. I do not surely mean to detract from him, who set all this spirit on float, but you see we can conquer, though Mr. Pitt is at his plough.

[Footnote 1: Lady Hervey, the widow of Pope's Lord Fanny and Sporus, had been the beautiful "Molly Lepel," celebrated by Lord Chesterfield.

Had I Hanover, Bremen, and Verden
And likewise the Duchy of Zell,
I would part with them all for a farden,
Compared with sweet Molly Lepel.

Three of her sons succeeded to the Earldom of Bristol.]

The express arrived while the Duke de Nivernois was at dinner with Lord Bute. The world says, that the joy of the company showed itself with too little politeness--I hope not; I would not exult to a single man, and a minister of peace; it should be in the face of Europe, if I assumed that dominion which the French used to arrogate; nor do I believe it happened; all the company are not so charmed with the event. They are not quite convinced that it will facilitate the pacification, nor am I clear it will. The City of London will not lower their hopes, and views, and expectations, on this acquisition. Well, if we can steer wisely between insolence from success and impatience for peace, we may secure our safety and tranquillity for many years. But they are _not_ yet arrived, nor hear I anything that tells me the peace will certainly be made. France _wants_ peace; I question if she _wishes_ it. How his Catholic royalty will take this, one cannot guess. My good friend, we are not at table with Monsieur de Nivernois, so we may smile at this consequence of the family-compact. Twelve ships-of-the-line and the Havannah!--it becomes people who cannot keep their own, to divide the world between them!

Your nephew Foote has made a charming figure; the King and Queen went from Windsor to see Eton; he is captain of the Oppidans, and made a

speech to them with great applause. It was in English, which was right; why should we talk Latin to our Kings rather than Russ or Iroquois? Is this a season for being ashamed of our country? Dr. Barnard, the master, is the Pitt of masters, and has raised the school to the most flourishing state it ever knew.

Lady Mary Wortley[1] has left twenty-one large volumes in prose and verse, in manuscript; nineteen are fallen to Lady Bute, and will not see the light in haste. The other two Lady Mary in her passage gave to somebody in Holland, and at her death expressed great anxiety to have them published. Her family are in terrors lest they should be, and have tried to get them: hitherto the man is inflexible. Though I do not doubt but they are an olio of lies and scandal, I should like to see them. She had parts, and had seen much. Truth is often at bottom of such compositions, and places itself here and there without the intention of the mother. I dare say in general, these works are like Madame del Pozzo's *Memoires*. Lady Mary had more wit, and something more delicacy; their manners and morals were a good deal more alike.

[Footnote 1: In a note to this letter, subsequently added by Walpole, he reduces this statement to seventeen, saying: "It was true that Lady Mary did leave seventeen volumes of her works and memories. She gave her letters from Constantinople to Mr. Sowden, minister of the English Church at Rotterdam, who published them; and, the day before she died, she gave him those seventeen volumes, with injunctions to publish them too; but in two days the man had a crown living from Lord Bute, and Lady Bute had the seventeen volumes."]

There is a lad, a waiter at St. James's coffee-house, of thirteen years old, who says he does not wonder we beat the French, for he himself could thrash Monsieur de Nivernois. This duke is so thin and small, that when minister at Berlin, at a time that France was not in favour there, the King of Prussia said, if his eyes were a little older, he should want a glass to see the ambassador. I do not admire this bon-mot. Voltaire is continuing his "Universal History"; he showed the Duke of Grafton a chapter, to which the title is, *Les Anglois vainqueurs dans les Quatres Parties du Monde*. There have been minutes in the course of our correspondence when you and I did not expect to see this chapter. It is bigger by a quarter than our predecessors the Romans had any pretensions to, and larger than I hope our descendants will see written of them, for conquest, unless by necessity, as ours has been, is an odious glory; witness my hand

H. WALPOLE.

P.S.--I recollect that my last letter was a little melancholy; this, to be sure, has a grain or two of national vanity; why, I must own I am a miserable philosopher; the weather of the hour does affect me. I cannot here, at a distance from the world and unconcerned in it, help feeling a little satisfaction when my country is successful; yet, tasting its honours and elated with them, I heartily, seriously wish they had their *quietus*. What is the fame of men compared to their happiness? Who gives a nation peace, gives tranquillity to all. How many must be wretched, before one can be renowned! A hero bets the lives and fortunes of thousands, whom he has no right to game with: but alas! Caesars have little regard to their fish and counters!

__RESIGNATION OF LORD BUTE--FRENCH VISITORS--WALPOLE AND NO. 45.__

TO SIR HORACE MANN.

STRAWBERRY HILL, *April* 30, 1763.

The papers have told you all the formal changes; the real one consists

solely in Lord Bute being out of office, for, having recovered his fright, he is still as much Minister as ever, and consequently does not find his unpopularity decrease. On the contrary, I think his situation more dangerous than ever: he has done enough to terrify his friends, and encourage his enemies, and has acquired no new strength; rather has lost strength, by the disappearance of Mr. Fox from the scene. His deputies, too, will not long care to stand all the risk for him, when they perceive, as they must already, that they have neither credit nor confidence. Indeed the new administration is a general joke, and will scarce want a violent death to put an end to it. Lord Bute is very blamable for embarking the King so deep in measures that may have so serious a termination. The longer the Court can stand its ground, the more firmly will the opposition be united, and the more inflamed. I have ever thought this would be a turbulent reign, and nothing has happened to make me alter my opinion.

Mr. Fox's exit has been very unpleasant. He would not venture to accept the Treasury, which Lord Bute would have bequeathed to him; and could not obtain an earldom, for which he thought he had stipulated; but some of the negotiators asserting that he had engaged to resign the Paymaster's place, which he vehemently denies, he has been forced to take up with a barony, and has broken with his associates—I do not say friends, for with the chief of them [1] he had quarrelled when he embarked in the new system. He meets with little pity, and yet has found as much ingratitude as he had had power of doing service.

[Footnote 1: "The chief of them." Walpole himself explains in a note that he means the Dukes of Cumberland and Devonshire.]

I am glad you are going to have a great duke; it will amuse you, and a new Court will make Florence lively, the only beauty it wants. You divert me with my friend the Duke of Modena's conscientious match: if the Duchess had outlived him, she would not have been so scrupulous. But, for Hymen's sake, who is that Madame Simonetti? I trust, not that old painted, gaming, debauched Countess from Milan, whom I saw at the fair of Reggio!

I surprise myself with being able to write two pages of pure English; I do nothing but deal in broken French. The two nations are crossing over and figuring-in. We have had a Count d'Usson and his wife these six weeks; and last Saturday arrived a Madame de Boufflers, scavante, galante, a great friend of the Prince of Conti, and a passionate admirer de nous autres Anglois. I am forced to live much with tout ca, as they are perpetually at my Lady Hervey's; and as my Lord Hertford goes ambassador to Paris, where I shall certainly make him a visit next year—don't you think I shall be computing how far it is to Florence? There is coming, too, a Marquis de Fleury,[1] who is to be consigned to me, as a political relation, vu l'amitie entre le Cardinal son oncle et feu monsieur mon pere. However, as my cousin Fleury is not above six-and-twenty, I had much rather be excused from such a commission as showing the Tombs and the Lions, and the King and Queen, and my Lord Bute, and the Waxwork, to a boy. All this breaks in upon my plan of withdrawing by little and little from the world, for I hate to tire it with an old lean face, and which promises to be an old lean face for thirty years longer, for I am as well again as ever. The Duc de Nivernois called here the other day in his way from Hampton Court; but, as the most sensible French never have eyes to see anything, unless they see it every day and see it in fashion, I cannot say he flattered me much, or was much struck with Strawberry. When I carried him into the Cabinet, which I have told you is formed upon the idea of a Catholic chapel, he pulled off his hat, but perceiving his error, he said, "Ce n'est pas une chapelle pourtant," and seemed a little displeased.

[Footnote 1: Cardinal Fleury, Prime Minister of France from 1727 to **1742. Pope celebrated his love of peace--**

Peace is my dear delight, not Fleury's more;

and by his resolute maintenance of peace during the first seven years of his administration he had so revived the resources and restored the power of his country, that when the question of going to war with France was discussed in the Council of Vienna the veteran Prince Eugene warned the Ministers that his wise and prudent administration had been so beneficial to his country that the Empire was no longer a match for it.]

My poor niece [Lady Waldegrave] does not forget her Lord, though by this time I suppose the world has. She has taken a house here, at Twickenham, to be near me. Madame de Boufflers has heard so much of her beauty, that she told me she should be glad to peep through a grate anywhere to get a glimpse of her,--but at present it would not answer. I never saw so great an alteration in so short a period; but she is too young not to recover her beauty, only dimmed by grief that must be temporary. Adieu! my dear Sir.

Monday, May 2nd, ARLINGTON STREET.

The plot thickens: Mr. Wilkes is sent to the Tower for the last North Briton;[1] a paper whose fame must have reached you. It said Lord Bute had made the King utter a gross falsehood in his last speech. This hero is as bad a fellow as ever hero was, abominable in private life, dull in Parliament, but, they say, very entertaining in a room, and certainly no bad writer, besides having had the honour of contributing a great deal to Lord Bute's fall. Wilkes fought Lord Talbot in the autumn, whom he had abused; and lately in Calais, when the Prince de Croy, the Governor, asked how far the liberty of the press extended in England, replied, I cannot tell, but I am trying to know. I don't believe this will be the only paragraph I shall send you on this affair.

[Footnote 1: The celebrated No. 45 which attacked the speech with which the King had opened Parliament; asserting that it was the speech not of the King, but of the Ministers; and that as such he had a right to criticise it, and to denounce its panegyric of the late speech as founded on falsehood.]

A PARTY AT "STRABERRI"--WORK OF HIS PRINTING PRESS--EPIGRAMS--A GARDEN PARTY AT ESHER.

TO GEORGE MONTAGU, ESQ.

STRAWBERRY HILL, May 17, 1763.

"On vient de nous donner une tres jolie fete au chateau de Straberri: tout etoit tapisse de narcisses, de tulipes, et de lilacs; des cors de chasse, des clarionettes; des petits vers galants faits par des fees, et qui se trouvoient sous la presse; des fruits a la glace, du the, du caffe, des biscuits, et force hot-rolls."--This is not the beginning of a letter to you, but of one that I might suppose sets out to-night for Paris, or rather, which I do not suppose will set out thither; for though the narrative is circumstantially true, I don't believe the actors were pleased enough with the scene, to give so favourable an account of it.

The French do not come hither to see. A l'Anglaise happened to be the word in fashion; and half a dozen of the most fashionable people have been the dupes of it. I take for granted that their next mode will be a l'Iroquoise, that they may be under no obligation of realising their pretensions. Madame de Boufflers[1] I think will die a martyr to a taste, which she fancied she had, and finds she has not. Never having

stirred ten miles from Paris, and having only rolled in an easy coach from one hotel to another on a gliding pavement, she is already worn out with being hurried from morning till night from one sight to another. She rises every morning so fatigued with the toils of the preceding day, that she has not strength, if she had inclination, to observe the least, or the finest thing she sees! She came hither to-day to a great breakfast I made for her, with her eyes a foot deep in her head, her hands dangling, and scarce able to support her knitting-bag. She had been yesterday to see a ship launched, and went from Greenwich by water to Ranelagh. Madame Dusson, who is Dutch-built, and whose muscles are pleasure-proof, came with her; there were besides, Lady Mary Coke, Lord and Lady Holderness, the Duke and Duchess of Grafton, Lord Hertford, Lord Villiers, Offley, Messieurs de Fleury, D'Eon,[2] et Duclos.[3] The latter is author of the Life of Louis Onze; dresses like a dissenting minister, which I suppose is the livery of a *bel esprit*, and is much more impetuous than agreeable. We breakfasted in the great parlour, and I had filled the hall and large cloister by turns with French horns and clarionettes. As the French ladies had never seen a printing-house, I carried them into mine; they found something ready set, and desiring to see what it was, it proved as follows:--

The Press speaks--

FOR MADAME DE BOUFFLERS.

The graceful fair, who loves to know,
Nor dreads the north's inclement snow;
Who bids her polish'd accent wear
The British diction's harsher air;
Shall read her praise in every clime
Where types can speak or poets rhyme.

FOR MADAME DUSSON.

Feign not an ignorance of what I speak;
You could not miss my meaning were it Greek:
'Tis the same language Belgium utter'd first,
The same which from admiring Gallia burst.
True sentiment a like expression pours;
Each country says the same to eyes like yours.

[Footnote 1: Boswell records Mr. Beauclerk's account of his introduction of this lady to Johnson: "When Mme. de Boufflers was first in England she was desirous to see Johnson. I accordingly went with her to his chambers in the Temple, where she was entertained with his conversation for some time. When our visit was over, she and I left him, and were got into Inner Temple Lane, when, all at once, I heard a noise like thunder. This was occasioned by Johnson, who, it seems, upon a little recollection, had taken it into his head that he ought to have done the honours of his literary residence to a foreign lady of quality, and, eager to show himself a man of gallantry, was hurrying down the staircase in evident agitation. He overtook us before we reached the Temple Gate, and brushing in between me and Mme. de Boufflers, seized her hand and conducted her to her coach. His dress was a rusty brown morning suit, a pair of old shoes by way of slippers, a little shrivelled wig sticking on the top of his head, and the sleeves of his shirt and the knees of his breeches hanging loose. A considerable crowd of people gathered round, and were not a little struck by this singular appearance" (vol. ii., ann. 1775.)]

[Footnote 2: This gentleman was at this time secretary to the Duc de Nivernois. For many years he dressed in woman's clothes, and the question of his sex was made the subject of many wagers and trials both in England and France.]

[Footnote 3: M. Duclos was an author of good repute as a novelist, and one of the contributors to the "Dictionnaire de l'Academie."]

You will comprehend that the first speaks English, and that the second does not; that the second is handsome, and the first not; and that the second was born in Holland. This little gentillesse pleased, and atoned for the popery of my house, which was not serious enough for Madame de Boufflers, who is Montmorency, *_et du sang du premier Chretien_*; and too serious for Madame Dusson, who is a Dutch Calvinist. The latter's husband was not here, nor Drumgold, who have both got fevers, nor the Duc de Nivernois, who dined at Claremont. The Gallery is not advanced enough to give them any idea at all, as they are not apt to go out of their way for one; but the Cabinet, and the glory of yellow glass at top, which had a charming sun for a foil, did surmount their indifference, especially as they were animated by the Duchess of Grafton, who had never happened to be here before, and who perfectly entered into the air of enchantment and fairyism, which is the tone of the place, and was peculiarly so to-day—*_apropos_*, when do you design to come hither? Let me know, that I may have no measures to interfere with receiving you and your grandsons.

Before Lord Bute ran away, he made Mr. Bentley^[1] a Commissioner of the Lottery; I don't know whether a single or a double one: the latter, which I hope it is, is two hundred a-year.

[Footnote 1: Mr. Bentley, who was an occasional correspondent of Walpole, was a son of the great Master of Trinity College, Cambridge.]

Thursday 19th

I am ashamed of myself to have nothing but a journal of pleasures to send you; I never passed a more agreeable day than yesterday. Miss Pelham gave the French an entertainment at Esher;^[1] but they have been so feasted and amused, that none of them were well enough, or reposed enough, to come, but Nivernois and Madame Dusson. The rest of the company were, the Graftons, Lady Rockingham, Lord and Lady Pembroke, Lord and Lady Holdernesse, Lord Villiers, Count Woronzow the Russian minister, Lady Sondes, Mr. and Miss Mary Pelham, Lady Mary Coke, Mrs. Anne Pitt, and Mr. Shelley. The day was delightful, the scene transporting; the trees, lawns, concaves, all in the perfection in which the ghost of Kent^[2] would joy to see them. At twelve we made the tour of the farm in eight chaises and calashes, horsemen, and footmen, setting out like a picture of Wouvement's. My lot fell in the lap of Mrs. Anne Pitt, which I could have excused, as she was not at all in the style of the day, romantic, but political. We had a magnificent dinner, cloaked in the modesty of earthenware; French horns and hautboys on the lawn. We walked to the Belvidere on the summit of the hill, where a theatrical storm only served to heighten the beauty of the landscape, a rainbow on a dark cloud falling precisely behind the tower of a neighbouring church, between another tower and the building at Claremont. Monsieur de Nivernois, who had been absorbed all day, and lagging behind, translating my verses, was delivered of his version, and of some more lines which he wrote on Miss Pelham in the Belvidere, while we drank tea and coffee. From thence we passed into the wood, and the ladies formed a circle on chairs before the mouth of the cave, which was overhung to a vast height with woodbines, lilacs, and laburnums, and dignified by the tall shapely cypresses. On the descent of the hill were placed the French horns; the abigails, servants, and neighbours wandering below by the river; in short, it was Parnassus, as Watteau would have painted it. Here we had a rural syllabub, and part of the company returned to town; but were replaced by Giardini and Onofrio, who with Nivernois on the violin, and Lord Pembroke on the bass, accompanied Miss Pelham, Lady Rockingham, and the Duchess of Grafton, who sang. This little concert lasted till past ten; then there were minuets, and as we

had seven couple left, it concluded with a country dance. I blush again, for I danced, but was kept in countenance by Nivernois, who has one wrinkle more than I have. A quarter after twelve they sat down to supper, and I came home by a charming moonlight. I am going to dine in town, and to a great ball with fireworks at Miss Chudleigh's, but I return hither on Sunday, to bid adieu to this abominable Arcadian life; for really when one is not young, one ought to do nothing but _s'ennuyer_; I will try, but I always go about it awkwardly. Adieu!

[Footnote 1: "_Esher_" Claremont, at Esher, now the property of the Queen, and residence of the Duchess of Albany, at this time belonged to the Duke of Newcastle, Miss Pelham's uncle.]

[Footnote 2: Kent was the great landscape gardener of the last generation.]

P.S.--I enclose a copy of both the English and French verses.

A MADAME DE BOUFFLERS.

Boufflers, qu'embellissent les graces,
Et qui plairoit sans le vouloir,
Elle a qui l'amour du scavoir
Fit braver le Nord et les glaces;
Boufflers se plait en nos vergers,
Et veut a nos sons etrangers
Plier sa voix enchanteresse.
Repetons son nom mille fois,
Sur tous les coeurs Boufflers aura des droits,
Par tout ou la rime et la Presse
A l'amour preteront leur voix.

A MADAME D'USSON.

Ne feignez point, Iris, de ne pas nous entendre;
Ce que vous inspirez, en Grec doit se comprendre.
On vous l'a dit d'abord en Hollandois,
Et dans un langage plus tendre
Paris vous l'a repete mille fois.
C'est de nos coeurs l'expression sincere;
En tout climat, Iris, a toute heure, en tous lieux,
Par tout ou brilleront vos yeux,
Vous apprendrez combien ils scavent plaire.

GENERAL CHARACTER OF THE FRENCH--FESTIVITIES ON THE QUEEN'S BIRTHDAY.

TO THE HON. H.S. CONWAY.

ARLINGTON STREET, _May_ 21, 1763.

You have now seen the celebrated Madame de Boufflers. I dare say you could in that short time perceive that she is agreeable, but I dare say too that you will agree with me that vivacity^[1] is by no means the _partage_ of the French--bating the _etourderie_ of the _mousquetaires_ and of a high-dried _petit-maitre_ or two, they appear to me more lifeless than Germans. I cannot comprehend how they came by the character of a lively people. Charles Townshend has more _sal volatile_ in him than the whole nation. Their King is taciturnity itself, Mirepoix was a walking mummy, Nivernois has about as much life as a sick favourite child, and M. Dusson is a good-humoured country gentleman, who has been drunk the day before, and is upon his good behaviour. If I have the gout next year, and am thoroughly humbled by it again, I will go to Paris, that I may be upon a level with them: at present, I am _trop fou_ to keep them company. Mind, I do not insist that, to have spirits, a

nation should be as frantic as poor Fanny Pelham, as absurd as the Duchess of Queensberry, or as dashing as the Virgin Chudleigh.[2] Oh, that you had been at her ball t'other night! History could never describe it and keep its countenance. The Queen's real birthday, you know, is not kept: this Maid of Honour kept it--nay, while the Court is in mourning, expected people to be out of mourning; the Queen's family really was so, Lady Northumberland having desired leave for them. A scaffold was erected in Hyde-park for fireworks. To show the illuminations without to more advantage, the company were received in an apartment totally dark, where they remained for two hours.--If they gave rise to any more birthdays, who could help it? The fireworks were fine, and succeeded well. On each side of the court were two large scaffolds for the Virgin's tradespeople. When the fireworks ceased, a large scene was lighted in the court, representing their Majesties; on each side of which were six obelisks, painted with emblems, and illuminated; mottoes beneath in Latin and English: 1. For the Prince of Wales, a ship, *Multorum spes*. 2. For the Princess Dowager, a bird of paradise, and *two* little ones, *Meos ad sidera tollo*. People smiled. 3. Duke of York, a temple, *Virtuti et honori*. 4. Princess Augusta, a bird of paradise, *Non habet parem*--unluckily this was translated, *I have no peer*. People laughed out, considering where this was exhibited. 5. The three younger princes, an orange tree, *Promittit et dat*. 6. The two younger princesses, the flower crown-imperial. I forget the Latin: the translation was silly enough, *Bashful in youth, graceful in age*. The lady of the house made many apologies for the poorness of the performance, which she said was only oil-paper, painted by one of her servants; but it really was fine and pretty. The Duke of Kingston was in a frock, *comme chez lui*. Behind the house was a cenotaph for the Princess Elizabeth, a kind of illuminated cradle; the motto, *All the honours the dead can receive*. This burying-ground was a strange codicil to a festival; and, what was more strange, about one in the morning, this sarcophagus burst out into crackers and guns. The Margrave of Anspach began the ball with the Virgin. The supper was most sumptuous.

[Footnote 1: In a subsequent letter he represents Mme. de Boufflers as giving them the same character, saying, "Dans ce pays-ci c'est un effort perpetuel pour sedivertir."]

[Footnote 2: Miss Chudleigh, who had been one of the Princess Dowager's maids of honour, married Mr. Hervey, afterwards Earl of Bristol, but, having taken a dislike to him, she procured a divorce, and afterwards married the Duke of Kingston; but, after his death, his heirs, on the ground of some informality in the divorce, prosecuted her for bigamy, and she was convicted.]

You ask, when do I propose to be at Park-place. I ask, shall not you come to the Duke of Richmond's masquerade, which is the 6th of June? I cannot well be with you till towards the end of that month.

The enclosed is a letter which I wish you to read attentively, to give me your opinion upon it, and return it. It is from a sensible friend of mine in Scotland [Sir David Dalrymple], who has lately corresponded with me on the enclosed subjects, which I little understand; but I promised to communicate his ideas to George Grenville, if he would state them--are they practicable? I wish much that something could be done for those brave soldiers and sailors, who will all come to the gallows, unless some timely provision can be made for them.--The former part of his letter relates to a grievance he complains of, that men who have *not* served are admitted into garrisons, and then into our hospitals, which were designed for meritorious sufferers. Adieu!

THE ORDINARY WAY OF LIFE IN ENGLAND--WILKES--C. TOWNSHEND--COUNT LALLY--LORD CLIVE--LORD NORTHINGTON--LOUIS LE BIEN AIME--THE DRAMA IN FRANCE.

TO THE EARL OF HERTFORD.

ARLINGTON STREET, _Dec._ 29, 1763

You are sensible, my dear lord, that any amusement from my letters must depend upon times and seasons. We are a very absurd nation (though the French are so good at present as to think us a very wise one, only because they, themselves, are now a very weak one); but then that absurdity depends upon the almanac. Posterity, who will know nothing of our intervals, will conclude that this age was a succession of events. I could tell them that we know as well when an event, as when Easter, will happen. Do but recollect these last ten years. The beginning of October, one is certain that everybody will be at Newmarket, and the Duke of Cumberland will lose, and Shafto win, two or three thousand pounds. After that, while people are preparing to come to town for the winter, the Ministry is suddenly changed, and all the world comes to learn how it happened, a fortnight sooner than they intended; and fully persuaded that the new arrangement cannot last a month. The Parliament opens; everybody is bribed; and the new establishment is perceived to be composed of adamant. November passes, with two or three self-murders, and a new play. Christmas arrives; everybody goes out of town; and a riot happens in one of the theatres. The Parliament meets again; taxes are warmly opposed; and some citizen makes his fortune by a subscription. The opposition languishes; balls and assemblies begin; some master and miss begin to get together, are talked of, and give occasion to forty more matches being invented; an unexpected debate starts up at the end of the session, that makes more noise than anything that was designed to make a noise, and subsides again in a new peerage or two. Ranelagh opens and Vauxhall; one produces scandal, and t'other a drunken quarrel. People separate, some to Tunbridge, and some to all the horse-races in England; and so the year comes again to October. I dare to prophesy, that if you keep this letter, you will find that my future correspondence will be but an illustration of this text; at least, it is an excuse for my having very little to tell you at present, and was the reason of my not writing to you last week.

[Illustration: HORACE WALPOLE.

From a picture in the National Portrait Gallery, by Nathaniel Hone, R.A.]

Before the Parliament adjourned, there was nothing but a trifling debate in an empty House, occasioned by a motion from the Ministry, to order another physician and surgeon to attend Wilkes:[1] it was carried by about seventy to thirty, and was only memorable by producing Mr. Charles Townshend, who, having sat silent through the question of privilege, found himself interested in the defence of Dr. Brocklesby![2] Charles ridiculed Lord North extremely, and had warm words with George Grenville. I do not look upon this as productive of consequential speaking for the opposition; on the contrary, I should expect him sooner in place, if the Ministry could be fools enough to restore weight to him, and could be ignorant that he can never hurt them so much as by being with them. Wilkes refused to see Heberden and Hawkins, whom the House commissioned to visit him; and to laugh at us more, sent for two Scotchmen, Duncan and Middleton. Well! but since that, he is gone off himself: however, as I did in D'Eon's case, I can now only ask news of him from you, not tell you any; for you have got him. I do not believe you will invite him, and make so much of him, as the Duke of Bedford did. Both sides pretend joy at his being gone; and for once I can believe both. You will be diverted, as I was, at the cordial esteem the ministers have for one another; Lord Waldegrave told my niece [Lady Waldegrave], this morning, that he had offered a shilling, to receive a hundred pounds when Sandwich shall lose his head! what a good opinion they have of one another! _apropos_ to losing heads, is Lally[3]

beheaded?

[Footnote 1: Wilkes had been wounded in a duel, and alleged his wound as a sufficient reason for not attending in his place in the House of Commons when summoned. Dr. Brocklesby, a physician of considerable eminence, reported that he was unable to attend; but the House of Commons, as if they distrusted his report, appointed two other physicians to examine the patient, Drs. Heberden and Hawkins.]

[Footnote 2: Dr. Brocklesby is mentioned by Boswell as an especial friend of Johnson; having even offered him an annuity of L100 to relieve him from the necessity of writing to increase his income.]

[Footnote 3: Count Lally, of an Irish family, his father or grandfather having been among those who, after the capitulation of Limerick, accompanied the gallant Sarsfield to France, had been the French governor in India; but, having failed in an attempt on Madras, and having been afterwards defeated at Wandewash by Colonel Coote, was recalled in disgrace, and brought to trial on a number of ridiculously false charges, convicted, and executed; his real offence being that by a somewhat intemperate zeal for the reformation of abuses, and the punishment of corruption which he detested, he had made a great number of personal enemies. He was the father of Count Lally Tollendal, who was a prominent character in the French Revolution.]

The East India Company have come to an unanimous resolution of not paying Lord Clive the three hundred thousand pounds, which the Ministry had promised him in lieu of his Nabobical annuity. Just after the bargain was made, his old rustic of a father was at the King's levee; the King asked where his son was; he replied, "Sire, he is coming to town, and then your Majesty will have another vote." If you like these franknesses, I can tell you another. The Chancellor [Northington] is a chosen governor of St. Bartholomew's Hospital: a smart gentleman, who was sent with the staff, carried it in the evening, when the Chancellor happened to be drunk. "Well, Mr. Bartlemy," said his lordship, snuffing, "what have you to say?" The man, who had prepared a formal harangue, was transported to have so fair opportunity given him of uttering it, and with much dapper gesticulation congratulated his lordship on his health, and the nation on enjoying such great abilities. The Chancellor stopped him short, crying, "By God, it is a lie! I have neither health nor abilities; my bad health has destroyed my abilities." [1] The late Chancellor [Hardwicke] is much better.

[Footnote 1: Lord Northington had been a very hard liver. He was a martyr to the gout; and one afternoon, as he was going downstairs out of his Court, he was heard to say to himself, "D--- these legs! If I had known they were to carry a Lord Chancellor, I would have taken better care of them;" and it was to relieve himself of the labours of the Court of Chancery that he co-operated with Mr. Pitt in the discreditable intrigue which in the summer of 1766 compelled the resignation of Lord Rockingham, Mr. Pitt having promised him the office of President of the Council in the new Ministry which he intended to form.]

The last time the King was at Drury-lane, the play given out for the next night was "All in the Wrong:" the galleries clapped, and then cried out, "Let _us_ be all in the right! Wilkes and Liberty!" When the King comes to a theatre, or goes out, or goes to the House, there is not a single applause; to the Queen there is a little: in short, _Louis le bien aime_ [1] is not French at present for King George.

[Footnote 1: "Le Bien aime" was a designation conferred on Louis XV. by the people in their joy at his recovery from an illness which had threatened his life at Metz in 1744. Louis himself was surprised, and asked what he had done to deserve such a title; and, in truth, it was a question hard to answer; but it was an expression of praise for his

leaving the capital to accompany his army in the campaign.]

I read, last night, your new French play, "Le Comte de Warwic,"[1] which we hear has succeeded much. I must say, it does but confirm the cheap idea I have of you French: not to mention the preposterous perversion of history in so known a story, the Queen's ridiculous preference of old Warwick to a young King; the omission of the only thing she ever said or did in her whole life worth recording, which was thinking herself too low for his wife, and too high for his mistress; the romantic honour bestowed on two such savages as Edward and Warwick: besides these, and forty such glaring absurdities, there is but one scene that has any merit, that between Edward and Warwick in the third act. Indeed, indeed, I don't honour the modern French: it is making your son but a slender compliment, with his knowledge, for them to say it is extraordinary. The best proof I think they give of their taste, is liking you all three. I rejoice that your little boy is recovered. Your brother has been at Park-place this week, and stays a week longer: his hill is too high to be drowned.

[Footnote 1: "Le Comte de Warwic" was by La Harpe, who was only twenty-three years of age. The answer here attributed to Elizabeth Woodville has been attributed to others also; and especially to Mdlle. de Montmorency, afterwards Princesse de Conde, when pursued by the solicitations of Henry IV.]

Thank you for your kindness to Mr. Selwyn: if he had too much impatience, I am sure it proceeded only from his great esteem for you.

I will endeavour to learn what you desire; and will answer, in another letter, that and some other passages in your last. Dr. Hunter is very good, and calls on me sometimes. You may guess whether we talk you over or not. Adieu!

A NEW YEAR'S PARTY AT LADY SUFFOLK'S--LADY TEMPLE POETESS LAUREATE TO THE MUSES_

TO GEORGE MONTAGU, ESQ.

ARLINGTON STREET, _Jan._ 11, 1764.

It is an age, I own, since I wrote to you: but except politics, what was there to send you? and for politics, the present are too contemptible to be recorded by anybody but journalists, gazetteers, and such historians! The ordinary of Newgate, or Mr. ---, who write for their monthly half-crown, and who are indifferent whether Lord Bute, Lord Melcombe, or Maclean [the highwayman], is their hero, may swear they find diamonds on dunghills; but you will excuse _me_, if I let our correspondence lie dormant rather than deal in such trash. I am forced to send Lord Hertford and Sir Horace Mann such garbage, because they are out of England, and the sea softens and makes palatable any potion, as it does claret; but unless I can divert _you_, I had rather wait till we can laugh together; the best employment for friends, who do not mean to pick one another's pocket, nor make a property of either's frankness. Instead of politics, therefore, I shall amuse you to-day with a fairy tale.

I was desired to be at my Lady Suffolk's on New-year's morn, where I found Lady Temple and others. On the toilet Miss Hotham spied a small round box. She seized it with all the eagerness and curiosity of eleven years. In it was wrapped up a heart-diamond ring, and a paper in which, in a hand as small as Buckinger's[1] who used to write the Lord's Prayer in the compass of a silver penny, were the following lines:--

Sent by a sylph, unheard, unseen,
A new-year's gift from Mab our queen:

But tell it not, for if you do,
You will be pinch'd all black and blue.
Consider well, what a disgrace,
To show abroad your mottled face:
Then seal your lips, put on the ring,
And sometimes think of Ob. the king.

[Footnote 1: Buckinger was a dwarf born without hands or feet.]

You will eagerly guess that Lady Temple was the poetess, and that we were delighted with the gentleness of the thought and execution. The child, you may imagine, was less transported with the poetry than the present. Her attention, however, was hurried backwards and forwards from the ring to a new coat, that she had been trying on when sent for down; impatient to revisit her coat, and to show the ring to her maid, she whisked upstairs; when she came down again, she found a letter sealed, and lying on the floor--new exclamations! Lady Suffolk bade her open it: here it is:--

Your tongue, too nimble for your sense,
Is guilty of a high offence;
Hath introduced unkind debate,
And topsy-turvy turn'd our state.
In gallantry I sent the ring,
The token of a love-sick king:
Under fair Mab's auspicious name
From me the trifling present came.
You blabb'd the news in Suffolk's ear;
The tattling zephyrs brought it here;
As Mab was indolently laid
Under a poppy's spreading shade.
The jealous queen started in rage;
She kick'd her crown, and beat her page:
"Bring me my magic wand," she cries;
"Under that primrose, there it lies;
I'll change the silly, saucy chit,
Into a flea, a louse, a nit,
A worm, a grasshopper, a rat,
An owl, a monkey, hedgehog, bat.
But hold, why not by fairy art
Transform the wretch into--
Ixion once a cloud embraced,
By Jove and jealousy well placed;
What sport to see proud Oberon stare,
And flirt it with a _pet en l'air_!"
Then thrice she stamp'd the trembling ground,
And thrice she waved her wand around;
When I, endow'd with greater skill,
And less inclined to do you ill,
Mutter'd some words, withheld her arm,
And kindly stopp'd the unfinish'd charm.
But though not changed to owl or bat,
Or something more indelicate;
Yet, as your tongue has run too fast,
Your boasted beauty must not last.
No more shall frolic Cupid lie
In ambuscade in either eye,
From thence to aim his keenest dart
To captivate each youthful heart:
No more shall envious misses pine
At charms now flown, that once were thine
No more, since you so ill behave,
Shall injured Oberon be your slave.

There is one word which I could wish had not been there though it is

prettily excused afterwards. The next day my Lady Suffolk desired I would write her a patent for appointing Lady Temple poet laureate to the fairies. I was excessively out of order with a pain in my stomach, which I had had for ten days, and was fitter to write verses like a Poet Laureate, than for making one; however, I was going home to dinner alone, and at six I sent her some lines, which you ought to have seen how sick I was, to excuse; but first I must tell you my tale methodically. The next morning by nine o'clock Miss Hotham (she must forgive me twenty years hence for saying she was eleven, for I recollect she is but ten), arrived at Lady Temple's, her face and neck all spotted with saffron, and limping. "Oh, Madam!" said she, "I am undone for ever if you do not assist me!" "Lord, child," cried my Lady Temple, "what is the matter?" thinking she had hurt herself, or lost the ring, and that she was stolen out before her aunt was up. "Oh, Madam," said the girl, "nobody but you can assist me!" My Lady Temple protests the child acted her part so well as to deceive her. "What can I do for you?" "Dear Madam, take this load from my back; nobody but you can." Lady Temple turned her round, and upon her back was tied a child's waggon. In it were three tiny purses of blue velvet; in one of them a silver cup, in another a crown of laurel, and in the third four new silver pennies, with the patent, signed at top, "Oberon Imperator;" and two sheets of warrants strung together with blue silk according to form; and at top an office seal of wax and a chaplet of cut paper on it. The Warrants were these:--

From the Royal Mews:

A waggon with the draught horses, delivered by command without fee.

From the Lord Chamberlain's Office:

A warrant with the royal sign manual, delivered by command without fee, being first entered in the office books.

From the Lord Steward's Office:

A butt of sack, delivered without fee or gratuity, with an order for returning the cask for the use of the office, by command.

From the Great Wardrobe:

Three velvet bags, delivered without fee, by command.

From the Treasurer of the Household's Office:

A year's salary paid free from land-tax, poundage, or any other deduction whatever by command.

From the Jewel Office:

A silver butt, a silver cup, a wreath of bays, by command without fee.

Then came the Patent:

By these presents be it known,
To all who bend before our throne,
Fays and fairies, elves and sprites,
Beauteous dames and gallant knights,
That we, Oberon the grand,
Emperor of fairy land,
King of moonshine, prince of dreams,
Lord of Aganippe's streams,
Baron of the dimpled isles

That lie in pretty maiden's smiles,
Arch-treasurer of all the graces
Dispersed through fifty lovely faces,
Sovereign of the slipper's order,
With all the rites thereon that border,
Defender of the sylphic faith,
Declare--and thus your monarch saith:
Whereas there is a noble dame,
Whom mortals Countess Temple name,
To whom ourself did erst impart
The choicest secrets of our art,
Taught her to tune the harmonious line
To our own melody divine,
Taught her the graceful negligence,
Which, scorning art and veiling sense,
Achieves that conquest o'er the heart
Sense seldom gains, and never art:
This lady, 'tis our royal will
Our laureate's vacant seat should fill;
A chaplet of immortal bays
Shall crown her brow and guard her lays,
Of nectar sack an acorn cup
Be at her board each year filled up;
And as each quarter feast comes round
A silver penny shall be found
Within the compass of her shoe--
And so we bid you all adieu!

Given at our palace of Cowslip Castle, the shortest night of the year.

OBERON.

And underneath,

HOTHAMINA.

How shall I tell you the greatest curiosity of the story? The whole plan and execution of the second act was laid and adjusted by my Lady Suffolk herself and Will. Chetwynd, Master of the Mint, Lord Bolingbroke's Oroonoko-Chetwynd;[1] he fourscore, she past seventy-six; and, what is more, much worse than I was, for added to her deafness, she has been confined these three weeks with the gout in her eyes, and was actually then in misery, and had been without sleep. What spirits, and cleverness, and imagination, at that age, and under those afflicting circumstances! You reconnoitre her old court knowledge, how charmingly she has applied it! Do you wonder I pass so many hours and evenings with her? Alas! I had like to have lost her this morning! They had poulticed her feet to draw the gout downwards, and began to succeed yesterday, but to-day it flew up into her head, and she was almost in convulsions with the agony, and screamed dreadfully; proof enough how ill she was, for her patience and good breeding makes her for ever sink and conceal what she feels. This evening the gout has been driven back to her foot, and I trust she is out of danger. Her loss will be irreparable to me at Twickenham, where she is by far the most rational and agreeable company I have.

[Footnote 1: Oroonoko-Chetwynd, M.P. for Plymouth. He was called Oroonoko and sometimes "Black Will," from his dark complexion.]

I don't tell you that the Hereditary Prince [of Brunswick][1] is still expected and not arrived. A royal wedding would be a flat episode after a real fairy tale, though the bridegroom is a hero. I have not seen your brother General yet, but have called on him, When come you yourself? Never mind the town and its filthy politics; we can go to the

Gallery at Strawberry--stay, I don't know whether we can or not, my hill is almost drowned, I don't know how your mountain is--well, we can take a boat, and always be gay there; I wish we may be so at seventy-six and eighty! I abominate politics more and more; we had glories, and would not keep them: well! content, that there was an end of blood; then perks prerogative its ass's ears up; we are always to be saving our liberties, and then staking them again! 'Tis wearisome! I hate the discussion, and yet one cannot always sit at a gaming-table and never make a bet. I wish for nothing, I care not a straw for the inns or the outs; I determine never to think of them, yet the contagion catches one; can you tell anything that will prevent infection? Well then, here I swear,--no, I won't swear, one always breaks one's oath. Oh, that I had been born to love a court like Sir William Breton! I should have lived and died with the comfort of thinking that courts there will be to all eternity, and the liberty of my country would never once have ruffled my smile, or spoiled my bow. I envy Sir William. Good night!

[Footnote 1: The Duke of Brunswick, who was mortally wounded in 1806 at the battle of Jena. He had come, as is mentioned in the next letter, to marry the King's sister.]

MARRIAGE OF THE PRINCE OF BRUNSWICK: HIS POPULARITY.

TO SIR HORACE MANN.

ARLINGTON STREET, _Jan._ 18, 1764.

Shall I tell you of all our crowds, and balls, and embroideries? Don't I grow too old to describe drawing-rooms? Surely I do, when I find myself too old to go into them. I forswore puppet-shows at the last coronation, and have kept my word to myself. However, being bound by a prior vow, to keep up the acquaintance between you and your own country, I will show you, what by the way I have not seen myself, the Prince of Brunswick. He arrived at Somerset House last Friday evening; at Chelmsford a quaker walked into the room, _did_ pull off his hat, and said, "Friend, my religion forbids me to fight, but I honour those that fight well." The Prince, though he does not speak English, understands it enough to be pleased with the compliment. He received another, very flattering. As he went next morning to St. James's, he spied in the crowd one of Elliot's light-horse and kissed his hand to the man. "What!" said the populace, "does he know you?" "Yes," replied the man; "he once led me into a scrape, which nothing but himself could have brought me out of again." You may guess how much this added to the Prince's popularity, which was at high-water mark before.

When he had visited the King and Queen, he went to the Princess Dowager at Leicester House, and saw his mistress. He is very _galant_, and professes great satisfaction in his fortune, for he had not even seen her picture. He carries his good-breeding so far as to declare he would have returned unmarried, if she had not pleased him. He has had levees and dinners at Somerset House; to the latter, company was named for him. On Monday evening they were married by the Archbishop in the great drawing-room, with little ceremony; supped, and lay at Leicester House. Yesterday morning was a drawing-room at St. James's, and a ball at night; both repeated to-day, for the Queen's birthday. On Thursday they go to the play; on Friday the Queen gives them a ball and dinner at her house; on Saturday they dine with the Princess at Kew, and return for the Opera; and on Wednesday--why, they make their bow and curtsy, and sail.

The Prince has pleased everybody; his manner is thought sensible and engaging; his person slim, genteel, and handsome enough; that is, not at all handsome, but martial, agreeably weather-worn. I should be able to swear to all this on Saturday, when I intend to see him; but, alas! the

post departs on Friday, and, however material my testimony may be, he must want it.

GAMBLING QUARRELS--MR. CONWAY'S SPEECH.

TO THE EARL OF HERTFORD.

ARLINGTON STREET, _Feb._ 6, 1764.

You have, I hope, long before this, my dear lord, received the immense letter that I sent you by old Monin. It explained much, and announced most part of which has already happened; for you will observe that when I tell you anything very positively, it is on good intelligence. I have another much bigger secret for you, but that will be delivered to you by word of mouth. I am not a little impatient for the long letter you promised me. In the mean time thank you for the account you give me of the King's extreme civility to you. It is like yourself to dwell on that, and to say little of M. de Chaulnes's dirty behaviour; but Monsieur and Madame de Guerchy have told your brother and me all the particulars.

I was but too good a prophet when I warned you to expect new extravagances from the Duc de Chaulnes's son. Some weeks ago he lost five hundred pounds to one Virette, an equivocal being, that you remember here. Paolucci, the Modenese minister, who is not in the odour of honesty, was of the party. The Duc de Pecquigny said to the latter, "Monsieur, ne jouez plus avec lui, si vous n'etes pas de moitie." So far was very well. On Saturday, at the Macaroni Club (which is composed of all the travelled young men who wear long curls and spying glasses), they played again: the Duc lost, but not much. In the passage at the Opera, the Duc saw Mr. Stuart talking to Virette, and told the former that Virette was a coquin, a fripon, &c., &c. Virette retired, saying only, "Voila un fou." The Duc then desired Lord Tavistock to come and see him fight Virette, but the Marquis desired to be excused. After the Opera, Virette went to the Duc's lodgings, but found him gone to make his complaint to Monsieur de Guerchy, whither he followed him; and farther this deponent knoweth not. I pity the Count [de Guerchy], who is one of the best-natured amiable men in the world, for having this absurd boy upon his hands!

Well! now for a little politics. The Cider Bill has not answered to the minority, though they ran the ministry hard; but last Friday was extraordinary. George Grenville was pushed upon some Navy Bills. I don't understand a syllable, you know, of money and accounts; but whatever was the matter, he was driven from entrenchment to entrenchment by Baker and Charles Townshend. After that affair was over, and many gone away, Sir W. Meredith moved for the depositions on which the warrant against Wilkes had been granted. The Ministers complained of the motion being made so late in the day; called it a surprise; and Rigby moved to adjourn, which was carried but by 73 to 60. Had a surprise been intended, you may imagine the minority would have been better provided with numbers; but it certainly had not been concerted: however, a majority, shrunk to thirteen, frightened them out of the small senses they possess. Heaven, Earth, and the Treasury, were moved to recover their ground to-day, when the question was renewed. For about two hours the debate hobbled on very lamely, when on a sudden your brother rose, and made such a speech^[1]--but I wish anybody was to give you the account except me, whom you will think partial: but you will hear enough of it, to confirm anything I can say. Imagine fire, rapidity, argument, knowledge, wit, ridicule, grace, spirit; all pouring like a torrent, but without clashing. Imagine the House in a tumult of continued applause, imagine the Ministers thunderstruck; lawyers abashed and almost blushing, for it was on their quibbles and evasions he fell most heavily, at the same time answering a whole session of arguments on the

side of the court. No, it was unique; you can neither conceive it, nor the exclamations it occasioned. Ellis, the Forlorn Hope, Ellis presented himself in the gap, till the ministers could recover themselves, when on a sudden Lord George Sackville led up the Blues; spoke with as much warmth as your brother had, and with great force continued the attack which he had begun. Did not I tell you he would take this part? I was made privy to it; but this is far from all you are to expect. Lord North in vain rumbled about his mustard-bowl, and endeavoured alone to outroar a whole party: him and Forrester, Charles Townshend took up, but less well than usual. His jealousy of your brother's success, which was very evident, did not help him to shine. There were several other speeches, and, upon the whole, it was a capital debate; but Plutus is so much more persuasive an orator than your brother or Lord George, that we divided but 122 against 217. Lord Strange, who had agreed to the question, did not dare to vote for it, and declared off; and George Townshend, who had actually voted for it on Friday, now voted against us. Well! upon the whole, I heartily wish this administration may last: both their characters and abilities are so contemptible, that I am sure we can be in no danger from prerogative when trusted to such hands!

[Footnote 1: Walpole must have exaggerated the merits of this speech; for Conway was never remarkable for eloquence. Indeed, Walpole himself, in his "Memoirs of George II.," quotes Mr. Hutchinson, the Prime Serjeant in Ireland, contrasting him with Lord G. Sackville, "Lord George having parts, but no integrity; Conway integrity, but no parts: and now they were governed by one who had neither." And Walpole's comment on this comparison is: "There was more wit than truth in this description. Conway's parts, though not brilliant, were solid" (vol. ii. p. 246). In his "Life of Pitt" Lord Stanhope describes him as "a man who, in the course of a long public life, had shown little vigour or decision, but who was much respected for his honourable character and moderate counsels" (c. 5).]

Before I have done with Charles Townshend, I must tell you one of his admirable bon mots. Miss Draycote, the great fortune, is grown very fat; he says her tonnage is become equal to her poundage.

ACCOUNT OF THE DEBATE ON THE GENERAL WARRANT.

TO THE EARL OF HERTFORD.

ARLINGTON STREET, Wednesday, Feb. 15, 1764.

My dear Lord,--You ought to be witness to the fatigue I am suffering, before you can estimate the merit I have in being writing to you at this moment. Cast up eleven hours in the House of Commons on Monday, and above seventeen hours yesterday,--ay, seventeen at length,--and then you may guess if I am tired! nay, you must add seventeen hours that I may possibly be there on Friday, and then calculate if I am weary. In short, yesterday was the longest day ever known in the House of Commons--why, on the Westminster election at the end of my father's reign, I was at home by six. On Alexander Murray's affair, I believe, by five--on the militia, twenty people, I think, sat till six, but then they were only among themselves, no heat, no noise, no roaring. It was half an hour after seven this morning before I was at home. Think of that, and then brag of your French parliaments!

What is ten times greater, Leonidas and the Spartan minority did not make such a stand at Thermopylae, as we did. Do you know, we had like to have been the majority? Xerxes[1] is frightened out of his senses; Sysigambis[1] has sent an express to Luton to forbid Phraates[1] coming to town to-morrow; Norton's[2] impudence has forsaken him; Bishop Warburton is at this moment reinstating Mr. Pitt's name in the dedication to his Sermons, which he had expunged for Sandwich's; and

Sandwich himself is--at Paris, perhaps, by this time, for the first thing that I expect to hear to-morrow is, that he is gone off.

[Footnote 1: "_Xerxes, Sysigambis, Phraates_" These names contain allusions to one of Mdlle. Scuderi's novels, which, as D'Israeli remarks, are "representations of what passed at the Court of France"; but in this letter the scene of action is transferred to England. Xerxes is George III.; Sysigambis, the Princess Dowager; and Phraates is Lord Bute.]

[Footnote 2: Sir Fletcher Norton, the Speaker.]

Now are you mortally angry with me for trifling with you, and not telling you at once the particulars of this _almost-revolution_? You may be angry, but I shall take my own time, and shall give myself what airs I please both to you, my Lord Ambassador, and to you, my Lord Secretary of State, who will, I suppose, open this letter--if you have courage enough left. In the first place, I assume all the impertinence of a prophet,--aye, of that great curiosity, a prophet, who really prophesied before the event, and whose predictions have been accomplished. Have I, or have I not, announced to you the unexpected blows that would be given to the administration?--come, I will lay aside my dignity, and satisfy your impatience. There's moderation.

We sat all Monday hearing evidence against Mr. Wood,[1] that dirty wretch Webb, and the messengers, for their illegal proceedings against Mr. Wilkes. At midnight, Mr. Grenville offered us to adjourn or proceed. Mr. Pitt humbly begged not to eat or sleep till so great a point should be decided. On a division, in which though many said _aye_ to adjourning, nobody would go out for fear of losing their seats, it was carried by 379 to 31, for proceeding--and then--half the House went away. The ministers representing the indecency of this, and Fitzherbert saying that many were within call, Stanley observed, that after voting against adjournment, a third part had adjourned themselves, when, instead of being within _call_, they ought to have been within _hearing_ ; this was unanswerable, and we adjourned.

[Footnote 1: Mr. Wood and Mr. Webb were the Under-Secretary of State and the Solicitor of the Treasury; and, as such, the officers chiefly responsible for the _form_ of the warrant complained of.]

Yesterday we fell to again. It was one in the morning before the evidence was closed. Carrington, the messenger, was alone examined for seven hours. This old man, the cleverest of all ministerial terriers, was pleased with recounting his achievements, yet perfectly guarded and betraying nothing. However, the _arcana imperii_ have been wofully laid open.

I have heard Garrick, and other players, give themselves airs of fatigue after a long part--think of the Speaker, nay, think of the clerks taking most correct minutes for sixteen hours, and reading them over to every witness; and then let me hear of fatigue! Do you know, not only my Lord Temple,[1]--who you may swear never budged as spectator,--but old Will Chetwynd, now past eighty, and who had walked to the House, did not stir a single moment out of his place, from three in the afternoon till the division at seven in the morning. Nay, we had _patriotesses_, too, who stayed out the whole: Lady Rockingham and Lady Sondes the first day; both again the second day, with Miss Mary Pelham, Mrs. Fitzroy, and the Duchess of Richmond, as patriot as any of us. Lady Mary Coke, Mrs. George Pitt, and Lady Pembroke, came after the Opera, but I think did not stay above seven or eight hours at most.

[Footnote 1: Lord Temple was Mr. Pitt's brother-in-law, a restless and impracticable intriguer. He had some such especial power of influencing Mr. Pitt--who, it is supposed, must have been under some pecuniary

obligation to him--that he was able the next year to prevent his accepting the office of Prime Minister when the King pressed it on him.]

At one, Sir W. Meredith moved a resolution of the illegality of the Warrant, and opened it well. He was seconded by old Darlington's brother, a convert to us. Mr. Wood, who had shone the preceding day by great modesty, decency, and ingenuity, forfeited these merits a good deal by starting up, (according to a Ministerial plan,) and very arrogantly, and repeatedly in the night, demanding justice and a previous acquittal, and telling the House he scorned to accept being merely _excused_; to which Mr. Pitt replied, that if he disdained to be _excused_, he would deserve to be _censured_. Mr. Charles Yorke (who, with his family, have come roundly to us for support against the Duke of Bedford on the Marriage Bill) proposed to adjourn. Grenville and the ministry would have agreed to adjourn the debate on the great question itself, but declared they would push this acquittal. This they announced haughtily enough--for as yet, they did not doubt of their strength. Lord Frederick Campbell was the most impetuous of all, so little he foresaw how much _wiser_ it would be to follow your brother. Pitt made a short speech, excellently argumentative, and not bombast, nor tedious, nor deviating from the question. He was supported by your brother, and Charles Townshend, and Lord George; the two last of whom are strangely firm, now they are got under the cannon of your brother:--Charles, who, as he must be extraordinary, is now so in romantic nicety of honour. His father, who is dying, or dead, at Bath, and from whom he hopes two thousand a year, has sent for him. He has refused to go--lest his _steadiness_ should be questioned. At a quarter after four we divided. _Our_ cry was so loud, that both we and the ministers thought we had carried it. It is not to be painted, the dismay of the latter--in good truth not without reason, for _we_ were 197, they but 207. Your experience can tell you, that a majority of _but_ ten is a defeat. Amidst a great defection from them, was even a white staff, Lord Charles Spencer--now you know still more of what I told you was preparing for them!

Crest-fallen, the ministers then proposed simply to discharge the complaint; but the plumes which they had dropped, Pitt soon placed in his own beaver. He broke out on liberty, and, indeed, on whatever he pleased, uninterrupted. Rigby sat feeling the vice-treasureship slipping from under him. Nugent was not less pensive--Lord Strange, though not interested, did not like it. Everybody was too much taken up with his own concerns, or too much daunted, to give the least disturbance to the Pindaric. Grenville, however, dropped a few words, which did but heighten the flame. Pitt, with less modesty than ever he showed, pronounced a panegyric on his own administration, and from thence broke out on the _dismissal of officers_. This increased the roar from us. Grenville replied, and very finely, very pathetically, very animated. He painted Wilkes and faction, and, with very little truth, denied the charge of menaces to officers. At that moment, General A'Court walked up the House--think what an impression such an incident must make, when passions, hopes, and fears, were all afloat--think, too, how your brother and I, had we been ungenerous, could have added to these sensations! There was a man not so delicate. Colonel Barre rose--and this attended with a striking circumstance; Sir Edward Deering, one of _our_ noisy fools, called out, "_Mr. Barre." [1] The latter seized the thought with admirable quickness, and said to the Speaker, who, in pointing to him, had called him _Colonel_, "I beg your pardon, Sir, you have pointed to me by a title I have no right to," and then made a very artful and pathetic speech on his own services and dismissal; with nothing bad but an awkward attempt towards an excuse to Mr. Pitt for his former behaviour. Lord North, who will not lose his _bellow_, though he may lose his place, endeavoured to roar up the courage of his comrades, but it would not do--the House grew tired, and we again divided at seven for adjournment; some of our people were gone, and we remained but 184, they 208; however, you will allow our affairs are mended, when we say,

but 184. _We_ then came away, and left the ministers to satisfy Wood, Webb, and themselves, as well as they could. It was eight this morning before I was in bed; and considering that, this is no very short letter. Mr. Pitt bore the fatigue with his usual spirit--and even old Onslow, the late Speaker, was sitting up, anxious for the event.

[Footnote 1: Mr. Barre had lately been dismissed from the office of Adjutant-General, on account of some of his votes in Parliament. In 1784 he was appointed Clerk of the Rolls, a place worth above £3,000 a year, by Mr. Pitt, who, with extraordinary disinterestedness, forbore from taking it himself, that he might relieve the nation from a pension of similar amount which had been improperly conferred on the Colonel by Lord Rockingham.]

On Friday we are to have the great question, which would prevent my writing; and to-morrow I dine with Guerchy, at the Duke of Grafton's, besides twenty other engagements. To-day I have shut myself up; for with writing this, and taking notes yesterday all day, and all night, I have not an eye left to see out of--nay, for once in my life, I shall go to bed at ten o'clock....

Adieu! pray tell Mr. Hume that I am ashamed to be thus writing the history of England, when he is with you!

LORD CLIVE--MR. HAMILTON, AMBASSADOR TO NAPLES--SPEECH OF LOUIS XV.
TO SIR HORACE MANN.

STRAWBERRY HILL, _June_ 8, 1764.

Your Red Riband is certainly postponed. There was but one vacant, which was promised to General Draper, who, when he thought he felt the sword dubbing his shoulder, was told that my Lord Clive could not conquer the Indies a second time without being a Knight of the Bath. This, however, I think will be but a short parenthesis, for I expect that _heaven-born hero_[1] to return from whence he came, instead of bringing hither all the Mogul's pearls and rubies. Yet, before that happens there will probably be other vacancies to content both Draper and you.

[Footnote 1: "That _heaven-born hero_" had been Lord Chatham's description of Lord Clive.]

You have a new neighbour coming to you, Mr. William Hamilton,[1] one of the King's equerries, who succeeds Sir James Gray at Naples. Hamilton is a friend of mine, is son of Lady Archibald, and was aide-de-camp to Mr. Conway. He is picture-mad, and will ruin himself in virtu-land. His wife is as musical as he is connoisseur, but she is dying of an asthma.

[Footnote 1: Mr. W. Hamilton, afterwards Sir William, was the husband of the celebrated Lady Hamilton.]

I have never heard of the present[1] you mention of the box of essences. The secrets of that prison-house do not easily transpire, and the merit of any offering is generally assumed, I believe, by the officiating priests.

[Footnote 1: A present from Sir Horace, I believe, to the Queen.--WALPOLE.]

Lord Tavistock is to be married to-morrow to Lady Elizabeth Keppel, Lord Albemarle's sister.

I love to tell you an anecdote of any of our old acquaintance, and I have now a delightful one, relating, yet indirectly, to one of them. You

know, to be sure, that Madame de Craon's daughter, Madame de Boufflers, has the greatest power with King Stanislaus. Our old friend the Princess de Craon goes seldom to Luneville for this reason, not enduring to see her daughter on that throne which she so long filled with absolute empire. But Madame de Boufflers, who, from his Majesty's age, cannot occupy all the places in the palace that her mother filled, indemnifies herself with his Majesty's Chancellor. One day the lively old monarch said, "Regardez, quel joli petit pied, et la belle jambe! Mon Chancelier vous dira le reste." You know this is the form when a King of France says a few words to his Parliament, and then refers them to his chancellor. I expect to hear a great deal soon of the princess, for Mr. Churchill and my sister are going to settle at Nancy for some time. Adieu!

THE KING OF POLAND--CATHERINE OF RUSSIA.

TO SIR HORACE MANN.

STRAWBERRY HILL, Aug. 13, 1764.

I am afraid it is some thousands of days since I wrote to you; but woe is me! how could I help it? Summer will be summer, and peace peace. It is not the fashion to be married, or die in the former, nor to kill or be killed in the latter; and pray recollect if those are not the sources of correspondence. You may perhaps put in a caveat against my plea of peace, and quote Turk's Island^[1] upon me; why, to be sure the parenthesis is a little hostile, but we are like a good wife, and can wink at what we don't like to see; besides, the French, like a sensible husband, that has made a slip, have promised us a new topknot, so we have kissed and are very good friends.

[Footnote 1: Turk's Island, called also Tortuga, is a small island near St. Domingo, of which a French squadron had dispossessed some British settlers; but the French Government disavowed the act, and compensated the settlers.]

The Duke of York returned very abruptly. The town talks of remittances stopped; but as I know nothing of the matter, and you are not only a minister but have the honour of his good graces, I do not pretend to tell you what to be sure you know better than I do.

Old Sir John Barnard is dead, which he had been to the world for some time; and Mr. Legge. The latter, who was heartily in the minority, said cheerfully just before he died, "that he was going to the majority."

Let us talk a little of the north. Count Poniatowski, with whom I was acquainted when he was here, is King of Poland, and calls himself Stanislaus the Second. This is the sole instance, I believe, upon record, of a second of a name being on the throne while the first was living without having contributed to dethrone him.^[1] Old Stanislaus lives to see a line of successors, like Macbeth in the cave of the witches. So much for Poland; don't let us go farther north; we shall find there Alecto herself. I have almost wept for poor Ivan! I shall soon begin to believe that Richard III. murdered as many folks as the Lancastrian historians say he did. I expect that this Fury will poison her son next, lest Semiramis should have the bloody honour of having been more unnatural. As Voltaire has unpoisoned so many persons of former ages, methinks he ought to do as much for the present time, and assure posterity that there never was such a lamb as Catherine II., and that, so far from assassinating her own husband and Czar Ivan,^[2] she wept over every chicken that she had for dinner. How crimes, like fashions, flit from clime to clime! Murder reigns under the Pole, while you, who are in the very town where Catherine de' Medici was born, and within a stone's throw of Rome, where Borgia and his holy father sent

cardinals to the other world by hecatombs, are surprised to hear that there is such an instrument as a stiletto. The papal is now a mere gouty chair, and the good old souls don't even waddle out of it to get a bastard.

[Footnote 1: The first was Stanislaus Leczinski, father of the Queen of France. He had been driven from Poland by Peter the Great after the overthrow of Charles XII. of Sweden (_v. infra_, Letter 90).]

[Footnote 2: Ivan, the Czar who had been deposed by the former Czarina, Elizabeth, had recently been murdered, while trying to escape from the confinement in which he had been so long detained.]

Well, good night! I have no more monarchs to chat over; all the rest are the most Catholic or most Christian, or most something or other that is divine; and you know one can never talk long about folks that are only excellent. One can say no more about Stanislaus _the first_ than that he is the best of beings. I mean, unless they do not deserve it, and then their flatterers can hold forth upon their virtues by the hour.

MADAME DE BOUFFLERS' WRITINGS--KING JAMES'S JOURNAL.
TO THE EARL OF HERTFORD.

STRAWBERRY HILL, _Oct._ 5, 1764.

My dear Lord,--Though I wrote to you but a few days ago, I must trouble you with another line now. Dr. Blanchard, a Cambridge divine, and who has a good paternal estate in Yorkshire, is on his travels, which he performs as a gentleman; and, therefore, wishes not to have his profession noticed. He is very desirous of paying his respects to you, and of being countenanced by you while he stays at Paris. It will much oblige a particular friend of mine, and consequently me, if you will favour him with your attention. Everybody experiences your goodness, but in the present case I wish to attribute it a little to my request.

I asked you about two books, ascribed to Madame de Boufflers. If they are hers, I should be glad to know where she found, that Oliver Cromwell took orders and went over to Holland to fight the Dutch. As she has been on the spot where he reigned (which is generally very strong evidence), her countrymen will believe her in spite of our teeth; and Voltaire, who loves all anecdotes that never happened, _because_ they prove the manners of the times, will hurry it into the first history he publishes. I, therefore, enter my caveat against it; not as interested for Oliver's character, but to save the world from one more fable. I know Madame de Boufflers will attribute this scruple to my partiality to Cromwell (and, to be sure, if we must be ridden, there is some satisfaction when the man knows how to ride). I remember one night at the Duke of Grafton's, a bust of Cromwell was produced: Madame de Boufflers, without uttering a syllable, gave me the most speaking look imaginable, as much as to say, "Is it possible you can admire this man!" _Apropos_: I am sorry to say the reports do not cease about the separation, and yet I have heard nothing that confirms it.

I once begged you to send me a book in three volumes, called "Essais sur les Moeurs;" forgive me if I put you in mind of it, and request you to send me that, or any other new book. I am wofully in want of reading, and sick to death of all our political stuff, which, as the Parliament is happily at the distance of three months, I would fain forget till I cannot help hearing of it. I am reduced to Guicciardin, and though the evenings are so long, I cannot get through one of his periods between dinner and supper. They tell me Mr. Hume has had sight of King James's journal;[1] I wish I could see all the trifling passages that he will not deign to admit into History. I do not love great folks till they

have pulled off their buskins and put on their slippers, because I do not care sixpence for what they would be thought, but for what they are.

[Footnote 1: This journal is understood to have been destroyed in the course of the French Revolution, but it had not only been previously seen by Hume, as Walpole mentions here, but Mr. Fox had also had access to it, and had made some notes or extracts from it, which were subsequently communicated to Lord Macaulay when he carried out the design of writing a "History of the Revolution of 1688," which Mr. Fox had contemplated.]

Mr. Elliot brings us woful accounts of the French ladies, of the decency of their conversation, and the nastiness of their behaviour.

Nobody is dead, married, or gone mad, since my last. Adieu!...

END OF VOL. I.

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