

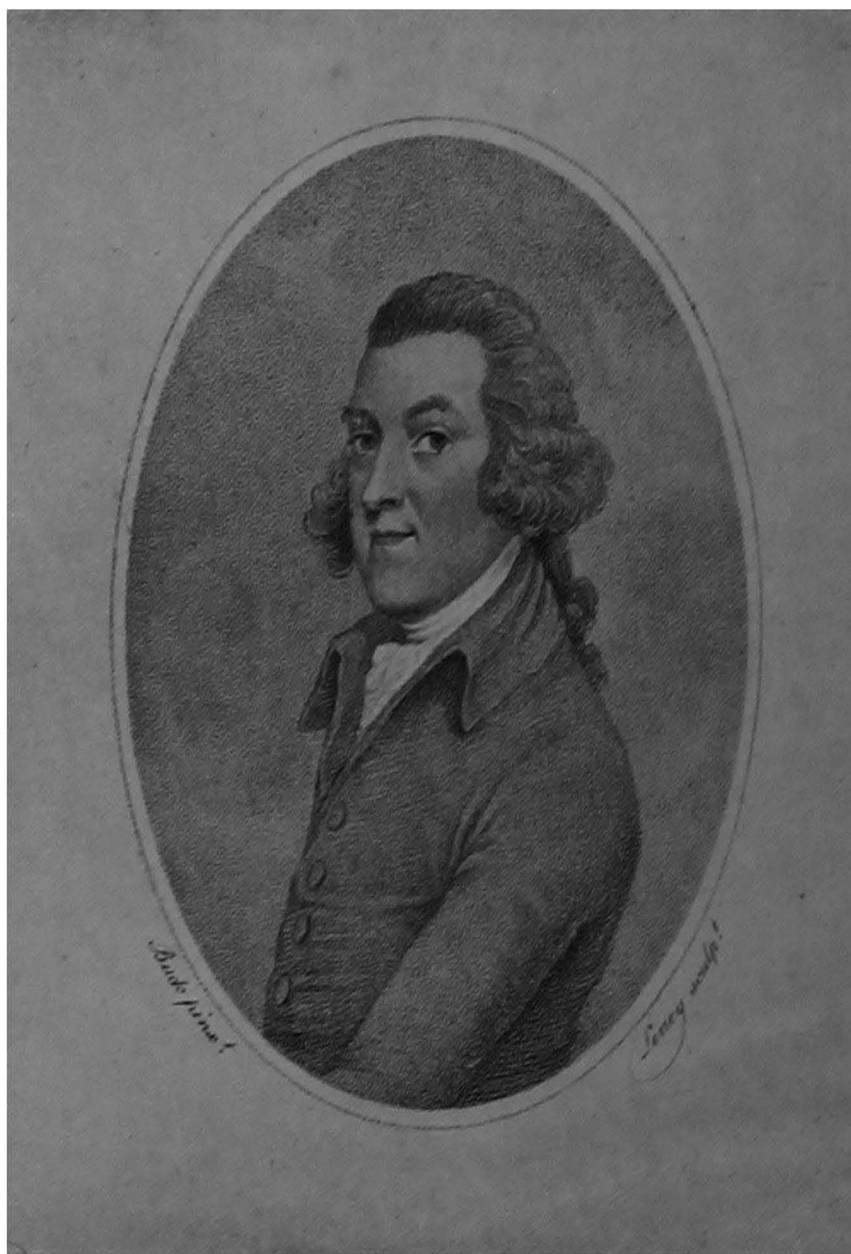
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EDWARD JERNINGHAM  
AND HIS FRIENDS



**EDWARD JERNINGHAM**

*[Frontispiece.]*

**EDWARD JERNINGHAM  
AND HIS FRIENDS**

**A SERIES OF EIGHTEENTH CENTURY LETTERS**

**EDITED BY**

**LEWIS BETTANY**

**LONDON  
CHATTO & WINDUS.**

**1919**



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TO  
**LADY JERNINGHAM**

## PREFACE

THE originals of the correspondence here presented to the public were, until recent years, preserved at Costessey Park, Norfolk, the ancient seat of the Jerningham family, and are the property of Sir Henry Stafford Jerningham, the present Baronet. The letters may be left, I hope, to speak for themselves; but, in order to meet in advance the objection that they are overloaded with notes, I take the liberty of stating that these notes are to be regarded as an integral part of "Edward Jerningham and His Friends," having been added with a view to supplementing the merely allusive account which the letters afford of the society in which the poet and his correspondents lived and moved. I should perhaps add that, while the first chapter of the book consists in letters written *by* Edward Jerningham, the eleven remaining chapters are devoted exclusively to letters written *to* him.

LEWIS BETTANY.

*January 10th, 1919.*

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I

EDWARD JERNINGHAM

AN ACCOUNT OF EDWARD JERNINGHAM (1737-1812), POET, DRAMATIST, AND MAN OF FASHION

EDWARD JERNINGHAM was born in 1737, the 3rd son of Sir George Jerningham, 5th Baronet, of Costessey Park, Norfolk, by his wife Mary, eldest daughter and heiress of Francis Plowden, of Plowden, Shropshire. In his boyhood his parents lived at Cambrai, in the North of France, and being devout Catholics, they sent their son at the age of ten to be educated at Catholic schools, first at the English College at Douai, founded by Cardinal Allen, and then at the University of Paris, under the tuition of Dr. Howard. Owing to this circumstance Edward Jerningham, besides picking up a fair amount of Latin and some Greek, became as familiar with the French and Italian languages as with his own. But he failed to cleave to his family's faith. Loving always to dabble in theological matters and to correspond with ministers of all denominations, he made early in life a study of the differences separating the Catholic and Reformed Churches, with the result that he became a convert to Protestantism, in which faith he remained till his death. He seems to have come to England in September, 1761, attracted by the coronation of King George III., and provided with a letter of introduction to Martha Blount, "the favourite of Pope." On the death of his father, January 21st, 1774, he set up house with his mother in Grosvenor Square, and lived with her there till her death in September, 1785. His time he seems to have spent in writing verse, in practising upon the harp, in frequenting the opera and the theatre, in conducting flirtations of a more or less Platonic character with various young women, and in corresponding with and visiting his aristocratic friends. These included the Earl of Chesterfield, the Earl of Carlisle, Earl Harcourt, the Countess of Ailesbury, the Countess of Mount Edgcumbe, the Countess of Jersey, and Horace Walpole. In view, however, of the fact that Chesterfield was forty-three years older than Jerningham, and that a single letter only of his is included in the poet's correspondence, in view too of the deafness and other disorders which made the great letter-



writer's last years a torment to himself and a distress to his friends, I cannot think that the friendship subsisting between the Earl and Jerningham can be regarded as having ever ripened into intimacy. With the Prince of Wales, however, Jerningham seems to have been on intimate terms. At Carlton House, and at the Pavilion, Brighton, where he arranged the library, he saw a good deal of his Royal Highness about the time of the Prince's liaison with Lady Jersey and marriage to the Princess Caroline. And when he died at Green Street, Grosvenor Square, on November 17th, 1812, it was with the knowledge that the Regent had made constant enquiries about his health, and with the satisfaction of having received the Sacrament according to the rites of the Church of England. All through his life Jerningham dabbled in poetry. His earliest productions, "The Magdalens" and "The Nunnery," are both written in the metre of Gray's "Elegy," and are not only slavish imitations of that poem, but such flagrant and line-for-line plagiarisms of it, that they cannot be said to exist as independent works. His first literary success was a poem on the Foundling Hospital, which, according to Jonas Hanway, greatly promoted the establishment of that institution. His best efforts, however, are to be found in "Enthusiasm," a sort of didactic poem, which contains some vigorous verse, and in "The Rise and Progress of the Scandinavian Poetry," an attempt at an epic which, dedicated to his friend the Earl of Orford, and showing painfully enough his incapacity for maintaining any prolonged poetical flight, surprises notwithstanding by exhibiting one or two really sonorous and imaginative lines. Of his plays little need be said. "The Welsh Heiress," though inadequate to the requirements of the stage, is quite an amusing comedy for the closet. But his tragedies, "Margaret of Anjou" and "The Siege of Berwick," are more lifeless even than those of Mason, or than those of his friend Carlisle. Jerningham was no favourite with the critics or the satirists. Gifford, in "The Baviad," depicted him as "Snivelling Jerningham," and as weeping, at the age of fifty, "o'er love-lorn oxen and deserted sheep." Mathias ridiculed him in "The Pursuits of Literature," remarking, "I am told that . . . Mr. Jerningham (poor man!) still continues sillier than his sheep." Byron, however, in return for kindnesses received from him as a boy, refrained from pillorying him in "English Bards and Scotch Reviewers." But Macaulay, in his review of Madame D'Arblay's "Diary and Letters," said that Jerningham's verses were fit to be put into Lady Miller's Vase at Bath Easton, ignorant presumably of the fact that this dubious honour was one which they had often actually received. Of Jerningham's discussions of ecclesiastical topics, excursions into

polemical theology, and translations from Bossuet's "Oraisons Funébres," I shall say nothing; I have read none of them save his essay on "Pulpit Eloquence," and his discourse on "The Mild Tenour of Christianity." But of his relations with women and of his acquaintance with men I must make a brief mention. Edward Jerningham seems to have formed lasting attachments to two women, to Lady Beauchamp Proctor, wife of Sir Thomas, and to Henrietta Dillon, niece to Lady Jerningham, and natural daughter of Charles, 12th Viscount Dillon. Neither attachment came to anything. Lady Beauchamp Proctor rejected the advances made by the poet with indignation, but not with contempt. Miss Dillon, acting on her aunt's advice, declined to marry him; but she kept up an association with him, so the present Viscount Dillon says, for twenty years, from 1783 to 1803. Otherwise Edward Jerningham's love-affairs seem to have been those of a not seriously regarded philanderer. Content to take the rôle of tame cat, he loved squiring young women about, entering into correspondence with them, and spicing such correspondence with a touch of sentiment; but, apparently, he never looked upon himself and they never looked upon him as a genuine *prétendant*. A couple of extracts from letters written to him by Miss Anne Beauclerk in 1789 will best illustrate the terms Jerningham kept with women twenty or thirty years his juniors. Writing on February 3rd, Miss Beauclerk says:—

"We lose much by not hearing daily from you the history of your transitory loves. Can you recollect how many you have had since last June? What is become of the little lady of the boat? Let us have some anecdotes of yourself, and some of the world."

Writing on November 23rd, she confesses:—

"Inured to your temporary neglects I was not much alarmed by your late silence, on your account indeed not at all. But, as I heard of you walking with a very pretty young lady, I did not know how far she might engage all your mind and attention; though I might guess for how long, and flattered myself that with the restoration of your reason would return the remembrance of your Banstead friends."

Whether among his numerous men acquaintances, drawn as they were from all ranks and professions, Edward Jerningham numbered an intimate friend is a point I have been unable to settle. This much, at least, is certain, that in the choice of his friends he went a course the very opposite to that which Boswell followed. He never deliberately tacked himself on to a great man; he felt no need of seeking the

highest type, provided he could get one fairly high. For instance, he knew Norton Nicholls, W. J. Temple, William Mason, Dr. Beattie, Joseph Warton, Richard Owen Cambridge, and Horace Walpole, all members of Gray's circle; yet he seems never to have known Gray himself. Again he knew such intimate friends of Johnson as Garrick, Reynolds, Dr. Burney, Dr. Percy, Sheridan, Boswell, Burke, and Windham, the last two possibly after Johnson's death. He knew hostesses whose assemblies Johnson frequented, such as Mrs. Montagu, Mrs. Vesey, Miss Elizabeth Harvey and Miss Monckton. He knew many of Johnson's women friends, Hannah More, Elizabeth Carter, Fanny Burney, and Helen Maria Williams. But Johnson himself he seems never to have met. And, if it be said that Horace Walpole, Chesterfield, Anna Seward, and three of his parson friends, Potter, Temple, and Stockdale, may have prejudiced him against Johnson, it may as fairly be urged that the only great man of letters he knew, Edmund Burke, would most assuredly have done his best to prejudice him in favour of the Doctor. The same reluctance against advancing from the circumference to the centre is shown by Jerningham in the case of Cowper. He knew Hayley and Romney, two of Cowper's intimate friends; but the acquaintance of the author of "The Task" he obviously never made. Probably he preferred being a little god himself to worshipping at the shrines of greater divinities. He was, in fact, regarded as patron by quite a number of self-constituted clients; and being seemingly a most good-natured and kind-hearted man, he was always prepared to strain his resources in order to do these clients good turns, a disposition which must have rendered his acquaintance with Lord Salisbury, the Chamberlain, and with four successive Viceroy's of Ireland<sup>1</sup> no small embarrassment to him. Jostling one another in Edward Jerningham's correspondence, these aspirants form a strange and a very mixed set. Young men wanting commissions in the Army; authors trying to get their books published; actresses seeking engagements from theatrical managers; vocalists craving the *éclat* of singing at the houses of fashionable women; hostesses asking him to call and to bring his harp with him; social climbers yearning for Royal patronage of their entertainments; clergymen, the most clamorous, persistent and versatile class of all, looking out for publishers, cadging for preferment, prepared to act as tutors, or desirous of being placed on the Commission of the Peace: these are the types of persons who seem to have made no small demands on the

<sup>1</sup> The first Marquis Townshend (1767-1772), the first Earl Harcourt (1772-1777), the second Earl of Buckinghamshire (1777-1780), the fifth Earl of Carlisle (1780-1782).

purse, the patience, and the influence of Edward Jerningham, the man of fashion. And other persons as unblushingly claimed his assistance as poet. Major Topham wanted him to write poems for "The World." Lady Miller was always worrying him for contributions to the Vase at Bath Easton. Mr. and Mrs. Temple expected him to commemorate their eldest son in an Elogy. And the Rev. Jonathan Boucher, Vicar of Epsom, had no sooner become a father than he earnestly demanded from him a "Genethliacon."<sup>1</sup> Mention of Boucher, a staunch loyalist, despite his friendship with General Washington, reminds me that in the American War of Independence Edward Jerningham, like his friends James Boswell and William Davies Shipley, Dean of St. Asaph, was an ardent pro-American. He was acquainted too with Lady Fawkener, who married Governor Pownall, and with Thomas Jefferson, author of the Declaration of American Independence, and President of the United States of America. Whether he ever came across Benjamin Franklin I cannot discover; but since he was known to Bishop Shipley's son he may well have met the Bishop's American friend.

Horace Walpole was possibly the most intimate friend Jerningham had; but though the great gossip mentions "the charming man" constantly in his letters, he says very little about him that is either memorable or illuminating. All this mention comes to amounts to little more than a statement that Walpole accepted the dedication of a poem called "The Swedish Curate" in 1773, and, though an old man of seventy-six at the time, went to Covent Garden to see the first performance of Jerningham's tragedy, "The Siege of Berwick," in 1793. A letter which Walpole wrote to Mary Berry on September 1st, 1795, is perhaps a little more informing. "At present [says the Earl of Orford] I have so little to say that I had better make my alphabet as tall as Jerningham's; though I have not his happy facility of making every sentence a *double entendre*. Mercy on us if he and Sophia were to correspond! They would have occasion, to use an expression of Lord Bacon's, to *speak without fig-leaves*. Some say the *Charming* will succeed Tommy Tyrwhit. I wish with all my heart he may! He will not offend by leaving his old friend, Madame de Maintenant,<sup>2</sup> nor displease by his abrupt *Sophisms*, congenial enough to the climate."

<sup>1</sup> As interpreted by Boucher, a "Genethliacon" seems to mean a didactic poem setting forth those educative influences under which the infant, whose training is the object of the poem, shall grow up a young man loyal to the Constitution in Church and State.

<sup>2</sup> The allusion is to the Countess of Jersey, who was expecting to welcome Jerningham as a colleague in the Prince of Wales's household.

The only portrait of Jerningham painted by a contemporary is that which we find in the pages of Fanny Burney's "Diary and Letters." Considering that the painter was an awkward, shy, plain, near-sighted young woman, gifted with the clever schoolgirl's faculty for spotting eccentricities of manner and superficial traits of character, but endowed with nothing of the real insight into mind and motive possessed by a genuine observer like, say, Jane Austen, I hold that the portrait is probably a pretty good likeness, due allowance being made for the fact that youngish or middle-aged men were never much attracted to Fanny Burney, the young woman. Here then are the six extracts which compose "Fannikin's" sketch of Jerningham, the frequenter of assemblies:—

"*Bath, Tuesday, April, 1780.*—We all went to Mrs. Bowdler's. . . . Besides their own family we met Mr. Jerningham the poet. I have lately been reading his poems, if his they may be called. He seems a mighty delicate gentleman; looks to be painted, and is all daintification in manner, speech, and dress. . . . He sings to his own accompaniment upon the harp. He has about as much voice as Sacchini, and very sweet-toned, though very English; and he sung and played with a fineness that somewhat resembled the man we looked at at Piozzi's benefit; for it required a painful attention to hear him. And, while he sings, he looked the gentlest of all dying Corydons!

"Oh, what must he have thought of Mrs. Bowdler! who, when he was trying to recollect an air from 'The Hermit,' called out, 'Pray, Mr. Jerningham, can't you sing us some of your own poetry?' I really feared he would have fainted away at so gross a question; but, to my great relief, I observed he only looked down and smiled."

"*Friday.*—Mrs. Cholmly was so kind as to call this morning; and, as I happened to be alone, we had a very comfortable chat together. And then Mrs. Thrale came in, and I had the pleasure of introducing them to each other. She is a woman of as much real delicacy as Mr. Jerningham (whom Lord Mulgrave calls a pink-and-white poet; for not only his cheeks but his coat is pink) is a man of affected delicacy."

"*Saturday.*—In the evening we had a great deal more company, consisting of the Dean of Ossory . . . my pretty new acquaintance, Miss Leigh, and Mr. Jerningham. Miss Leigh and I kept together very rigidly the whole evening, and talked a great deal of talk, and grew very intimate; but one time, when accidentally I took up a book from the table, merely to peep at the title-page, Mr. Jerningham approached me, and said in a gentle style of raillery, 'Why do you take up a book, Miss Burney? You know you can't read.' 'Oh,' answered

I, in the same gentle style, 'I only do it to make believe.' And you can't think how prettily he laughed. He enquired, however, a great deal after my father, and wonders he does not come down here. Another time he said to me, 'Pray were not you the lady who used the glass the other night at the play?' Here I was quite shocked; but could only defend, not deny, protesting, with great truth, that I only used it for the performers, and could not see at all without it. 'A lady in the box with me,' continued he, 'wanted sadly to know which was you; so indeed did all the company I was with. And I fancy I pointed right. Did not I point right?'"

"*January, 1784.*—I went alone to Mrs. Vesey's, which was very disagreeable to me. There was a very full meeting too, and most of the company were already arrived; and, to add to the pleasure of my *entrée*, Mrs. Vesey was in an inner room. So my name was spoke aloud at the door, and then nobody was ready to receive me. I stood so awkward, till at last Sir Joshua Reynolds smilingly called out, 'Miss Burney, you had better come and sit by me; for here's no Mrs. Vesey.' I instantly obeyed the droll summons. 'Why don't Dr. Burney come with you?' cried he good-naturedly. 'You should make him; for it is very distressing to you to come in alone.' I never will go alone again, unless I can go much earlier. I now soon saw folks enough that I knew. Mr. Jerningham first came up to me, and offered to fetch Mrs. Vesey, which, though I declined, he would do. She received me most kindly and told me I had a little party of friends in the boudoir who desired I would join them; but I had had enough of exhibiting myself, and begged leave to sit still. 'But you can't think, my dear Ma'am,' cried she, 'how happy you will make me, if you will be quite at your ease here, and run about just as you like.' How well she sees what would make me happy! To run about in rooms full of company! As soon as she was called off Mr. Jerningham took her place, civilly declaring he would not give it up, come who might. . . . Afterwards Miss Hamilton herself came, and, taking my hand, insisted upon carrying me back with her. The boudoir party was Mrs. Carter, Miss Gregory, Miss Hamilton, Lady Wake, Miss Ann Clarke, and Mr. Montagu. . . . I stayed with this party all the evening. Mrs. Carter talked more than anybody ever heard her talk before. . . . Her talk was all instruction. Were I to see much of her, I really think we should be exceedingly good friends. Mrs. Vesey, Dr. Warton, and Mr. Jerningham joined us occasionally. In the other rooms were Mrs. Montagu, Mrs. Buller, Sir William Hamilton, and crowds more, with dear, amiable, unaffected Sir Joshua."

"*January 24th, 1789.*—The Queen, in the morning, when I

chanced to be alone with her, read to me a new poem of Mr. Jerningham's, upon the death of his mother.<sup>1</sup> It is very pretty."

"*May, 1790.*—My dear Mrs. Ord was so good as to come to me one morning at 9 o'clock to take me to the Exhibition, where I saw, I fear, the last works of the first of our painters, Sir Joshua Reynolds. The thought, and his unhappy loss of eyesight, made the view of his pictures very melancholy to me. I have been very much pleased with Mr. Jerningham's verses to him upon his visual misfortune."

John Taylor, grandson of that Chevalier Taylor, who attained considerable notoriety in his day as an itinerant eye-specialist and as oculist to King George II., gives an account of Edward Jerningham in his "Records of My Life," published in 1832. This Taylor was a correspondent of Jerningham's and the proprietor of *The Sun* newspaper. He tells us something of the poet's intercourse with Chesterfield in the closing years of the latter's life. How, while the Countess and a Roman Catholic priest would be wrangling over religion, utterly ignoring the rest of the company, Jerningham would be shouting into the ear-trumpet of the Earl and thereby maintaining a conversation with him. How Chesterfield told a story of Martha Blount's visiting at his house on the very day of Pope's death, of her concealing this important circumstance from him, and of her meeting with the utmost flippancy the indignant remonstrances which he made to her on discovering it. Taylor describes Jerningham as "a warm, sincere, and steady friend, one of the most amiable characters I ever knew;" and he seems to have proved his own friendship for the poet by bringing him and Gifford together and "exciting in them kind sentiments towards each other." But his praise, being quite general, and never dealing in little traits of manner or of character, leaves the psychology of his friend largely unexplored.

During the last dozen years of his life Edward Jerningham went less and less to assemblies and theatres and, devoting himself to theological studies, produced an essay on "Pulpit Eloquence" and a discourse on "The Mild Tenour of Christianity," works to which I have already alluded, together with a treatise called "The Alexandrian School; or a Narrative of the First Christian Professors in Alexandria." The essay and the discourse I have read, and I may say that they are well worth reading, the latter being a very spirited attack on the practice of Asceticism and on the doctrine of Predestination; but neither quite convinces me that Jerningham had the true religious sense. I am inclined indeed to think that his

<sup>1</sup> "To the Memory of the late Lady Jerningham," verses written in August, 1786, in the Album at Costessey Hall, Norfolk.

interest in the Bible and in the Fathers was purely literary, and humanistic; and I am confirmed in this impression by reading the character which Lady Bedingfeld gives of her uncle in her diary for 1809. ("The Jerningham Letters.")

"*July 27th.*—I took a walk with my Uncle E. in the morning. He talked a good deal of 'Pulpit Eloquence,' and says he will read me an essay he has written upon it. He seemed much elated with Mr. Fountaine's approbation of it. Poor man! He cannot help harping upon religion; and, tho' he has left us, appears always particularly flattered by the approbation of our clergy. He never talks to me of the particular dogmas of religion, but in general terms, as if we were both of the same. I wonder what a sharp illness would produce in him. I doubt much if he would think his Protestant Buckler a sufficient guard against the Arch-Fiend. He has many amiable points about him, and is good-natured in the extreme; but [he is] so thoughtless in conversation that he often makes as much mischief as an ill-natured man, unsteady in his resolutions, or rather making none, but acting according to the impulse of the moment. By this he is for ever drawn into pecuniary difficulties; from which he expects my Father to extricate him, without reflecting how many children and grandchildren my Father has, who would be glad of assistance, if there was any to be had. He has had his share of the family property over and over again; but he has never made this calculation; and, if he were rich, he would be very generous to us all. No man in society is so pleasant: he has a playfulness of mind that is delightful. Mirth is his element, and he avoids any scene or any thought that can molest it. . . . My uncle talked to all the people he met, particularly the children, and gave them halfpence. This is the Jerningham way: I have it quite."

"*Aug. 12th.*—Last Thursday my Uncle Ed., who appears very light and thoughtless, considering the present circumstances of things, went up to my Father's room after dinner (he appeared a little elevated); but, when he saw my Mother sitting by the bedside suffering with the gout, and his Brother lying as he does, silent and weak, he was suddenly so struck with the melancholy of the scene that he burst into violent and loud weeping. Edward, who was in the outward room with Frederick, rushed in dreadfully alarmed, supposing my Father was gone, and that the screams came from my Mother. He dragged my Uncle out, who was in a perfect hysteric; but after a few minutes, and drinking a glass of water, he returned to the library quite recovered. Nor should I ever have guessed it by his manner."

"*Aug. 14th* [the day of Sir William Jerningham's death].—I



hoped in the midst of all my affliction that he, poor man, my Uncle, might be touched by the awefulness of the event and return to the Ancient Faith; but he did not."

There is a tradition in the Jerningham family that this hope was realised, and that Edward Jerningham was reconciled to the Catholic Church before he died. Such a tradition, however, is a case of the wish being father to the thought. The poet died as he had lived a sincere and convinced member of the Church of England. Writing to Lady Bedingfeld at Bath, in October, 1812, a month before his death, Edward Jerningham is very emphatic in stating his dissent from the dogmas of the Ancient Faith. He says:—

"I do not entertain an idea that what I say should impress the mind of others. But I should wish they understood that my secession from the Catholick Doctrine is grounded not only upon the controversial parts, but on the system of terror which the Catholic appears to *me* to substitute instead of the system of mercy which the Christian doctrine so evidently displays. Every page, every line almost, of the Old Testament favours my opinion. Under this idea I wrote the little tract, 'The Mild Tenour of Christianity,' in which I have advanced nothing of my own invention. The many passages that are perpetually occurring soothe and delight my mind. In fine I could talk and write upon this subject for ever. But I reject all correspondence upon these points; and therefore, my dear niece, if you ever write, do not touch this ground. There is no combating with your side: the Catholic comes with the axe of Infallibility."

On the day before he died John Taylor had a farewell interview with him. This is what Jerningham said to his friend:—

"I know that when I am no more you will say something kind of my memory; but I am already dead to all the vanities of this world, and what I desire is that you will say I was consistent in my religious creed and conduct. I am besieged by some Roman Catholic priests, who are anxious I should return to their persuasion. And, if there were no likelihood of contradiction, they would certainly make no scruple of asserting that I had done so. They would even think it meritorious so to do, for the honour of their religion. All therefore that I require of you as the last testimony of friendship is to state in your newspaper that I took the Sacrament on Wednesday last according to the rites of the Church of England."

Edward Jerningham greatly admired Alexander Pope. He was well acquainted with Pope's villa at Twickenham, and he gathered some particulars of the celebrated poet's personal

habits from an old boatman who used to convey Pope from Twickenham to Richmond. Truth to tell, if the small man may be compared with the great man, the two poets had two or three points in common. Both were Protestants who, out of consideration for their relatives, never *formally* abjured the Ancient Faith in which they had been brought up. Both proved dutiful and most affectionate sons to their mothers, to comfort whose declining age they devoted the best years of their lives. Both, as young men, formed close friendships with celebrated wits over forty years their seniors—Pope with Wycherley, Jerningham with Chesterfield. Jerningham, it will be allowed, is an admirable letter-writer. He excels alike as a Society gossip, as a rebuker of insolence, and as a describer of scenes of natural and of artificial beauty. The reason being that, in every case, he has his correspondent carefully in his view. Whatever he was, he cannot be called an egotist.

LETTERS FROM EDWARD JERNINGHAM. EIGHT  
OUT OF THE NINE TO HIS BROTHER, SIR  
WILLIAM JERNINGHAM, BART.

1.

DEAR BROTHER,

I send you a line of enquiry; for, not hearing of you since the New Year, my mother is uneasy.—How did the old mansion behave in the storm? Grosvenor Square braved it very well: Lady Blandford suffered the most.—I have to tell you of the death of Lady Litchfield:<sup>1</sup> her asthma of late has been worse, without the appearance of danger: this morning she was seized with a coughing fit and expired in a few minutes.—This, being a note and not a letter, shall add nothing more.

Yours affectionately.

I hope Lady J——m received my last letter.

Friday [neither dated nor addressed].

<sup>1</sup> It took some time and research approximately to identify this Lady Lichfield or Litchfield. She must not be confused with the Ansons, Earls of Lichfield; for Thomas William Anson, 2nd Viscount Anson, great-great-nephew of Admiral Anson, the circumnavigator, was not created Earl of Lichfield till 1831. She was probably the widow of George Henry Lee, 2nd Earl of Lichfield, who succeeded to the earldom on his father's death in 1716, and himself died on February 18th, 1749-1748. Her maiden name was Frances Hales, and she was the daughter of Sir John Hales, Bart. One of her five daughters, Lady Charlotte Lee, married in 1745 Henry, 11th Viscount Dillon, and was the mother of the Hon. Frances Dillon, who married William Jerningham, the future Baronet, brother of the poet Edward Jerningham, in

1787. Inasmuch as Lady Charlotte Lee's brother, George Henry Lee, 3rd Earl of Lichfield, died in 1772 without issue, and her uncle, Robert Henry Lee, 4th Earl, died in 1776, also without issue, the honours of the Lee family became extinct in the latter year. But the family estate of Ditchley went to Lady Charlotte Lee, Viscountess Dillon, who also brought into the Dillon family the Stuart blood through her paternal grandfather, Sir Edward Henry Lee, 5th Baronet, of Ditchley Park, Oxfordshire, who had married Lady Charlotte Fitzroy, natural daughter of King Charles II. by Barbara Villiers, Duchess of Cleveland, and had been created Earl of Lichfield on June 5th, 1674. Lady Charlotte Lee also introduced into the Dillon family the Plantagenet strain; for her mother, Frances Hales, was descended from the Margaret Plantagenet, niece of King Edward IV. and Countess of Salisbury, who was martyred in the Tower on May 27th, 1541. Lady Charlotte's brother, George Henry Lee, 3rd Earl of Lichfield (1718-1772), who was M.P. for the County of Oxford from 1740 to 1743, and became Chancellor of the University of Oxford in 1762, would, had he been blessed with any children, somewhat have neutralised, or ought I to say, adulterated, the Plantagenet and Stuart strains in the Lee family; for he married Diana, daughter of Sir Thomas Frankland, Bart., of Thirkleby, Yorkshire, husband and wife being fourth in descent from King Charles II. and from Oliver Cromwell, Lord Protector, respectively, the second Frankland baronet having married a daughter of Sir John Russell, Bart., by Frances, daughter of Oliver Cromwell. I should explain that Sir John Russell was Frances Cromwell's second husband.

A letter of condolence on Lady Lichfield's death, written by Lady Jerningham (Mary Plowden) to her daughter-in-law, the Hon. Mrs. Jerningham, and dated February, 1769, establishes the fact that Lady Lichfield's death must have occurred, and that Edward Jerningham's letter announcing it must have been written, on some day in the February of that year. Lady Lichfield might conceivably be the widow of the 3rd Earl or the wife or widow of the 4th Earl; but I fancy that Edward Jerningham would not have chronicled her death unless she had been a blood relation to the Hon. Mrs. Jerningham, unless, that is to say, she had been that lady's maternal grandmother. Perhaps I ought to add that Robert Henry Lee, 4th Earl of Lichfield, married Katherine, daughter of Sir John Stonhouse, Bart., of Radley, Berkshire.

## 2

DEAR BROTHER,

July 2nd [no further date and no address].

I arrived in town on Wednesday evening. My journey began, continued, and ended in rain. I do not, however, feel so much displeas'd at the rain as I do at the small portion of time that was allotted me to pass at Cossey.— This morning I was at Parnel's<sup>1</sup> and delivered him your letter; and in consequence he gave me the receipt, which I enclose.— The letter to Mr. Jones I have not delivered; but [I] am under an appointment to meet him on Tuesday, when he will give me a receipt, which I will enclose to you that evening.— The bond for the four hundred upon Messrs. Wright cannot have its effect without your sending an order.— You will receive this on Sunday; and, as you may not have a stamp by

you, I enclose you one, and beg you will write the order and send it on Sunday evening, which I shall receive on Tuesday and then finish my own business. The same evening I shall negotiate your thousand with Mr. Jones.—The manner of the order you are to enclose to me is to run thus:—

To Messrs. Wright,

Pay to Edward Jerningham or order the sum of £400, payable at sight.

Mr. Wright bids me inform you that my telling you that they have four hundred pounds upon your account is sufficient, without writing themselves, to let you know it, and that you have only to send the order to me.—My mother is as usual, is delighted with the pictures in colour from Charlotte.<sup>2</sup>—I shall write to Lady Jerningham in a few days: to her and Charlotte I present my affectionate remembrance.—No news.—The Ladies at Stortrise<sup>3</sup> are broke up, and have distributed themselves by threes and fours into other Houses.—The Superior, Mrs. Clavering,<sup>4</sup> with our cousin and two others, have taken up their new abode at Rouen in a French House. Sterne would have made an excellent chapter upon so interesting an occurrence.—The visit to Mr. Longland<sup>5</sup> and your commission of the knitting purse you shall hear of in my next, that is on Tuesday's post, when I shall write you without fail.—In the meantime adieu.

Yours ever affectionately.

My best compliments to Mr. Dillon<sup>6</sup> and Mr. Chamberlaine.

<sup>1</sup> The solicitor to whom Letter 9 is addressed.

<sup>2</sup> Charlotte Georgiana was Edward Jerningham's niece, the daughter of Sir William Jerningham, 6th Baronet. On June 16th, 1795, she married Sir Richard Bedingfeld, 5th Baronet. She died on July 29th, 1854.

<sup>3</sup> I have consulted the two largest modern gazetteers, and can find this place in neither.

<sup>4</sup> I cannot identify this lady.

<sup>5</sup> I cannot identify Mr. Longland.

<sup>6</sup> By Mr. Dillon is meant one of Lady Jerningham's brothers, if not Charles, who became the 12th Viscount Dillon, then either Arthur or Henry, both of whom were generals in the French service, the former being guillotined on April 13th, 1794, during the Terror. Before her marriage Lady Jerningham was the Hon. Frances Dillon, eldest daughter of the 11th Viscount Dillon.

DEAR BROTHER,

Tho' I have nothing very particular to say, I will just ask you how you do?—I had the pleasure of hearing a great

deal yesterday about George.<sup>1</sup> Claxon<sup>2</sup> appointed a rendezvous with Burges<sup>3</sup> at the school; and he is returned full of him. We hope to see him here at Easter.—Lady Stafford<sup>4</sup> has been very much out of order this winter; and, from the accounts of her, it is thought she cannot hold out many months. At her decease your income would be encreased; but, till that event happens, you must have recourse to your economy, to patience, and to virtue.—There has been in town a sensible decline of expense. The first assembly was the other night at Bolton House.<sup>5</sup> Plays and operas have been neglected. I have passed, ever since I have been in town, three or four evenings at home. There is indeed a great deal of private card parties; but, as I have such bad luck, I decline all invitations of that kind.—Our neighbour Lord Jersey<sup>6</sup> liked to have died some time ago. He was taken ill a hunting with a pain he thought the stone. They let him blood in the field; and the bandage as he was returning came off, by which means he lost thirty ounces [of blood]. This circumstance was a favourable one for a mortification would have been formed, had it not been for that accident.

My mother sent for a print of the children yesterday for Lady Mary Forbes,<sup>7</sup> who is very desirous of having one. She now and then expresses a surprise that she has not heard from you this New Year; for she does not reckon your letter to me as equivalent. Therefore, if you would send her [a] line or two, all would be well.—Adieu, mon cher frère. My affectionate compliments to Lady Jerningham: I propose writing to her very soon. Mrs. Browne<sup>8</sup> tells me that Charlotte has wrote a charming letter to her.—Your turkey came safe.—If Abbé Nichols<sup>9</sup> is with me [you?], as he wrote me word he should soon [be], let him know I shall answer him before-long.

<sup>1</sup> George William, Sir William Jerningham's eldest son. Born on April 27th, 1771, he succeeded his father on August 14th, 1809, as 7th Baronet, and on the reversal of the attainder of the Viscount Stafford, who was executed for alleged complicity in the Popish Plot, became 8th Baron Stafford. He died October 4th, 1851.

<sup>2</sup>, <sup>3</sup> I can identify neither of these persons.

<sup>4</sup> Apparently Lady Stafford was the widow of John Paul Stafford Howard, 4th Earl of Stafford and but for the attainder 5th Baron and Viscount Stafford. Her maiden name was Elizabeth Mary Michael Ewens. She was the daughter of Abraham Ewens, married the 4th Earl in 1738, and died on January 16th, 1783.

<sup>5</sup> The town house of the Duke of Bolton. The Dukedom became extinct on December 24th, 1794, on the death of Harry Paulet, 6th Duke and Admiral of the White. He was the nephew of Charles Paulet, the 3rd Duke, who is best known for having married (as his second wife) Lavinia Fenton, the actress who made such a success as Polly Peachum in Gay's "Beggar's Opera."

\* The 4th Earl, husband of the Countess with whom the Prince of Wales was connected. Presumably he had a town house in Grosvenor Square.

' Lady Mary Capell, fourth daughter of William, 3rd Earl of Essex, married on August 25th, 1758, Admiral the Hon. John Forbes, 2nd son of George, 3rd Earl of Granard. She died in April, 1782.

Admiral Forbes (1714-1796) is best known for his refusal, as member of the Admiralty Board, to sign the death-warrant of Admiral Byng. He took an honourable part in the bungled action against the combined fleets of France and of Spain off Toulon on February 11th, 1748-44. But, becoming lame in both hands and feet, he saw no sea service after 1750; though in 1770 he was made Admiral of the White, and, on the death of Lord Hawke in 1781, he was advanced to the rank of Admiral of the Fleet, a position which he held till his death. From 1757 to 1768 he served on the Board at the Admiralty; and he subsequently became a general of marines.

Lady Mary Forbes seems to have been what we should call "a cadger." Writing to John Pinkerton from Strawberry Hill on August 18th, 1785, a refusal to print some work he recommended, Horace Walpole says:—"I have been so much solicited, since I set up my press, to employ it for others, that I was forced to make it a rule to listen to no such application. . . . I refused Lady Mary Forbes to print letters of her ancestor, Lord Essex." Lady Mary was half-sister to William Anne, 4th Earl of Essex, and aunt to Lord Malden.

\* I cannot identify this Mrs. Browne.

\* Abbé Nichols is, of course, the Rev. Norton Nicholls.

## 4

Mount Edgcomb, September 13th, 1777.

As I have heard nothing of Cossey, I beg to send you my enquiries, which do not however proceed from curiosity but a much better cause.—I hope this will find you in the enjoyment of health, and also of the good weather, which has been and is still (in these parts) the finest I ever remember. This circumstance has contributed to make my tour perfectly agreeable; and [I] have seen many fine places in their full beauty. I went first to Stonor,<sup>1</sup> and from thence to Blenheim,<sup>2</sup> where I passed a day and a half, which is not too much to see all the beauties of this place. The water is the capital feature, and does Mr. Brown<sup>3</sup> credit. From Blenheim I went to Heythrop,<sup>4</sup> and took Ditchley<sup>5</sup> in my way. The house-keeper was very busy in hatching the five hundred eggs of French partridges which Mr. Dillon had sent. This place did not entirely answer my expectation. The house is comfortable, with some capital pictures in it. The ground is tame and equal. The same character of ground is seen at Heythrop. The house, which was built by the Duke of Shrewsbury,<sup>6</sup> is a charming edifice. The gallery, or rather library, which is eighty-two<sup>7</sup> feet in length, is the most cheerful room I ever saw. The highly finished stucco work does honour to Mr.

Robert<sup>8</sup> of Oxford. From the gallery you go to a small room, which leads to the drawing room, which is a superb apartment, forty seven by twenty five, and twenty in height. This is reckoned one of the most highly finished rooms in the kingdom. It is hung with Brussels tapestry<sup>9</sup> made on purpose. The garden beauties of this place are not striking. Sixty or four score men, however, continually employed : this serves to amuse and [to] occupy Lord Shrewsbury. Though from these great efforts small effects are produced. I stayed here two days, and then went to Oxford, where I passed a whole day among the cloisters, chapels and libraries. Then to Nuneham, which is not improved since I saw it, though very capable.<sup>10</sup> Lord Nuneham's flower garden, consisting of two acres, is a charming voluptuous spot. I stayed here two days, and went to Bath [and] passed one day there. I found Nick<sup>11</sup> in good spirits, and free from pain, tho' swelled with a dropsy. 'Tis wonderful that nothing can conquer his spirits. He was going to Collumpton his home. From Bath I went a little out of my road to see Mr. Hoare's,<sup>12</sup> which indeed is well worth seeing. As this is all in your own way, you will not be displeas'd to have an idea of the place. The gardiner conducted me to a green terrace, above which was a Turkish tent. At the foot of the terrace the water; and a little farther the semi-circular Italian bridge, which stands bold and characteristic. This bridge leads to the grotto. The entrance is very dark. As you advance, the path opens into a spacious room. On the right is a form of a woman sleeping, raised on a couch that stands in the water, with drops distilling from every part of the couch. You pass to another department open at top, but shaded with branches of trees, which appear as if they were rushing in. Fronting you is a river god pouring water from an urn. Going out of the grotto you catch a view of the Temple of Flora, and the figure of Neptune on the bank of the river. The walk, as it winds, leads to the Pantheon, which is a beautiful building enriched with statues. From this place is beheld on the left the Turkish tent, a little lower [is seen] the Temple of Flora. The river is here formed into an artificial lake, round which all these buildings are properly disposed. On the right a cascade rushes down, and forces its way from a wood. A little farther on the right appears the Temple of Apollo. In the front is seen a simple stone bridge, and beyond that the famous Bristol Cross, backed by the parish church. The imagination of Ariosto could not invent a more picturesque scene. The path on the right leads to a bar-bridge, where you catch a half-view of the Italian bridge, with a wood rising behind it crowned with an obelisk. The same path leads to a hermitage; and, passing thro' the gloom of that recess, the burst of light and of the scenery has a

most striking effect. The full view of the Italian bridge, the obelisk, the Pantheon, and Alfred's Tower growing out of a deep wood that stands on a high ground behind the Pantheon, are objects that altogether form an enchanting scene. As you advance, you reach the Temple of Apollo, from whence all the same objects are beheld, with the addition of the green-house and a partial view of the House seen thro' a vista. The gardiner told me that this spot is reckoned the most capital. It appeared otherwise to me, from the Bristol Cross and [the] church being seen sideways. This kind of circular walk is a mile and a half. The less decorated parts of the park are also very beautiful; but I had not time to see them, having no acquaintance with the family. I proceeded on my journey and went to Ugbrooke,<sup>18</sup> where I stayed three or four days. I met Mr. and Mrs. Porter<sup>14</sup> there, and Mr. and Mrs. Standish,<sup>15</sup> who is a very agreeable accomplished woman. Lord Clifford<sup>16</sup> is in love with his place, and indeed he may [well be]; and if it was in any other county it would rank high in fame. But, being within forty miles distance from Mount Edgcomb, it loses its share of praise; for the proud Mount engrosses all commendation to itself, and indeed deservedly. I have been here almost three weeks, have lived abroad, and have every day been struck with something new. No description can do any justice to it.

Lady Clifford<sup>17</sup> complained that she had not received any answer from Lady Jerningham. I do not complain; but [I] hope to hear by you that she received a letter I wrote to her from town. Did the books I sent Charlotte arrive safe? And do you know if F. Gobbet<sup>18</sup> received the Italian books I sent her?

Was you not surprised at the Chevalier's sudden trip to Italy? I rather envy him; as I should like excessively to make that tour.

We have a very agreeable family here, General Conway, Lady Ailesbury, and Mrs. Damer. Upon being more acquainted with Mrs. Damer I find her uncommonly agreeable and clever. She has withdrawn herself from the world since her husband's unhappy death.<sup>19</sup>

But it is time to finish my long letter, which I have wrote to you at stolen times; for we live abroad, and half the time upon water. Adieu. My respects to Lady Jerningham, with my benediction to the nursery. My compliments to Mr. Buxton;<sup>20</sup> and to Mr. Nichols, in case he should be with you. And let him know I may perhaps write to him soon. Compliments to Mr. Moore.<sup>21</sup> I congratulate you on your new neighbor at Honingham.<sup>22</sup> I should be obliged to you if you would send a brace of partridges to *Mr. Wood,*<sup>23</sup> in *Windmill Street, Rathbone Place.*



<sup>1</sup> The Stonors, of Stonor Park, Henley-on-Thames, Oxfordshire, now represented by Lord Camoys, are one of the oldest Catholic families in England. The existing house and chapel at Stonor were built in the 13th century. In 1839 the abeyance of the Barony of Camoys was terminated in favour of Thomas Stonor, after a lapse of over 400 years.

<sup>2</sup> The seat of the Duke of Marlborough.

<sup>3</sup> Lancelot Brown (1715-1783) was a famous 18th-century landscape gardener and architect, who was known as "Capability" Brown from his frequent use of that word. Originally a kitchen gardener in the employment of Lord Cobham at Stow, he soon obtained the patronage of persons of rank and taste, and laid out or remodelled the grounds at Kew, Blenheim and Nuneham Courtenay. He is sometimes spoken of as the originator of the modern or English style of landscape-gardening, which superseded the geometric style. But the honour of inventing this style belongs to William Kent (1684-1748), whose manner and designs Brown improved upon. Writing to George Montagu from Daventry, on July 22nd, 1751, Horace Walpole says, "I saw Warwick, a pretty old town, small and thinly inhabited, in the form of a cross. The castle is enchanting; the view pleased me more than I can express; the river Avon tumbles down a cascade at the foot of it. It is well laid out by one Brown, who has set on a few ideas of Kent and Mr. Southcote. One saw what the prevalence of taste does; little Brooke [i.e. Lord Brooke, the Earl of Warwick's eldest son], who would have chuckled to have been born in an age of clipt edges and cockle-shell avenues, has submitted to let his garden and park be natural?" When Brown died Horace Walpole waxed very eulogistic on him, celebrating his professional talents both in prose and verse.

<sup>4</sup> Heythrop was the seat of the Earl of Shrewsbury and was or is about 4 miles south-east of Chipping Norton.

<sup>5</sup> Ditchley, Enstone, Oxfordshire, is the country seat of the Viscounts Dillon.

<sup>6</sup> Heythrop, Heythorpe, or Heythrop Hall was built for the famous Duke of Shrewsbury about 1705 by Thomas Archer, a pupil of Sir John Vanbrugh, and is said to have been his first work. Horace Walpole thought little of Archer's professional talents. The Duke of Shrewsbury, Charles Talbot, succeeded his father as 12th Earl of Shrewsbury on March 16th, 1667, and was one of the peers who promoted the Revolution of 1688. In 1694 he was made Knight of the Garter and created Duke of Shrewsbury. Born July 24th, 1660, he died without issue on February 1st, 1717-18.

<sup>7</sup> Brewer, in "The Beauties of England and Wales," says that the gallery is 83 feet in length, and "is now destitute of books."

<sup>8</sup> I cannot identify this person.

<sup>9</sup> The work of Vanderborght, says Brewer, "representing the four quarters of the world."

<sup>10</sup> Whether "capable" means "respectable" or "susceptible of improvement" I cannot determine. I imagine, however, that the epithet is a joke made at the expense of "Capability" Brown, the landscape gardener, who had laid out the grounds. John Wealey visited Nuneham in 1784 and gives the following account of it in his "Journal."

"Tuesday, October 19th.—I spent an hour at Lord Harcourt's seat, near Nuneham, one of the pleasantest spots I have seen. It stands on a gently rising hill and commands a most delightful prospect. The rooms are not so grand as some, but elegant in the highest degree; so is also the front of the house, and what is called the flower garden, a small enclosure surrounded by lofty trees, and filled with all the beauties that nature and art can give."

<sup>11</sup> I cannot identify this person.

<sup>12</sup> This place was Stourton or Stourhead, near Bath, Wiltshire, a property which Mr. Henry Hoare, the banker, bought from Lord Stourton in 1720. John Wesley visited Stourton on September 12th, 1776, just a year previous to the time at which Edward Jerningham went there. I quote from his "Journal" his account of the place:—

"*Thursday September 12th.*—I spent about two hours in Mr. Hbare's gardens at Stourton. I have seen the most celebrated gardens in England; but these far exceed them all:—1. In the situation; being laid out on the sloping sides of a semicircular mountain; 2. In the vast basin of water enclosed between them, covering, I suppose, sixty acres of ground; 3. In the delightful interchange of shady groves and sunny glades, curiously mixed together; 4. Above all, in the lovely grottos; two of which excel every thing of the kind which I ever saw; the fountain grotto, made entirely of rock-work, admirably well imitating nature, and the castle grotto, into which you enter unawares, beneath a heap of ruins. This is within totally built of roots of trees, wonderfully interwoven. On one side of it is a little hermitage, with a lamp, a chair, a table, and bones upon it. Others were delighted with the temples; but I was not:—1. Because several of the statues about them were mean; 2. Because I cannot admire the images of devils; and we know the gods of the Heathens are but devils; 3. Because I defy all mankind to reconcile statues with nudities, either to common sense or common decency."

He refers to it again in his "Journal" in the entry which describes his visit to Stow Gardens, on October 18th, 1779.

"There is nothing even at Cobham to be compared, 1. To the beautiful Cross at the entrance of Stourhead Gardens; 2. To the vast body of water; 3. To the rock-work grotto; 4. To the Temple of the Sun; 5. To the Hermitage. Here too every thing is nicely clean, as well as in full preservation. Add to this, that all the gardens hang on the sides of a semicircular mountain; and there is nothing either at Cobham or at Stowe which can balance the advantage of such a situation."

Hoare's daughter Susannah, who died on February 4th, 1783, made two "good matches," marrying first, on May 18th, 1753, Charles, Viscount Dungarvon, eldest son of the 5th Earl of Cork and Orrery, and secondly, on February 17th, 1761, Baron Bruce of Tottenham, who was created Earl of Ailesbury on June 10th, 1776. This Earl of Ailesbury was the nephew of the 3rd Earl of Ailesbury, who married (as his third wife) Caroline, only daughter of John Campbell, 4th Duke of Argyll, the lady who subsequently became the wife of General Conway and the mother of Mrs. Damer.

<sup>13</sup> Ughbrooke Park, Chudleigh, Devonshire, is the country seat of Baron Clifford of Chudleigh.

<sup>14</sup> <sup>15</sup> I can identify neither the Porters nor the Standishes. Among the "Landed Gentry" of to-day I find the Standishes of Standish Hall, near Wigan, Lancashire, and the Standishes of Scaleby Castle, Carlisle, Cumberland. For the Porter family see the notes to Norton Nicholls's letters.

<sup>16</sup> <sup>17</sup> This was Hugh, 4th Baron Clifford of Chudleigh, who married on December 17th, 1749, Lady Anne Lee, 5th daughter of George Henry, 2nd Earl of Lichfield. Henry, 11th Viscount Dillon, had married on October 26th, 1745, Lady Charlotte Lee, the eldest daughter.

<sup>18</sup> I find on consulting Mr. Egerton Castle's "Jerningham Letters," that this lady must be Frances Gobbet who came as a pensioner to the Blue Nuns School at Paris in 1773, and subsequently married a M. Negri.

<sup>19</sup> The Hon. John Damer had shot himself at the Bedford Arms, Covent Garden, on August 15th, 1776.

<sup>20</sup> " I cannot identify either of these persons. But Mr. Buxton may possibly be the (Catholic) priest or tutor who wrote the postscript to the Rev. Norton Nicholls's 6th letter.

<sup>21</sup> At the time this letter was written Honingham Hall, Norfolk, was the seat of Charles Townshend, who, born in 1728, had recently, on August 21st, 1777, married his cousin (once removed), Annabella Powlett. He was the grandson of Charles, 2nd Viscount Townshend, two of whose daughters had married into the Cornwallis family, Elizabeth and Mary having become the respective wives of Charles, 1st Earl Cornwallis, and of Lieut.-General Edward Cornwallis. Charles Townshend was created Baron Bayning in 1797, and died on May 19th, 1810.

<sup>22</sup> I cannot identify this Mr. Wood.

5

[June, 1779].

Monday [no other date and no address].

MIO CARO FRATELLO,

I am scandalously long in your debt; but there has been a communication of letters between Cossey and the Square from time to time. So that I have had the satisfaction of hearing of you. The good effects of the bath, I hope, still operate, and that Lady J——m will find herself much better during the course of the summer; and then I should recommend the bath again.—I suppose Mr. Dillon will certainly make you a visit. I have not been so fortunate as to find him at home; but I hear he is perfectly well. Lord Dillon is overjoyed to see him again.—What does your political world say to the Spanish War?<sup>1</sup> It has cast a deeper shade over the scene of things here. Mrs. Hobart,<sup>2</sup> however, keeps up her spirits and those of her acquaintance with making her house the center of amusements. Balls, proverbs, French and English plays, fairs, and musical pieces are exhibited in succession; and she the prime performer. Her performance in French is not excellent; and it appears the worse from her two associates being French. Texier<sup>3</sup> and his valet, which he calls his secretary, George<sup>4</sup> en attendant is diverting himself at Paris.—I suppose by this time you have seen the Bacons.<sup>5</sup>

I should imagine Miss Bacon<sup>6</sup> will be impatient to get to Drayton. Miss Campbell,<sup>7</sup> with all her beauty and accomplishments, is not nearer matrimony than she was. The men think of course that she is to have Wodehouse;<sup>8</sup> and consequently no offers are made. You have heard the Miss Langdales<sup>9</sup> are about marrying. Mr. Butler<sup>10</sup> transferred with great ease his passion from the youngest to the eldest. Though the match with Mr. Clifford's Apolonia<sup>11</sup> is to be, there are some difficulties attending it: the mothers do not speak to one another. I have heard only one side of the question; and from what I have heard Lady Langdale<sup>12</sup> appears to be in the wrong.—Lord Shelbourne is to be made happy with Lady

Louisa Fitzpatrick.<sup>13</sup> I think him a very fortunate man; and his success with this present lady will sufficiently atone for the disappointment he met with from Miss Molesworth<sup>14</sup> last year.—To go on with the list of lovers. Baron Nolkein<sup>15</sup> is to marry the widow Le Maitre.<sup>16</sup> The rich Mr. Joobat,<sup>17</sup> I cannot spell his name, the brother to Mrs. Stapleton,<sup>18</sup> is to marry Mrs. Trefusis,<sup>19</sup> a young widow. Her beauty procured her a first husband; for she is low of birth and remarkably simple. Sir Edward Swinburn<sup>20</sup> proposed to keep her; but Lord and Lady Montagu,<sup>21</sup> who have taken her under their protection, warded off that misfortune, and have made this match for her, at which all his relations are very much offended. To give you an instance of her simplicity, the first time she saw my mother she asked her to carry her to a review!

<sup>1</sup> Spain declared war on England in June, 1779. This letter may then probably be dated about that time.

<sup>2</sup> Albinia, daughter of Lord Vere Bertie, and granddaughter of Robert, 1st Duke of Ancaster, married, on May 16th, 1757, the Hon. George Hobart, 3rd son of Sir John, 1st Earl of Buckinghamshire. He succeeded his brother John as 3rd Earl of Buckinghamshire on August 8rd, 1798.

<sup>3</sup> Le Tessier or Le Texier was a famous French actor. See the note to the Countess of Jersey's 10th letterette.

<sup>4</sup> The Bacons of Redgrave and of Mildenhall, Norfolk, are the premier baronets of England.

<sup>5</sup> I cannot identify this Miss Bacon.

<sup>6</sup> I cannot identify this Miss Campbell. The Countess of Ailesbury's nieces, Lady Augusta Campbell and Lady Charlotte Susan Maria, daughters of John, 5th Duke of Argyll, would be children of two or three years old at this time. Lord William Campbell, a brother of the fifth Duke, had two daughters, Anne and Caroline; but in 1779 the former was only thirteen.

<sup>7</sup> I cannot identify this Wodehouse. Sir Armins Wodehouse of Kimberley, 5th Baronet, married, on October 3rd, 1738, Letitia, eldest daughter of Sir Edmund Bacon of Garboldisham, 6th Baronet. His eldest son, Sir John, 6th Baronet, was born in 1741, and married, on March 30th, 1769, Sophia, only child of the Hon. Charles Berkeley, and niece of John, last Lord Berkeley. He succeeded as 6th Baronet on May 21st, 1777, and was elevated to the peerage as Baron Wodehouse of Kimberley on October 26th, 1797. Sir Armine's second son, the Rev. Philip Wodehouse, Prebendary of Norwich, married, on July 29th, 1775, Apollonia, daughter of John Nourse of Wood Eaton, Oxford. I mention this fact here because Apollonia is an unusual name for a woman, and because another Apollonia is mentioned in a subsequent note.

<sup>8, 10</sup> <sup>11</sup> Marmaduke Langdale, 5th and last Baron Langdale, had three surviving daughters. Elisabeth, the eldest, married Robert Butler, Esq., of Ballynagget in Ireland. Mary, the second, married, on June 15th, 1775, Charles Philip, 16th Lord Stourton. Apollonia married, on May 2nd, 1780, Hugh Edward Henry, 5th Baron Clifford of Chudleigh. At the time when this letter was written—about June, 1779—the 5th Baron was only the Hon. Hugh Clifford: he succeeded his father as Baron on September 1st, 1783.

<sup>12</sup> The 5th Lord Langdale married Constantia, daughter of Sir John Smythe, 3rd Baronet, of Acton Burnel, co. Salop. Lady Langdale's brother,

Walter Smythe, was the father of Mary Anne Smythe, who, having married first, in 1775, Edward Weld, of Lulworth Castle, Dorsetshire, and secondly, in 1778, Thomas Fitzherbert, of Norbury, Derbyshire, took for her third husband, on December 21st, 1785, the future King George IV., whose senior she was by six years.

<sup>13</sup> This was the distinguished statesman, William, the 2nd Earl of Shelburne and 1st Marquess of Lansdowne. He was born on May 2nd, 1737, and married first, on February 8rd, 1765, Lady Sophia Carteret, daughter of John, Earl Grenville. She died on January 5th, 1771; and on July 19th, 1779, the Earl married Lady Louisa Fitzpatrick, daughter of John, 1st Earl of Upper Ossory, and sister-in-law to Horace Walpole's friend and correspondent, the Countess of Upper Ossory.

<sup>14</sup> Who this Miss Molesworth was I cannot be certain. Mary Usher, daughter of the Rev. William Usher, Archdeacon of Clonfort, was the second wife of the 8rd Viscount Molesworth, and had by him one son and six daughters. Two of them, Melosina and Mary, perished with their mother in that disastrous fire at their house in Upper Brook Street which Horace Walpole describes in his letter to General Conway of May 6th, 1768. Henrietta, the eldest daughter, married the Right Hon. John Staples on October 10th, 1774. Louisa married on December 26th, 1769, William, 1st Lord Ponsonby. Of the two others, Elizabeth and Charlotte, I can only find that the former married James Stewart of Killymoon, Tyrone.

<sup>15, 16</sup> For months I could discover nothing about Baron and Baroness Nolken, Nolkein or Nolcken, save that she wrote several letters to Edward Jerningham asking him to come to see her, and that she gave concerts which the Prince of Wales and other members of the Royal Family attended. (This information was gained from the lady's own letters to Edward Jerningham.) Then I met with a mention of her in the second volume of the "Memoirs of William Hickey" (Hurst and Blackett). All that Hickey says of her is this: "Thus was I enabled to deliver to the Baroness Nolken and many others the parcels I brought from India for them." The date of this reference is about July 6th, 1780. Eventually, however, I came across an epigram in Edward Jerningham's collected "Poems" (new edition, 1796) which clears up the mystery—

"TO THE BARON NOLKEN, THE SWEDISH AMBASSADOR, ON HIS SUDDEN  
RECALL.

"Thine the applause, which (to long merit due)  
Those judges pay, who are to honour true:  
Still, as before, thou art to all endeared,  
Deposed, yet courted, and tho' fall'n, revered."

Subsequently I discovered that the Baron and Baroness Nolken were on visiting terms with Lady Mary Coke. In the "Letters and Journal" of that lady I found them dining with her on July 22nd, 1772, the rest of the company on that occasion including Count Belgioso, the Imperial Minister, Count Lamberg, nephew to the Princess Esterhazy, and the Duke and Duchess of Queensberry.

<sup>17, 18, 19</sup> I can identify none of these persons.

<sup>20</sup> Sir Edward Swinburne, of Capheaton, Northumberland, 5th Baronet, was born in 1733. He married, in 1761, Christiana, daughter of Robert Dillon, and died on November 2nd, 1786.

<sup>21</sup> Anthony Joseph Browne, 7th Viscount Montagu, was born in 1720, and married, in 1765, Frances, sister of Sir Herbert Mackworth, Bart., and widow of Alexander, Lord Halkerton. He died on April 9th, 1787.

6

Saturday, August 21st. [1779].

DEAR BROTHER,

In my letter to Lady Jerningham I flatter myself with the pleasure of seeing you next Thursday; but, my mother having been indisposed, the visit to Thorndon<sup>1</sup> did not take place, and consequently my visit to you is deferred. I hope however to be at Cossy Sunday or Monday se'nnight in the evening. We go to Thorndon on Monday; and so the Monday after I confidently hope to be with you at the latest.—I hope by that time our political world will be less clouded than it is at present. A number of reports are flying about to-day; but none are to be trusted to, and so I shall not trouble you with them.—Lady Edgcumbe was to have come to town in case of any real attack upon Plymouth;<sup>2</sup> and, her not being come, I conclude everything is still very quiet, and nothing attempted there yet.—I shall add nothing more than my affectionate compliments to Lady J——m. My mother commissions me to say the same to you both.

Yours most affectionately,

E. J——m.

P.S.—Let me sleep in the Blue Room.

<sup>1</sup> Lord Petre's country seat in Essex.<sup>2</sup> Vide the letter written to Edward Jerningham in September, 1779, by Mr. Drake, friend or chaplain to the Mount Edgumbes.

7

February 2nd [no further date and no address]. [1782].

DEAR BROTHER,

This day se'nnight I received your letter; and immediately wrote to Lord Essex,<sup>1</sup> who was in the country, recommending in the strongest terms Mr. Smythe.<sup>2</sup> I have seen Lord Essex since, who thanked me for recommending so proper a steward; but [he] did not say he would appoint him, but that he would consider of it. I mentioned Mr. Smythe to Lord Malden,<sup>3</sup> who said he would strengthen my recommendation, if his father should speak of it to him.—I am in debt to Lady Jerningham for half a letter, which I will pay most assuredly next week.—The famous Tarlton<sup>4</sup> looks as young as when you knew him at Norwich. He is much in vogue. He is invited, known or unknown, to all the assemblies; and wherever he stands a circle is formed around him.—Lord Cornwallis<sup>5</sup> keeps inurned at Lambeth—General Arnold<sup>6</sup> intends to exhibit himself as much as Tarlton when his wife<sup>7</sup> (who is a great beauty) is recovered of her indisposition.—I hope this will find you and your family in perfect health.—

My mother is pretty well, I may say very well. She had a letter from Charles,<sup>8</sup> who says the fêtes at Paris were very ennuiant. He left Paris to avoid them. The Parisians have so Anglicised themselves that it is the bon ton to be ennuié; and the young men excuse themselves from the balls at Versailles by saying "C'est un grand boar," which word is revived at Paris just as it began to be dropped here.—Mrs. Mary Bacon<sup>9</sup> is far from well: she keeps entirely in her bed-chamber apartment, and never goes out. The Bacons of Bruton Street<sup>10</sup> are as usual: I have heard of them, but not seen them.—The Pope<sup>11</sup> had an intention of visiting the Emperor;<sup>12</sup> and expressed his design to his Nuncio at Vienna. The Emperor replied that he should be proud of doing the honors of his capital to him; but he would never enter into a discussion of any business with him. The matter rests there; and his Holiness intends to stay at home. He has by this intention, and by exposing himself to the cold civility of the Emperor, discovered to the world the falling interest of the court of Rome.—Adieu, mon cher frère.—My affectionate compliments to Lady Jerningham. I enclosed to her the receipt of the shoemaker's bill. The leases from Cossey are forwarded. My mother was disappointed at not having a letter from you at the same time: two or three lines would have done.—Lady Betty Compton<sup>13</sup> is determined to marry Lord G. Cavendish<sup>14</sup> against the sense and wishes of the Duchess of Beaufort.<sup>15</sup> The young woman had a right to make her own choice; and she has made an unexceptionable one. But the Duchess sets her face against it; by which means the amours of the nuptials will not go on so smoothly as they would otherwise have done. Mrs. Mary Bacon was a prime counsellor; and is furious about it, and sides with the Duchess in this important trifle.—Adieu once more.—My love to Charlotte.

<sup>1</sup> William Anne, 4th Earl of Essex, was born on October 7th, 1732, and died on March 5th, 1799. He married, firstly, on August 1st, 1754, Frances, daughter and coheir of Sir Charles Hanbury Williams, K.B., the famous wit and man of fashion, whose other daughter, Charlotte, became the wife of Robert Boyle, younger son of Henry Boyle, 1st Earl of Shannon.

<sup>2</sup> This Mr. Smythe was probably one of the four sons of Walter Smythe, second son of Sir John Smythe, 3rd Baronet. In that case he would be a brother of Mrs. Fitzherbert, whose maiden name was Mary Anne Smythe. The Smythes were a Catholic family; so Edward Jerningham, as a member of a Catholic family, would be desirous of assisting one of their number.

<sup>3</sup> Viscount Malden was the eldest son and successor of William Anne, 4th Earl of Essex. Of his connection, in his twenty-third year, with the spurious romance of "Florizel and Perdita," which, for a time linked together the names of the Prince of Wales and of Mary Robinson, the actress, and of his second marriage, in his eighty-first year, with Catherine Stephens, the singer and actress, notice is given elsewhere. He was born in 1757, and died, without issue, in 1839.

' This was Sir Banastre Tarleton, Bart. (1754-1833), the famous cavalry leader on the British side in the American War of Independence, who repaid with such ingratitude the frequent warm commendations which he received in Lord Cornwallis's dispatches. Having returned to England on parole early in 1782, he took Mary Robinson in keeping after the termination of her liaison first with the Prince of Wales and then with the Prince's friend, Charles James Fox, with the former of whom he became on intimate terms. It was on a journey undertaken to relieve Colonel Tarleton from pecuniary difficulties that detained him at a seaport town, a journey made in a carriage with open windows on a severe winter's night, that Mary Robinson contracted that rheumatic illness that resulted in a paralysis of her lower limbs. It is a strange, but of course an undesigned, coincidence that two persons so intimately connected with Mary Robinson's fortunes as Lord Malden and Colonel Tarleton should be mentioned in the same letter. The fact that Mrs. Fitzherbert's brother is also referred to in the letter makes the coincidence all the stranger. I may add that Sir Banastre Tarleton married on December 17th, 1798, Susan Priscilla, natural daughter of Robert Bertie, 4th Duke of Ancester.

Horace Walpole gives Tarleton a very ugly character:—

" It is no *new* Fast candidate that is to have the vacant mitre, but that poor creature, Dr. *Bagot*, and the Fast sycophant, Bishop *Butler* is to have the deanery of St. Paul's. Perhaps you thought these cures of souls would have been given to the Mohocks, Arnold and Tarleton, who are bloody enough to wear lawn sleeves. I must tell you a saying of Sheridan too sublime to be called a *bon-mot*. Tarleton boasts of having butchered more men and lain with more women than anybody. '*Lain with,*' said Sheridan, 'what a weak expression! He should have said *ravished*—rapes are the relaxation of murder.'" (Walpole to the Rev. William Mason, February 23rd, 1782.)

Among other famous or notorious eighteenth-century soldiers who formed connections with actresses may be mentioned Major Topham, editor of *The World*, and one of Edward Jerningham's correspondents, who had several children by Mrs. Wells, Colonel Cæsar, who was the last protector of Peg Woffington, and General Churchill, nephew of the great Duke of Marlborough, who succeeded Arthur Maynwaring in the possession of Mrs. Oldfield's favours. It was of General Charles Churchill the second that the famous wit mentioned in the first note to this letter said:—

" None led through youth a gayer life than he,  
Cheerful in converse, smart in repartee;  
Sweet was his night, and joyful was his day:  
He dined with Walpole and with Oldfield lay."

Mrs. Oldfield was very generous to Richard Savage, supposed natural son of the Countess of Macclesfield, and bosom friend of Dr. Johnson; she allowed him an annuity during her life of £50. Quaintly enough, Sir Richard Steele, the great denouncer of "keeping," wished to marry Savage, a natural son, to his own natural daughter!

Another military man who took his mistress from the stage was the well-known soldier and dramatist, General John Burgoyne (1723-1792), son of Captain John Burgoyne, and grandson of Sir John Burgoyne, Bart., of Sutton Park, Bedfordshire. His great friend was Lord Strange, eldest son of the 11th Earl of Derby and father of the 12th Earl, for whose second wife, Miss Farren, the General provided one of her most popular parts, that of Niminy Piminy, in his play "The Heiress." Burgoyne married Lord Strange's sister, Lady Charlotte Stanley, who died in 1776. Between 1782 and 1783



be had, however, four children by Susan Caulfield, the singer, who was probably related to the Caulfield who was an author and print-seller, and to the Caulfield who was a comedian. These four children of the sexagenarian general were looked after by Lady Charlotte Burgoyne's nephew, the 12th Earl of Derby. A circumstance which emboldens me to say that there is this much to be said of the extra-matrimonial associations formed in the 18th century. The children of such connections in high life were acknowledged in general, were looked after and educated, and were allowed to take their father's name, and not, as in modern times, starved, badged, and branded by being known as the offspring of their mother only. By the way, Horace Walpole, in a letter addressed to the Rev. William Mason on October 5th, 1777, throws some doubt on Burgoyne's origin. "You ask [says he] the history of Burgoyne the pompous. He is a natural son of Lord Bingley, who put him into the entail of the estate; but when young Lane came of age, the entail was cut off. He ran away with the old Lord Derby's daughter, and has been a fortunate gamester." (George Fox, afterwards Fox Lane, the collateral of the Lane Foxes of Bramham Park, Yorkshire, married on July 12th, 1731, Harriet, daughter and sole heiress of Robert Benson, Baron Bingley, and on May 13th, 1762, was himself created Baron Bingley. He died at Bramham Park on February 22nd, 1778, leaving no legitimate issue.) Horace Walpole's own origin is, of course, somewhat suspect. Despite his superb confidence in his provenance from the great Sir Robert Walpole, K.G., it has been suggested that he was really the son of Carr, Lord Hervey, the elder brother of Pope's *bête noir*, John Lord Hervey, the memoir-writer.

<sup>5</sup> The Lord Cornwallis alluded to is, of course, the general who, having fought so skilfully in the American War of Independence, subsequently became Governor-General of India and Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland. Born at Grosvenor Square on December 31st, 1738, the eldest son of Charles, 1st Earl Cornwallis, he died at Ghazipore, India, on October 5th, 1805.

<sup>6</sup> This Arnold is Benedict Arnold (1741-1801), the American general who, having heard of the arrest of Major André, with whom he had arranged the surrender of West Point, went over to the British side on September 25th, 1780, and was made a Brigadier-General. He never obtained active employment in the British Army; though when he came to England in 1782, he was received at Court with very great favour. By the way, Arnold's victim, Major André, was a friend of Miss Seward, "the Swan of Lichfield," one of Edward Jerningham's most voluminous correspondents.

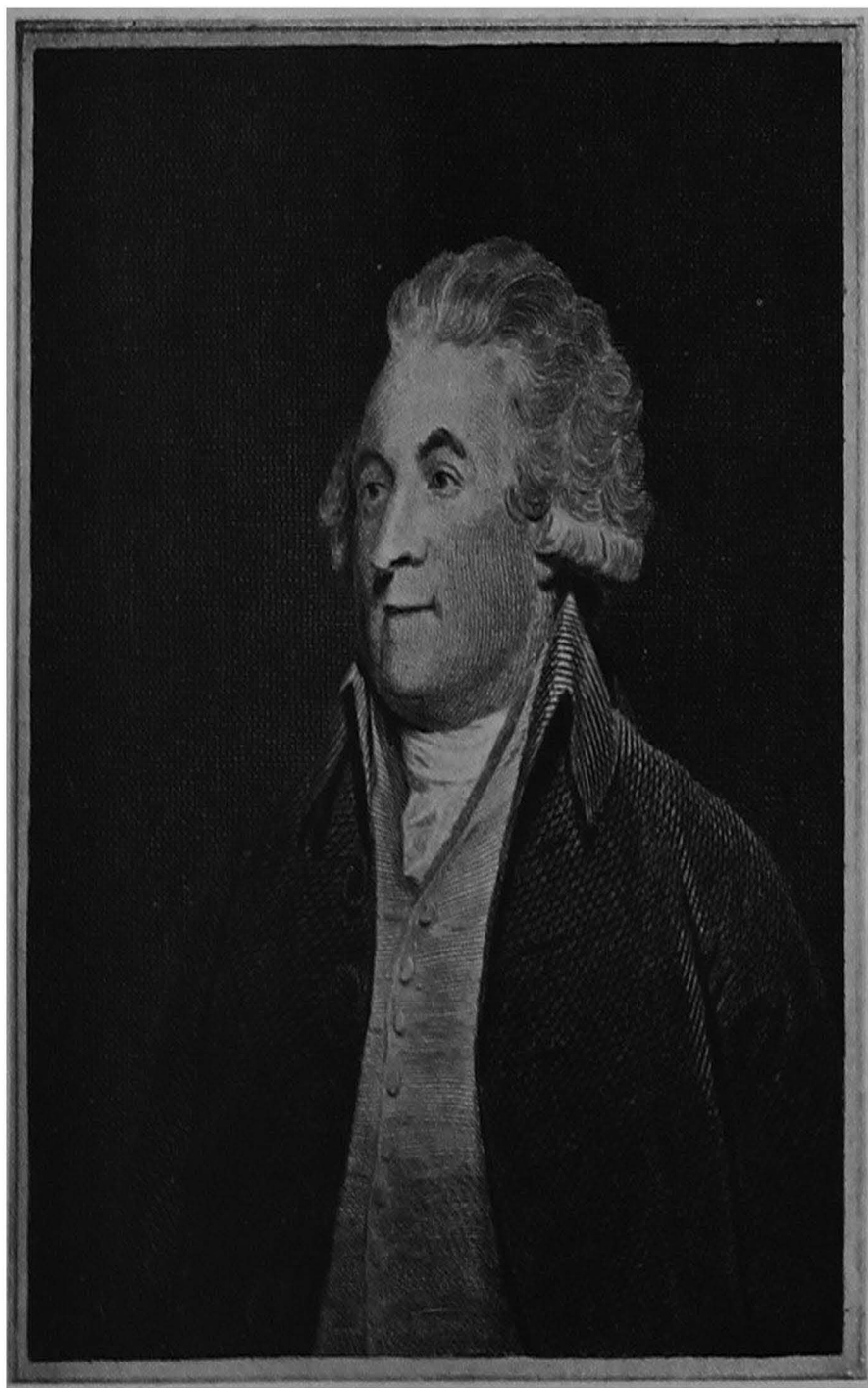
<sup>7</sup> Arnold married in April, 1779, as his second wife, Peggy (Margaret) Shippen, a beautiful and cultivated woman, youngest daughter of Edward Shippen, a loyalist.

<sup>8</sup> Charles was the Chevalier Jerningham, an officer in the French service, brother of Sir William and of Edward Jerningham.

<sup>9</sup> Presumably Mrs. Mary Bacon is Mary Bacon, 2nd daughter of Sir Edmund Bacon, 6th Baronet.

<sup>10</sup> This is probably an allusion to Sir Edmund Bacon, 8th and 9th Baronet, and his wife Lady Bacon, Anne, eldest daughter of Sir William Beauchamp Procter, Bart. Sir Edmund, who married Anne Beauchamp Procter on January 29th, 1778, was born on October 14th, 1749, and died on September 5th, 1820.

<sup>11, 12</sup> On February 27th, 1782, Pope Pius VI., who reigned from 1775 to 1799, actually left Rome for Vienna, where, though he was magnificently received by the Emperor, Joseph II., he was quite unsuccessful in the attempt he made to interfere with the social and ecclesiastical reforms which



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were being carried out by the Imperial minister, Kaunitz. Horace Walpole' in a letter to the Rev. William Cole, dated February 22nd, 1782, makes the following allusion to this Papal pilgrimage :—

"The act of the Emperor to which I alluded is the general destruction of convents in Flanders, and, I suppose, in his German dominions too. The Pope suppressed the Carnival, as mourning, and proposed a journey to Venice to implore mercy. This is a little different from the time when the Pontiffs, trod on the necks of Emperors, and called it trampling 'super aspidem et draconem.'"

"On February 27th, 1782, Lord George August Henry Cavendish, brother of William, 5th Duke of Devonshire, was married to Lady Elizabeth Compton, only daughter of Charles, 7th Earl of Northampton. Lord George was created Earl of Burlington on September 10th, 1831.

"This was Elizabeth, daughter of Admiral the Hon. Edward Boscawen, who became Duchess of Beaufort by her marriage with Henry, the 5th Duke, on January 2nd, 1766.

## 8

27th [otherwise unaddressed and undated,  
but probably written in the autumn of 1783.]

DEAR BROTHER,

I have to thank you for your present.—That complaint Lady Jerningham has in her eyelids is certainly a fever; and no exterior application will be of any use. The bark, and nothing but the bark, will be effectual. Lady Chesterfield had the same kind of indisposition last year in a much greater degree;<sup>1</sup> for her eyelids were closed. The faculty at first declared it to be paralytic; but by the advice of one of them, who differed from the others, she took a great quantity of bark, and was cured in a few days. I flatter myself Lady J——m has already taken the bark, and that her complaint is removed.

You have heard, I suppose, that Monsieur de Catinelar<sup>2</sup> is returned to England. He is as wild and romantick as ever; and his wife is come with him. Which destroys a good deal of his satisfaction; as he tells me it is a great constraint upon him. The reason of his bringing her was to quiet the complaints of her relations; who found fault with his perpetually escaping from his wife and lengthening a three weeks' absence into three months. She is a meek, pleasing kind of woman, has a remarkably fine shape and good eyes; but is not handsome.—They are gone into the country to-day to Mr. Seymour's,<sup>3</sup> who, you know, married a French woman who has remains of beauty and has just brought him a son and heir. Their country house is a few miles from town. My mother and I were to be of the party; but she was afraid of catching the rheumatism and I of catching ennui. I wish Cossey were some miles nearer; and I would bring instead of sending my best wishes and compliments.—Madame de Masserano<sup>4</sup> is arrived with her son and

his wife the bride. I have not yet seen them; I go this evening. I am told the bride and bridegroom are the ugliest pair that ever were seen.<sup>5</sup> However their arrival looks like pacific intentions on the side of Spain.—As for the French Ambassador,<sup>6</sup> he assumes a different line from his predecessor; and, as he could not surpass him in splendour, he intends to live in an elegant but simple style. He gives a dinner once a week; no balls, no suppers, no concerts. This will make him less popular than Monsr. de Guignes; but the graver part of the town will not esteem him the less.—I have a letter from Paris that speaks much of Mrs. Dillon;<sup>7</sup> that she is quite a first object there, notwithstanding Mrs. Boulton<sup>8</sup> did all she could to block up the road to success.—There is no news.—Lady Derby<sup>9</sup> pays already too dear for her late hours and dissipated life. She has confirmed gall stones, which makes her suffer martyrdom.—I am just come from a visit to Lady Fawkener,<sup>10</sup> who enquired much after you; she has been extremely ill.—Mrs. North, the Bishop's wife,<sup>11</sup> has given the town a good example of reformation. She was of Lady Derby's set, gamed very high, and was up all night. She is come to a sense of the impropriety of such a life; and, in order to enter upon a new plan effectually, she has parted with her house in town, and is gone to pass the whole winter at the Bishoprick.—I saw Mr. Townshend<sup>12</sup> yesterday: he goes into Norfolk to-morrow se'nnight.—Adieu, mon cher frère.—Have you planted much this year? Success attend your plantations, particularly the beautiful moving plantation within doors. My respects to the stately mother-elm; and, to carry on the metaphor, my best compliments to the sturdy American oak at Easton.—Mr. Luke Davy<sup>13</sup> solicits the honour of your standing for his next child: Mrs. Howard<sup>14</sup> is to be your partner at the Font.—Bid Suffield<sup>15</sup> write me some Norwich news.—Excuse my not sending this free.

<sup>5</sup> Since this letter, judged by the reference to the new French Ambassador and to the approach of winter, must have been written in the autumn of 1783, the Lady Chesterfield mentioned cannot be Petronilla Melusina von der Schnlenburg (natural daughter of King George I. by his mistress, the Duchess of Kendal, Countess of Walsingham in her own right, and widow of Philip Dormer Stanhope, the 4th and celebrated Earl of Chesterfield), who died on September 16th, 1778, but must be the first wife of Philip Stanhope, 5th Earl of Chesterfield. This lady, who was married to the Earl on August 20th, 1777, was Anne, daughter of the Rev. Robert Thistlethwayte, D.D., of Norman Court and Southwick Park, Hants, and died on October 20th, 1798. Horace Walpole tells Sir Horace Mann that the elder lady had had a stroke of the palsy in March, 1777; but he makes no allusion to the younger lady's eye-trouble.

<sup>6</sup> I can identify neither of these persons.

<sup>7</sup> The Prince of Masserano, the Spanish Ambassador to England, is mentioned several times by Horace Walpole between 1764 and 1777. He died on

November 16th in the latter year. Madame de Masserano was presumably his wife (or widow) and the mother of the bridegroom.

<sup>a</sup> I can obtain no information on this point.

<sup>b</sup> M. (later the Duc) de Guines was succeeded as French Ambassador in London by the Comte d'Adhémar, who arrived in this country about May, 1783

<sup>c</sup> The reference is probably to one of Lady Jerningham's two elder sisters-in-law. The Hon. Charles Dillon, subsequently the 12th Viscount Dillon, married first, on August 19th, 1776, Henrietta Maria, only daughter of Constantine, 1st Lord Mulgrave. The Hon. Arthur Dillon, lieut.-general in the French service, married first, in 1769, Lucie, daughter of the Comte de Rothe.

<sup>d</sup> I cannot identify the lady.

<sup>e</sup> Edward Smith-Stanley, 12th Earl of Derby, married first on June 23rd, 1774, Lady Elizabeth Douglas, only daughter of James, 6th Duke of Hamilton and Brandon. Horace Walpole, writing to Sir Horace Mann, on January 23rd, 1779, says of the Duke of Dorset:—"He is waiting for a Duchess till Lady Derby is divorced. He would not marry her before Lord Derby did; and now is forced to take her, when he himself has made her a very bad match." Lord Derby, however, did not divorce his wife, though he separated from her; and she died on March 14th, 1797. On May 1st, 1797, the Earl married the celebrated actress, Miss Eliza Farren, thus becoming the ancestor of the Earls of Wilton. He was born on Sept. 19th, 1752. The first Lady Derby was, of course, the daughter of the famous beauty, Elizabeth Gunning, and was born on January 28th, 1753.

<sup>f</sup> This was the lady mentioned by Horace Walpole on November 2nd, 1741, in a letter addressed to Sir Horace Mann. Speaking of Sir T. Robinson's ball he says:—"There was Churchill's daughter, who is prettyish and dances well." Writing to the same person from Arlington Street on February 23rd, 1747, Walpole says:—"Sir Everard Falkener is married to Miss Churchill." Elsewhere Walpole describes her as "sister of my brother-in-law, Mr. Churchill, a very intriguing woman, and intimate both with Lady Waldegrave and the Duchess of Cumberland."

Sir Robert Walpole's illegitimate daughter by his second wife, Maria Skerrett, had been given the precedence of an earl's daughter and accordingly was Lady Anna Maria Walpole. She married in 1745 Charles Churchill, natural son of Lieut.-General Charles Churchill by Mrs. Oldfield, the celebrated actress, and brother to Harriet Churchill, who married successively Sir Everard Fawkener, merchant and diplomatist, and Governor Pownall. Lieut.-General Charles Churchill himself was a natural son, his father being General Charles Churchill, elder brother of the famous Duke of Marlborough. Harriet Churchill was born in 1726 and in February, 1747, married Sir Everard Fawkener, who was forty-two years her senior. He was a silk and cloth merchant who had Voltaire domesticated with him when the French philosopher visited England from 1726 to 1729, and who was knighted and made ambassador to Constantinople in 1735. Subsequently Fawkener was made secretary to the Duke of Cumberland and accompanied him throughout his campaigns on the continent and in Scotland. From 1745 till his death (November 16th, 1758) he was joint Postmaster-General with the Earl of Leicester. On August 3rd, 1765, Lady Fawkener married Thomas Pownall (1722-1805), who had been Governor of Massachusetts from 1757 to 1769, and of South Carolina from 1769 to 1760; but, as this letter proves, written obviously after the marriage of Bishop North (January 17th, 1771), she still seems to have been generally known as Lady Fawkener. She died on February 6th, 1777. Pownall married again, taking as his second wife, on August 2nd, 1784, Hannah, widow of Richard Astell, of Everton House, Huntingdonshire. It

is interesting to note that both of the husbands of Harriet Churchill were associated with Benjamin Franklin: they are both mentioned, too, in Franklin's "Autobiography." Harriet herself seems to have been a true eighteenth-century realist, seeing clearly and acting without needless scruple. Writing to Thomas Warton, the historian of English poetry, on April 22nd, 1760, Gray tells an extraordinary story of the attempt made by "Lady F., Sir Ev. F.'s fine young widow," to enter the matrimonial state a second time. She wrote, it appears, to Mr. Chedwick, steward to the Duke of Cleveland, an anonymous letter offering him £3000 to be paid out of the estate if he would bring about a marriage between her and the Duke, and naming a place at which both parties might meet and negotiate matters. The Duke was at this time sixty-two years old and Lady Fawkener thirty-four. She defended the unusual expedient she had made use of for getting a second husband by saying that her children were unprovided for, and that, placed in her own case, all her friends would have done the same.

<sup>11</sup> Mrs. North was wife of the Hon. and Rev. Brownlow North (1714-1820), who was successively Bishop of Lichfield (1771-1774), of Worcester (1774-1781), and of Winchester (1781-1820), thanks to his being the half-brother of Lord North, the Prime Minister, whose nepotism the Bishop imitated by making his younger son, Charles Augustus, Prebendary of Winchester, by appointing that son's son, Brownlow, while yet an infant, registrar of the diocese, and by granting to other members of his family long leases of the property of the see at nominal fines. Horace Walpole, writing to the Rev. William Mason, on May 12th, 1778, tells a quaint story of Mrs. North. "About ten days ago I wanted a housemaid, and one presented herself very well recommended. I said, 'But, young woman, why do you leave your present place?' She said she could not support the hours she kept; that her lady never went to bed before three or four in the morning. 'Bless me, child,' said I, 'why, you tell me you live with a bishop's wife; I never heard that Mrs. North gamed or raked so late.' 'No, sir,' she said, 'but she is three hours undressing.' Upon my word, the edifice that takes three hours to demolish must at least be double the time in fabricating! Would not you for once sit up till morning to see the destruction of the pyramid and distribution of the materials? Do not mention this; for I did not take the girl, and she still assists at the daily and nightly revolutions of Babel." Mrs. North's maiden name was Henrietta Maria Bannister. She was the daughter and co-heiress of John Bannister and married Brownlow North on January 17th, 1771. She died in 1796. In the entry in her "Diary and Letters" for Saturday, July 5th, 1783, Fanny Burney makes the following allusion to Mrs. North:—"My father and I went to dinner at Winchester House, Chelsea. Mrs. North was rather cold at first, and reproached me with my long absence; but [she] soon made up, and almost forced from me a promise to go to Farnham as the only condition of her forgiveness. She is clever, bright, pleasing, eccentric, and amusingly whimsical; and she is also beautiful. But her manner has in it something alarming, that seems always upon the *qui vive*."

<sup>12</sup> Probably the reference is to Mr. Charles Townshend, the future Lord Bayning. See Note 22 on Edward Jerningham's 4th letter.

<sup>13</sup> I cannot identify Mr. Luke Davy.

<sup>14</sup> I cannot identify this lady.

<sup>15</sup> The Suffield here spoken of cannot be the first Lord Suffield, first because such a style of allusion would scarcely be in consonance with the formal character of eighteenth-century speech and letter-writing, and for the second and more important reason that this letter, was obviously written in the autumn of 1783, whereas Sir Harbord Harbord, 2nd Baronet and M.P. for

Norwich, was not created Baron Suffield till August 21st, 1786. Who this Suffield was I cannot say; but Suffield is a common name of persons as well as a place name.

## 9

*Letter of Edward Jerningham to Benjamin Parnell.*

Green Street, July 13th.

SIB,

I beg leave to convey to you my sentiments respecting the impropriety of your conduct towards me when I called upon you last. [Mr] Moore who accompanied me, (whose skill [and] professional integrity are as unquestionable [as your] own, and who possesses in a more [eminent] degree than yourself the manners [of a] gentleman is ready to assert that no [action] or word of mine could authorise [the ind]ecorum and illiberal intemperance [of behavi]our which you displayed. The tenor [of your co]nduct in this business has the ap[pear-ance] of your wishing to create a family—dissension. If that were your design, let me tell you that you have not succeeded. I rather think you have been the means of making the tie of kindred affection still stronger. Under this idea, I feel a sense of obligation to you, which mingles with the contemptuous disregard you compel me to entertain of Benjamin Parnell.

[Part of the left side of this letter has been torn off, and the words and letters inserted between square brackets indicate the attempt made by the editor, not, as usual, to elucidate the writer's meaning, but to supply the missing passages. From a brief professional letter found in the correspondence of Edward Jerningham and addressed to that gentleman from Gray's Inn on August 18th, 1793, it would appear that Benjamin Parnell was a solicitor.]

·II

EDMUND BURKE AND HORACE  
WALPOLE



LETTERS FROM EDMUND BURKE (1729-1797)

1

MY DEAR SIR,

The exchange of hats, in which I made the exchange of Diomed, was very lucky to me; since I received a present of great value from you.<sup>1</sup> My business must be what it must be; but you have taken care that my leisure shall not be unpleasant nor unfruitful. A thousand thanks. I am just now extremely occupied,<sup>2</sup> or I should say more to you about what I think of your other elegant performances; for this I have not read. But do me the favour to believe me always with high respect and regard,

My dear Sir,  
Your most obedient and humble servant,  
EDMUND BURKE.

Gerard Street, January 23rd, 1790.

<sup>1</sup> Edward Jerningham's "Enthusiasm" was published in 1789, and his "Lines on a late Resignation at the Royal Academy" in 1790. Probably it was one of these two poems that Burke found in Jerningham's hat.

<sup>2</sup> In writing his "Reflections on the Revolution in France."

2

DEAR SIR,

Your early and obliging approbation of my poor endeavours<sup>1</sup> to prevent some enthusiasts from running the Country into confusion and barbarism is highly flattering to me. You, who have done so much to approve and to adorn Literature, will naturally be partial to every attempt which is made to prevent it from being abused to its destruction. Be assured that I am exceedingly proud of having, by my good intentions,<sup>2</sup> been so happy as to merit your approbation.<sup>3</sup> I have the honour to be with great esteem and respect,

Dear Sir,  
Your most faithful and obedient humble servant,  
EDMUND BURKE.

Beaconsfield, November 18th, 1790.

<sup>1, 2</sup> That vein of extravagance which helped so largely to spoil the effect of Burke's Parliamentary oratory is conspicuous in the 2nd, 3rd and 4th of his

letters to Edward Jerningham, which are all largely tinged by the pride which speaks humility. When Burke describes himself as Jerningham's "weak fellow labourer" or as "furnishing the crude materials to Miss Wilkes's skill," he enables us to understand the pretexts doubtless put forward by the Whig leaders for twice excluding from the Cabinet the statesman who furnished the party with its brains. Burke had "wit at will"; but he had not an atom of tact and not a glimmering of a sense of humour. And these defects of temperament were made the excuse for refusing him high official rank, the real reason being, of course, his inability to boast himself a member of a great Whig family.

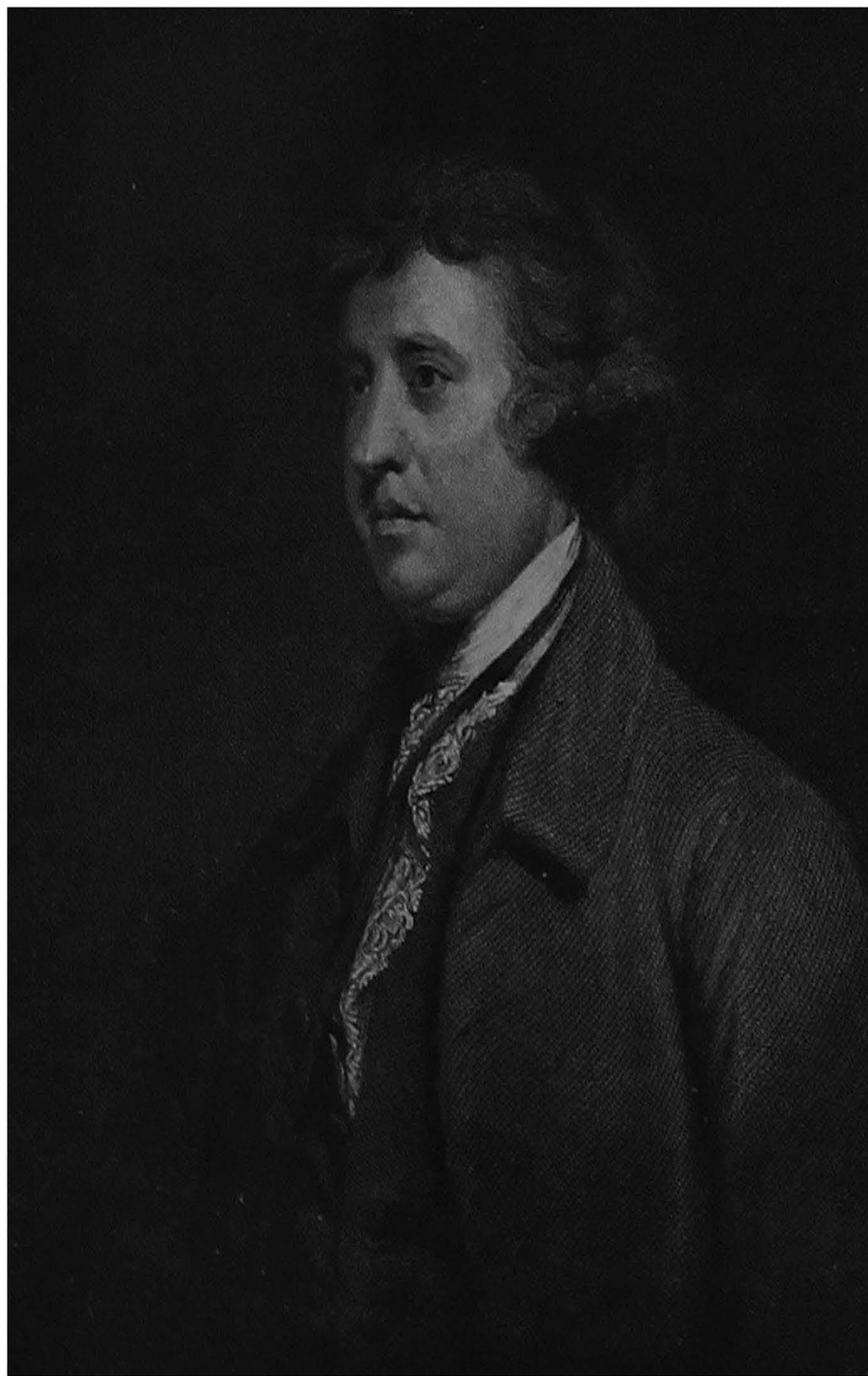
<sup>2</sup> Of the "Reflections," which were published on November 1st, 1790.

## 3

SIR,

I owe you my best thanks for the obliging present you have made me of your fine poem on "The Shakespeare Gallery." I have not for a long time seen anything so well finished. You have caught new fire by approaching, in your Perihelion, so near to the Sun of our poetical System.<sup>1</sup> How long will the astronomers calculate the time before you can cool? The Painters have warmed their imaginations at the same Reservoir of heat and light. You reflect new rays on them. Their pictures have never been before placed in a light so advantageous to them.

I am happy that the Dutchess de Biron, for whom I have long had the greatest possible respect, has condescended to think favourably of what was nothing more than well intended.<sup>2</sup> The execution fell short indeed of my wishes in favour of a cause so interesting to humanity, to national freedom, to all the morals, and to all the elegancies, ornaments, and decencies of life. One Paragraph however had merit, when it passed thro' the hands of so perfect a judge both of the French and of the English Language as Miss Wilks.<sup>3</sup> If what that Lady has done should afford a moment's melancholy consolation to illustrious persons sinking under unmerited Calamities, I should think myself happy in furnishing the crude materials to her skill. It may be something to the support of greatness oppressed to find that a great nation sympathises in the misfortunes of its rival; and that the power, with which she has had so many a noble struggle, should, after resisting all her force and virtue, perish in an inglorious manner and by base hands, is a circumstance which excites in her a generous compassion. I hope these Sentiments are prevalent where they are more forcibly demanded. If the Natural friends and allies of France should think themselves unconcerned in the dreadful oppression that is suffered in that nation, I think miserably of their heads and of their hearts. But if they should take the steps that their faith, their feelings, and their true Interests demand from



**EDMUND BURKE**

them, I conceive that other powers would greatly mistake their real and permanent advantages, if they put any impediment in their way. But all these things are above my sphere.  
*Cynthia amarem.*<sup>4</sup>

Pray present my most humble respects to the Dutchess de Biron, and to the Comtesse de Boufflers,<sup>5</sup> if you see her,  
I have the honour to be

Sir,

Your most obedient and obliged humble servant,  
EDMUND BURKE.

Beaconsfield, January 18th, 1791.

<sup>1</sup> Readers will note that Burke's praise of Jerningham's poem, though seemingly enthusiastic, is really very artfully guarded.

<sup>2</sup> The allusion is to the "Reflections."

<sup>3</sup> Miss Wilkes had gained her knowledge of French by accompanying her father on that exile to France which the hostility of Parliament had compelled him to undergo.

<sup>4</sup> I do not recognise this quotation.

<sup>5</sup> Henriette de Sanjou, Comtesse de Boufflers, correspondent of Hume, and mistress of the Prince de Conti. She understood English, and was introduced to Dr. Johnson by Topham Beauclerk.

4

MY DEAR SIR,

You will have the goodness to excuse me in using the hand of a Friend in making the acknowledgements which are so justly due to you on my part for the valuable present of your fine poem.<sup>1</sup> The publick is much concerned in this exertion of your genius; and my Fame, if Fame could be, or ought to be, an object to me, gives me a concern in it. The best use I could make of my hand would be to make it express the dictates of my heart on this occasion; but the truth is, I have been, and I am, extremely ill,<sup>2</sup> and there are few hours in the four and twenty which I am not obliged to pass in my bed or on my couch. "Infirmity," (as one of your Poets says) "doth still neglect all office."<sup>3</sup> I assure you I read your piece with great pleasure. The Conceptions are just, the sentiments affecting, and the pictures forcible and true. I can say that I am not particular in this opinion; nor am I bribed to it by your indulgence to me, your weak fellow Labourer in the same cause. Mr. Windham,<sup>4</sup> I understand, and he has a judgement not to be deceived or corrupted by praise, thinks of your Poem as I do. There are some lines in it less finished than the thoughts conveyed in them deserve. The Poets of this time fall short of their immediate Predecessors rather than not labouring their compositions to the perfection of the Art than in any want of natural capacity. After the elaborate things that we have seen at the end of the last Age nearly to the

middle of this, we are become more fastidious than perhaps we ought to be with regard to the last hand that is given to verses. You are yet happily young and strong enough<sup>5</sup> to be able to give to the work of your genius all the advantages of art and discipline with regard to the more mechanical but not less essential part of poetical composition; and I have the satisfaction of observing that your last piece is far less deficient in these more minute excellencies than any of your former, whilst it exceeds them in vigour and spirit.

I have the honour to be, with most sincere respect and regard,

Dear Sir,

Your most obedient, most obliged, and most faithful humble servant,

EDMUND BURKE.

Beaconsfield, December 18th, 1796.

<sup>1</sup> "Peace, Ignominy, and Destruction," a poem of Jerningham's issued anonymously and ironically dedicated to Charles James Fox, was published in 1796.

<sup>2</sup> Burke had had a severe attack of illness in July of this year. He died on July 9th, 1797. His disease was discovered after his death to be internal abscesses.

<sup>3</sup> The Poet is Shakespeare, and the quotation is taken from "King Lear," ii. 4—

"Infirmity doth still neglect all office,  
To which our health is bound."

<sup>4</sup> William Windham (1750-1810), the well-known Whig statesman, a statesman at once so charming and so instable that he may be called the Earl of Rosebery of his time. The French Revolution made him a Pittite, and in 1794 he became Secretary at War, with a seat in the Cabinet. Subsequently he rejoined the Whigs, becoming War and Colonial Minister in the Grenville-Fox Administration of 1806. A member of the Literary Club, he soothed the last moments both of Johnson and of Burke. A cadet of an old Norfolk family, he was one of Edward Jerningham's correspondents.

<sup>5</sup> At this time the poet was in his sixtieth year!

## LETTERS FROM THREE WELL-KNOWN STATESMEN

*Letter from the Earl of Chesterfield.*

Black-heath, August the 12th, 1765.

SIR,

I do not know whether I can with decency acknowledge the favour of your Poetical letter of the 7th.<sup>1</sup> But Men, as well as Women, are very apt to break through decency when desire is very strong; as mine, I assure you, is to thank you for it. Could I give you as good as you bring, my thanks should be conveyed to you in Rhyme and Metre; but the Muses, who never were very propitious to me when I was young, would now laugh at, and be as deaf as I am, to the

invocation of a Septuagenary Invalid. Accept then my humblest thanks, in humble prose, for your very good verses upon a very indifferent subject; which, should you be reproached with, you may very justly make the same answer that your Predecessor, Waller, did to King Charles after the Restoration. The King accused him of having made finer verses in praise of Oliver Cromwell than of himself; to which he agreed, saying that fiction was the soul of Poetry.<sup>2</sup> Am I not generous to help you out of this scrape at my own expence? I am sensible that, before I send this letter, I ought to show some commonplace modesty at least, and protest to you that I am ashamed, confounded, and in a manner annihilated, by the praises you most undeservedly bestow upon me; but I will not, because, if I did, I should lie confoundedly. For every human creature has vanity, and perhaps I have full as much as another. The only difference is that some people disown any, and others avow it; whereas I have truth and impudence enough to say,

“Tu m'adull ma tu mi piaci.”

What am I to suppose you are now doing in Norfolk?

“Scribere quod Casii Parmensis opuscula vincat,  
An sylvas inter et montes reptare salubres.”<sup>3</sup>

If you stray among the Hills, Vales and purling streams, it is to make your court to the Muses, who have long had such an affection for you that (I will answer for it) they will meet you wherever you please to appoint them. If to those Nine Ideal Ladies you add a tenth, of real good country flesh and blood, I cannot help it; but God forbid that I should advise it. In all events, I believe you would be equal to the ten.

I am with equal truth and esteem,

Sir,

Your most faithful humble servant,

CHESTERFIELD.

I desire my respects to Lady Jerningham; but not one word of the tenth Muse.

<sup>1</sup> The last two stanzas of this letter run:—

“Though deafness, by a doom severe,  
Steals from thy ear the murm'ring rill,  
And Philomel's delightful air;  
E'en deem this but a partial ill.

“Ah! If anew thy ear was strung,  
Awake to ev'ry voice around,  
Thy praises by the many sung  
Would stun thee with the choral sound.”

<sup>3</sup> Chesterfield's is a free rendering of Waller's reply, which is generally given as, “Sir, we poets never succeed so well in writing truth as in fiction.”

\* Chesterfield, quoting from memory, has made rather a hash of the second line, which should run—

“An tacitum silvas inter reptare salubres.”

The lines are from Horace's Epistles, Book I, Letter IV.

*Letter from the Earl of Shelburne.*

Bowood Park, 22nd December, 1784,

SIR,

I am much honour'd by the Interest you are so good to take in what regards me,<sup>1</sup> and still more so by your good opinion. But, as I wish for a continuance of it, I must beg to undeceive you as to my Pretensions to Learning. 'Tis my Ignorance has made me sometimes seek the company and friendship of Men of Letters, in hopes by their conversation to remedye in some degree the consequences of a bad education.<sup>2</sup> Upon condition of your giving me credit for this, which without affectation is the fact, and upon no other, I would desire the honour of your company here some time when you are not better engag'd. Instead of a place to exercise your acknowledg'd Talents, You will find it, I hope, a good place to rest them; as it will give me great pleasure to assure you of the Truth and Regard with which I have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your most obedient and most humble servant,

LANSDOWN.

<sup>1</sup> William Petty (1737-1806), 2nd Earl of Shelburne, had been created Marquis of Lansdowns on December 6th of this year, as a reward for his support of Pitt. From July 6th, 1782, to February 24th, 1783, he had been Prime Minister.

<sup>2</sup> According to the "Autobiography" contained in Lord Fitzmaurice's "Life of Shelburne," this consisted in his having been "sent to an ordinary public school," then "shut up with a private tutor," and then sent to Christ Church, where he "had again the misfortune to fall under a narrow-minded tutor." It does not sound a very convincing indictment.

*Letter from William Windham.*

DEAR SIR,

I had not till this moment read your Poem<sup>1</sup> (though I had laid it by for that purpose previously even to my being informed by whom it was written,<sup>2</sup> or of the handsome compliment which I was to find in it to myself), or I should not have delayed till now to express to you the lively pleasure it has given me, and the respect I feel both for the spirit which it breathes, and the force with which that spirit is expressed. It is no inconsiderable compliment to say that I think it one

of the very happiest of your compositions; and that it does as much credit to your poetical talents as to your patriotic feelings. I wish with all my heart you could inspire into the Country a little of the spirit of your poetry, or a little of the Poetical spirit in general. It is the want of that that is one of the evils of the time: a Genuine son of the Muses can hardly be a democrat.

January 14th [1797].

I had written what is above I know not how long since; and might, you may think, have found another piece of paper to repeat the same sentiments. But I was willing to show that my neglect was not quite so great as it appeared to be, and that I did not want the new obligation, for which I am now to thank you, in order to call forth my acknowledgements for the first. I am happy that somebody more just to me than I had been to myself<sup>1</sup> had made known to you the opinion which I have expressed above, and which a second perusal of the poem has served only to confirm. You will not be disposed to regret with any very lively affliction the return of Lord Malmesbury;<sup>2</sup> and [you] may think perhaps that the Insolence of the Enemy has stood us in better stead than our sense of dignity. If the country however has not of itself, or is not taught by some good Tyrtaeus, a juster sense of the insults offered to it, I am afraid we shall not be the better for our kicking. Two things we might have expected: First that the authors of these measures<sup>3</sup> should be considered as being tolerably earnest in their desires for peace, And then that the rejection of the overtures made, aggravated too with every species of insult, should have excited in the country a more determined and indignant spirit for carrying on the War. Perhaps the second copy of your work, which I have not yet been able to look into, may contain something of this sort. We must look to poetry; for I don't think we can hope for much inflammation from our Oratory.<sup>4</sup> You will at least have the satisfaction of having well executed your part.

I am, Dear Sir,

Your very Obedient and Faithful Humble Servant,

W. WINDHAM.

<sup>1</sup> "Peace, Ignominy, and Destruction."

<sup>2</sup> The poem was published anonymously.

<sup>3</sup> Burke, in his letter to Jerningham of December 18th, 1796.

<sup>4</sup> In the autumn of 1796 the Portland Whigs, influenced by Burke's "Letters on a Regicide Peace," were still opposed to coming to any terms with the French Directory. Despite their opposition, Pitt sent the Earl of Malmesbury to Paris to open negotiations. Malmesbury arrived in Paris on October 22nd; but after spending two months in preliminaries he was unable to prove to the French Government that he was vested with plenipotentiary



powers. He was thereupon given his passports and ordered to leave Paris within forty-eight hours.

\* It is rather extraordinary that a Cabinet Minister, writing to a private person and holding the office of Minister for War, should have allowed himself to reflect in this fashion on the Prime Minister.

\* Another reflection on Pitt, who in Windham's opinion evidently was quite unable to fill the gap in Parliamentary Oratory caused by Burke's withdrawal from the House of Commons.

## LETTERS FROM HORACE WALPOLE (EARL OF ORFORD) (1717-1797)

I

Arlington Street, Feb. 18th, 1778.

DEAR SIR,

If I was Speaker of both Houses and of all Houses, I would return you the thanks of the Public for the new volume of your Poems. To thank you for your present to myself is too cold and too selfish. Gratitude is a return to a mark of friendship; but a private Individual can no more pay the Debts of the Public than the Public can pay—any of its own. Nay, I cannot, like the Nation, pay you interest by a poetic annuity; so I must call your gift by that long obsolete, but now revived, term, a *Benevolence*.

*Yours*, I hope, will grow an established Duty; as if you presented a brace of carp to a Judge on the circuit, all the twelve Judges would claim them for ever, as often as they go their rounds of *justice* near your fish pond.

I have not time to tell you all I like in your small volume; but must mention one passage that struck me particularly, as touches of nature and tenderness always do. Margaret's answer to the Robber, where he says

"If thou hast aught concealed  
Within this wood, give me the hoarded treasure."

And she replies

"Ah! Here is all my Treasure" (pointing to her child).

This is sweetly pathetic, and preferable to all the poetry of Pindar, that soars out of sight, and beyond comprehension. I love Poets that speak to the heart's ears; for those that grow on the head, and whose veins only go to the brain, and not to the palpitation of the heart, I do not value them of a rush. I own that, when the Brain, on revision, confirms the heart's tears, the Bard has double merit. Treble, if the Brain discovers more than the heart conceived. And your Hemistich has that triple portion. The Sentence would penetrate in the mouth of any Mother; when it is a Queen that has lost Husband, Crown, Power, Court, everything but her child, the Thought

improves on reflection, and deepens all the accents on *here*, all, *my*, *treasure*. An Actress would perhaps be to blame to pronounce all those fond Syllables with the full emphasis that belongs to them; for *here* is opposed to England, *all* to the Exchequer, *my* to the regal style *Ours*, and *Treasure* transfers the Idea of riches to that of an only child.

I beg your pardon, and may have refined too much. We Commentators do sometimes discover more than our Author intended; but when Nature speaks, it is prodigious how far the justness of her thoughts will vibrate. Shakespeare, who wrote down what she dictated, must often have perceived more beauties than he was aware of at first, in committing her words to paper. I have taken up too much of your time, and am Dear Sir,

Your obliged humble servant,

HOR. WALPOLE.

The "historical interlude" of Edward Jerningham's, styled "Margaret of Anjou," was produced at Drury Lane Theatre on March 11th, 1777, on the occasion of Miss Younge's benefit, and played along with "The Rivals." The incident on which it is based is mentioned by Hume, the time being soon after the battle of Hexham. Miss Younge acted Margaret, and in Sheridan's comedy appeared as Lydia Languish to the Captain Absolute of John Palmer. "Margaret of Anjou" was included in the author's "Fugitive Poetical Pieces," published in 1778.

2

I know how awkward it is to *prier* a man of the world on a opera night. However, as you cannot be so much awkwarder as to go thither before it is over, I must tell you that I shall have a private party to-morrow night for the Vesey's,<sup>1</sup> which will begin at the beginning. And you may go to the Hay-market afterwards, and complain that you have been forced to go to a place where everybody was come before it was time for them to go away;<sup>2</sup> but indeed it was at an old gentleman's of the last Century, who had lived long before the World had found out that there is no real diversion upon earth but in being too late for every one.

Monday.

<sup>1</sup> Inasmuch as Mr. Vesey died early in June, 1785, this letter must date before that event, and rank second in order of the letters written by Horace Walpole to Edward Jerningham.

Elizabeth Vesey (1715-1791), "the blue-stocking" leader, was the second daughter of Sir Thomas Vesey, Baronet, and Bishop of Ossory. She married, first, William Handcock, of Willsbrook, Westmeath, M.P. for Fore, and secondly (before 1746), Agmondesham Vesey, M.P. for Harviestoun, co. Kildare, and Kinsala, co. Cork, and Accountant General of Ireland from 1767. He died early in June, 1785, having been elected a member of "The Club" on April 2nd, 1778, through Edmund Burke's influence, and having been made a Privy Councillor of Ireland in the spring of 1776. Mrs. Vesey's parties, which

Horace Walpole, writing to Mason on February 5th, 1781, nicknamed "Babels," attained their greatest celebrity between the years 1770 and 1784. They took place at her house, which from 1768 to 1780 was in Bolton Row, and from 1780 onwards was in Clarges Street. They were given every other Tuesday down to January, 1788, the members of "The Club" dining together on that day and coming to Mrs. Vesey's afterwards. By 1788 Mrs. Vesey had become very depressed and had largely lost her memory. Mrs. Handcock, the sister of her first husband, who had lived with her for a good many years, died in February, 1789. By that time Mrs. Vesey had been "bereft of her faculties"; but she lingered on in this state till 1791.

<sup>2</sup> This custom of going late to all assemblies and places of amusement was rather a favourite topic with Horace Walpole. Writing to the Rev. William Mason on February 19th, 1781, he declares: "They who are called *the people of fashion* or *the ton* have contributed nothing of their own [to entertainments] but *being too late*; nay, actually do go to most public diversions after they are over." Writing to Miss Mary and Miss Agnes Berry on June 23rd, 1789, six days after the Opera House had been burnt down, he says:—

"Have you shed a tear over the Opera House? Or do you agree with me that there is no occasion to rebuild it! The nation has long been tired of operas, and has now a good opportunity of dropping them. Dancing protracted their existence for some time; but *the room after* was the real support of both, and was like what has been said of your sex, that they never speak their true meaning but in the postscript of their letters. Would not it be sufficient to build an after-room on the whole 'emplacement,' to which people might resort from all assemblies? It should be a codicil to all the diversions of London; and the greater the concourse, the more excuse there would be for staying all night, from the impossibility of ladies getting their coaches to drive up. To be crowded to death in a waiting-room, at the end of an entertainment, is the whole joy; for who goes to any diversion till the last minute of it? I am persuaded that, instead of retrenching St. Athanasius's Creed, as the Duke of Grafton proposed in order to draw *good company* to church, it would be more efficacious if the congregation were to be indulged with an after-room in the vestry. And instead of two or three being gathered together, there would be all the world, before prayers would be quite over."

Again, writing to Miss Mary Berry on November 18th, 1790, he remarks:—

"It is entirely out of fashion for women to grow old and stay at home in an evening. They invite you, indeed, now and then, but do not expect to see you till midnight; which is rather too late to begin the day, unless one was born but twenty years ago. I do not condemn any fashions, which the young ought to set, for the old certainly ought not; but an oak, that has been going on in its old way for an hundred years, cannot shoot into a Maypole in three years, because it is the mode to plant Lombardy poplars."

## 3

Strawberry Hill, August 8rd, 1785.

I am rejoiced, dear Sir, to hear that Lady Jerningham is revived, and that her amendment will procure me the pleasure of your company to Park Place,<sup>1</sup> where I am sure you will be most welcome, as you will be here on Friday morning to

Your obedient servant,  
H. WALPOLE.

<sup>1</sup> Park Place, Henley, was the seat of General Conway. It was bought by him in 1752, and after his death in 1795, it was sold to James Harris, the 1st Earl of Malmesbury. Horace Walpole could assure a welcome to Edward Jerningham at Park Place, since its owner was not only his frequent correspondent but his first cousin, Walpole's mother being Catherine, and Conway's being Charlotte, both daughters of Sir John Shorter, Lord Mayor of London.

## 4

August or September, 1785 [no date or address written].

Thank you, dear Sir, for your curious news. I am rather sorry for it; as I suppose it will please the Emperor to hear that a Cardinal is sent to prison for forgery.<sup>1</sup> And his Imperial Rapacity<sup>2</sup> is such a Tyrant, that he will commit new injustice on pretence of punishing your Church. I was not acquainted with the Cardinal de Rohan. Pray was he not a cousin of that capital swindler the Prince de Guémené?<sup>3</sup>

The manners of Nations seem to cross over and figure in. In France two Rohans and a Cardinal punished for petty larceny! In England—oh, I will not incur the penalty of Scandalum Magnatum; but at least the greatest Rogues are not sent to Newgate.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The Cardinal de Rohan was arrested in connection with the mysterious "affair of the diamond necklace," on August 15th, 1785.

<sup>2</sup> Joseph II., German Emperor, reigned from 1780 to 1790, and so had no responsibility for any of the three partitions of Poland (1772, 1793 and 1795). Walpole describes him as "His Imperial Rapacity" because he suppressed so many of the religious houses in his dominions.

<sup>3</sup> Writing on November 5th, 1782, to the Countess of Upper Ossory, Walpole says:—"Apropos to millions, have you heard, Madam, of the Prince de Guémené's breaking for 28,000,000 of livres? Would not one think it was a debt contracted by the two Foleys?" Mention of the Foleys makes necessary another reference to the letters of Walpole. Writing to Sir Horace Mann, on August 11th, 1776, he had said, "Can you believe that Lord Foley's two sons (Thomas and Edward) have borrowed money so extravagantly that the interest they have contracted to pay amounts to eighteen thousand pounds a year? I write the sum at length, lest you should think I have mistaken, and set down two or three figures too much."

<sup>4</sup> A sentiment as old as the earliest moralist, but certainly rather redolent of Fielding's "Jonathan Wild."

## 5

Strawberry Hill, Friday 6th.

I take your intention of coming hither on Sunday so kindly, dear Sir, that I write to accept it on purpose that you may not think yourself at liberty to change your mind. You must not venture to return at night; for there is a body of 200 footpads between this place and Isleworth, three regiments of House-breakers at Brentford, between three and four thousand Highwaymen encamped at Turnham-green, and a whole army of

Nabobs<sup>1</sup> at Knightsbridge, who plunder and murder without any treachery. I can send you safely back the next day to Lady Jerningham: an Air-balloon<sup>2</sup> sets out every morning from the Mun [or "Shun"] Gulph's head, and puts up at the Moon in Moorfields.

Your affectionate cousin,  
H. FITZOSBERT.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> I need scarcely explain that Nabobs was the name popularly given to persons who had enriched themselves in the Honourable East India Company's service by the plunder of native princes and peoples. Nabobs generally returned to this country to buy out old English families and to enter Parliament. In many respects they were the counterparts in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries of our own South African millionaires; and they were far from being popular. A Nabob figures prominently in Boswell's "Letters to Temple"; Foote satirised the Nabob in his three-act comedy of that name produced at the Haymarket on June 29th, 1792; and William Cobbett, in his "Rural Rides," is never tired of denouncing the clan.

The word "nabob" is an Anglo-Indian corruption of "Nawáb," the phrase used to describe an administrator of a province under the Mogul Empire.

<sup>2</sup> This reference to an "air-balloon" gives no very definite clue to the date of this letter; for between 1783 and 1786 such allusions are fairly frequent in Horace Walpole's letters.

<sup>3</sup> This recondite subscription seems to be explained by the following extract from a letter which Horace Walpole wrote to the Rev. William Cole from Strawberry Hill on June 5th, 1775:—

"I have recovered a barony in fee, which has no defect but in being antecedent to any summons to Parliament, that of the Fitz-Osberts; and on my mother's side it has mounted the Lord knows whither, by the Philipps's to Henry VIII., and has sucked in Dryden for a great-uncle; and by Lady Philipps's mother, Darcy, to Edward III. And here I stop for brevity's sake; especially as Edward III. is a second Adam. Who almost is not descended from Edward III.? As posterity will be from Charles II., and all the princes in Europe from James I."

Through their kinship with the Fitz-Osberts the Jerninghams are connected with the Walpoles. Sir Henry Stafford Jerningham, the present Baronet, and the owner of the Edward Jerningham Correspondence, has kindly furnished me with the following particulars of the Fitz-Osbert strain in his family, taken from an old genealogical table: "Sir Walter Jernegan of Horham, Knight, married Isabel, daughter and co-heir of Sir Peter Fitz-Osbert of Somerley Town in Suffolk. She survived him, but died before 1334." The son of this marriage, Sir Peter Jernegan, inherited Somerley Town from his mother.

6

Strawberry Hill, July 30th, 1789.

DEAR SIR,

I shall be extremely glad to see you on Saturday; and thank you for proposing it, and for staying all night. But alas! I am sorry that your Muse is not pregnant; for my Apollo is so old, though not troubled with the rickets like the



**HORACE WALPOLE**

Emperor, that I fear he will not be able to impregnate Her. However, I have some hopes of your finding Lady Ailesbury and Mr. Conway here; and he is still so vigorous a Poet, that who knows but he may do your Madame Clio's business? I can at worst be your accoucheur; or my assistant Kirgate<sup>1</sup> shall, who has just delivered the Virgin Hannah of a Divine Babe, of which she fell in labour on fancying she saw a Ghost.<sup>2</sup>

Yours most sincerely,

H. WALPOLE.

<sup>1</sup> Thomas Kirgate, Horace Walpole's printer and secretary.

<sup>2</sup> The "Divine Babe" was a poem of Hannah More's, called "Bonner's Ghost," which was privately printed by Horace Walpole. It is mentioned several times in Walpole's letters, but not in the "Dict. Natl. Biography" memoir of Hannah More.

## 7

Strawberry Hill, August 9th, 1789.

DEAR SIR,

You have the genteelest way in the world of calling whore and rogue; for a Constable is no better, who stops a young Woman on King Apollo's high way, and presses her to own her bastard child. You then almost lay it to me; and then, as if I were a god, my illegitimate babe becomes Immortal! Well, you verify the old saying, that extremes meet. It is difficult to be more distant in quantity of person than Falstaff and I; yet, like him, I am the cause of wit in other men. And though you have laid a child to me, you silyly laugh at my age and meagre figure, and tell me I could beget nothing but a ghost. My Phantom Issue, however, is not so very incorporeal; for it has propogated by your Muse. And if the Bantling did not cajole its Grandpapa so immeasurably, I should be very proud of producing Master Fitzbonner, and suckling him in the nursery of

Your most obliged humble servant,

H. WALPOLE.

Apparently this joke, rather laboured in more senses than one, is an allusion to "Enthusiasm," the only poem published by Edward Jerningham in 1789.

## 8

Strawberry Hill, Wednesday, November 10th [1790].

DEAR SIR,

As your letter has no date of day, week, month, or year, and as I receive it to-day, I conclude next Tuesday does not mean yesterday, but a certain Tuesday in next week, when, or any Tuesday, but those that are dead and gone, I shall be happy to have your Company. On Sunday next I believe I shall be in town myself.

Delighted with Mr. Burke?<sup>1</sup> Yes, so delighted that I have redde him twice; and, if I were not so old, and had not lost my Memory, I would try to get his whole book by heart. It is the wisest book I ever redde in my life, and after that the wittiest. It ought to be translated into all languages, and commented and preached in all Churches in portions. Pray has not Dr. Price hanged himself?<sup>2</sup>

I have been reading at the Antipodes too. That is, Mrs. Hervey<sup>3</sup> had "The Laurel of Liberty"<sup>4</sup> at Park Place, and I dipped into it. And therefore I found "cobweb tears" and "lute-string Oceans," new productions, if not of nature, at least of Art; and I suppose to be had at the new Birmingham warehouse of the original Maker.<sup>5</sup> But keep my secret; I don't desire to be hoisted à la Lanterne. For modern Liberty is very captious, and since the new Crime of Leze-Nation has been invented, one may commit treason against anybody's Majesty in a whole Country, or perhaps against their high and mighty Allies in any other Country. Adieu!

Yours, &c.,  
H. W.

<sup>1</sup> Burke's "Reflections on the Revolution in France" was published on November 1st, 1790.

<sup>2</sup> Burke's famous work was largely called forth by a sermon preached at the Meeting House in the Old Jewry on November 4th, 1789, by Dr. Richard Price. In this discourse, "On the Love of our Country," Dr. Price observed: "I could almost say, 'Lord, now lettest Thou Thy servant depart in peace; for mine eyes have seen Thy salvation:' . . . After sharing in the benefits of one revolution, I have been spared to be a witness to two other revolutions, both glorious." The two other revolutions were of course the American Revolution, or War of Independence, and the French Revolution. The "one revolution" was the Revolution of 1688.

<sup>3</sup> This lady, Elizabeth, only child of Francis Marsh, married Colonel William Thomas Hervey, of the Guards, son of the Hon. Thomas Hervey, and nephew of the famous John, Lord Hervey, and a grandson of John Hervey, 1st Earl of Bristol. At this time she was a widow.

Mrs. Elizabeth Hervey was the daughter of the Hon. William Hervey, Captain B.N., and a niece of Dr. Johnson's friends the Hon. Thomas Hervey and the Hon. and Rev. Henry Hervey. She gave assemblies which Dr. Johnson attended, and died unmarried after 1800, the title "Mrs." often being given in the 18th century to a spinster lady who had reached mature age.

The Hon. and Rev. Henry Hervey, married Catherine Aston, sister of Johnson's favourite, Molly Aston, who married Captain Brodie, B.N.

<sup>4</sup> Captain Merry (1755-1798), better known as "Della Crusca," the poet of Major Topham's periodical, *The World*, brought out his poem, "The Laurel of Liberty," in 1790, under his own name. It was a defence of the French Revolution, of which Merry was always an ardent enthusiast. Largely mixed up with the amateur and professional theatrical life of his time, he married, in 1791, the well-known actress Elizabeth Brunton, whose sister Louisa, also an actress, married William, 7th Baron and 1st Earl Craven of the second creation, in 1807.



\* This seems to be an allusion to Dr. Priestley, who from 1780 to 1791 was minister of the New Meeting, a Unitarian Chapel, at Birmingham. Early in 1791 he founded the "Unitarian Society." On Thursday, July 14th, 1791, thinking him present at a dinner given on that evening by the Birmingham Constitutional Society to commemorate the fall of the Bastille, the mob attacked his house at Fairhill, a mile from Birmingham, and destroyed nearly all his books, papers and scientific apparatus.

The defeat of Fox's motion for the repeal of the Test and Corporation Acts (March 2nd, 1790) was largely caused by the preface of Priestley's "Letters," addressed to the Rev. Edward Burn, Curate at St. Mary's Chapel, Birmingham.

III

THE FIFTH EARL OF CARLISLE

AN ACCOUNT OF FREDERICK HOWARD, FIFTH  
EARL OF CARLISLE (1748-1825)

LIKE most men of ample opportunities, various activities and small achievement, the fifth Earl of Carlisle may be regarded eulogistically or dyslogistically, according to the mood or standard of the appraiser. In the latter case he may be dismissed, as Byron dismisses him, as one of "the mob of gentlemen who write with ease," and who take as easy and as profitless a part in public life as they take in literature. In the former case his "heterogeneous honours" may claim a certain cumulative value, entitling him to the praise of being something of a politician and of a diplomat, a not altogether contemptible versifier and playwright, and a generous collector and patron of the arts. That he was a fine gentleman of the William Congreve and Horace Walpole type, professing to despise authorship, yet at heart desirous of being taken seriously as a man of letters, is evident from the fifth letter he addresses to Edward Jerningham, with the view of getting a notice of "The Stepmother" in *The Monthly Mirror*, and from the letter which Dr. Johnson wrote to Mrs. Chapone, giving her his formal opinion of "The Father's Revenge." Of that solid judgment, mellow humour, and masculine common sense which distinguish the 2nd Earl Harcourt's correspondence with Edward Jerningham, Carlisle's letters bear little trace. They show him as a light tenor to Harcourt's baritone; and in no sense can they be said to redeem the promise he gave in his youth of being an accomplished letter-writer. Carlisle was born on May 28th, 1748, the only son of Henry, 4th Earl of Carlisle by his second wife, Isabella, daughter of William Byron, 4th Baron Byron, and succeeded his father as 5th Earl on September 4th, 1758. He was educated at Eton, where he was the contemporary and friend of Charles James Fox, Lord Fitzwilliam, James Hare, and Anthony Morris Storer, and at King's College, Cambridge, which university he left without taking a degree. He then made the Grand Tour in the company of Fox, of Lord Fitzwilliam and of Lord Kildare, writing home to his friend, George Selwyn, travel letters, which, gay and frank as they undoubtedly are, can but be regarded as intolerably pert and flimsy, if compared with those of Smollett

or of Byron. In his absence from England Carlisle had been elected a Knight of the Thistle, and he was invested with the insignia of the order at Turin by the King of Sardinia on February 27th, 1768, a circumstance to which, in his correspondence with Selwyn, he devotes an absurdly disproportionate amount of space and attention. He returned to London in 1769, and took his seat in the House of Lords on January 9th, 1770. On March 20th, 1770, having by this time got over his old passion for Fox's lovely aunt, Lady Sarah Lennox, he married Lady Margaret Caroline Leveson-Gower, daughter of Granville, 1st Marquis of Stafford, a beautiful and charming woman, who gave him four sons and three daughters, and died early in 1824. For a long time he was known as a man of fashion only, rivalling Fox in devotion to dress and to play, and becoming security for his friend's gambling debts, an act of generosity which crippled his financial resources for some years. Such political career as he followed is comprised within a period of about six years and a half. On June 13th, 1777, he was made Treasurer of the Household and sworn of the Privy Council. On April 13th, 1778, he was appointed chief member of the Commission sent out to America by Lord North, his friend, with a view to arriving at some pacific settlement with the insurgent American colonists, his two colleagues being William Eden, ex-secretary to Lord Suffolk, and George Johnstone, formerly Governor of Florida. But the mission was a failure, as Horace Walpole prophesied it would be; for though the Commissioners far exceeded their powers in the conciliatory proposals they made, offering the Colonists a kind of Home Rule and a representation in the British Parliament, they found that Congress refused to accept any terms short of absolute independence. In the course of this Transatlantic visit Carlisle declined taking part in a duel to which he had been challenged by Lafayette. Soon after his return to England the Earl resigned the Treasurership of the Household, and on November 6th, 1779, succeeded Lord George Germain as President of the Board of Trade. On February 9th, 1780, he was appointed Lord Lieutenant of the East Riding of Yorkshire, and on October 13th of the same year he became Viceroy of Ireland in succession to John Hobart, 2nd Earl of Buckinghamshire. He arrived in Dublin towards the close of December, 1780, taking with him as Chief Secretary William Eden (afterwards Lord Auckland), who had accompanied him to America. But, though he proved a popular Lord Lieutenant and advocated the sensible policy of an Ireland governed by Irish laws, he held the Viceroyalty for little more than fifteen months. On the accession of the Marquis of Rockingham to power in March, 1782, he was summarily dismissed from the

Lord Lieutenancy of the East Riding and replaced by the Marquis of Carmarthen, who had been removed from that office by Lord North, a slight which Carlisle felt so much that he surrendered his Irish appointment. On May 12th, 1782, he was made, however, Lord Steward of the Household, a position which he retained during some months of the premiership of the Earl of Shelburne. But he retired from office on hearing of the terms of peace agreed upon with America, France and Spain, resenting especially what he regarded as the British desertion of the loyalist Americans. On the return to power of his friends Fox and North (April, 1783), he became Lord Privy Seal in the Coalition Ministry presided over by the Duke of Portland, an office which he kept till Pitt became Prime Minister in December, 1783. His public career then practically came to an end. In the discussions of the Regency Bill in 1788 and 1789 he continued to act with the Whigs, or perhaps I had better say, with the Opposition, attacking the restrictions placed upon the Prince of Wales's authority; but on the outbreak of the French Revolution he became a Pittite; approving the War with France, defending the suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act, and advocating a Union with Ireland. In return for this support he was made a Knight of the Garter on June 12th, 1793, and was restored to the Lord Lieutenancy of the East Riding on February 26th, 1799. He died at Castle Howard on September 4th, 1825, having survived his wife nineteen months. Such verse of Carlisle's as I have read struck me as singularly laboured and lifeless; Sir George Trevelyan, who admires the Earl's early letters, confesses that it would be flattery to compare his poetry with Roscommon's. Of Carlisle's two published but never acted tragedies, "The Father's Revenge" (1783) and "The Stepmother" (1800), I have read neither; but knowing how utterly wooden 18th-century tragedy is at its best, I cannot regard this omission as a dereliction of duty. Horace Walpole warmly admired the latter play; but Johnson, when it was forced upon his notice by Mrs. Chapone, gave it such very guarded praise as showed, plainly enough, what slight estimation he put upon it. The Earl's theatrical pamphlet I have read: it is indeed quite readable and sensible. As employer of Tatham, the architect, as purchaser of the Orleans pictures, as patron of Sir Joshua Reynolds, at whose funeral he was one of the pall-bearers, and as a liberal-minded Viceroy of Ireland, Carlisle fills a place in 18th-century records from which he is not likely to be dislodged. And he has still another claim to remembrance in the two rather remarkable quarrels in which he was unfortunately involved. The earlier one was with his bosom-friend Anthony Morris Storer (1746-1799). Storer was intimate with Carlisle at Eton, the

Orestes to his Pylades, says *The Gentleman's Magazine*, from about 1760 onwards; and this intimacy continued and ripened at Cambridge, though the former was at Corpus Christi College, and the latter at King's. When the two young men met again in London they rivalled one another in fashionable accomplishments, in sartorial equipment, and in a passion for play. And they became staunch allies in politics, Storer going to America with Carlisle and Eden on that fruitless mission of conciliation which they undertook in 1778, sitting as M.P. for two of the Earl's pocket boroughs, for Carlisle from 1774 to 1780, and for Morpeth from 1780 to 1784, and acting as secretary to the Legation at Paris in September, 1783. What the ground of the quarrel was does not appear; but what is evident is that Storer failed to stand for Morpeth at the General Election of 1784, and that he revoked a clause in his will devising his property to Carlisle. A wealthy man, he left £1000 to his old Eton chum, Hare; but he left nothing to the Earl, though the quarrel seems to have been made up after a fashion.

The history of the later quarrel is not very much more perspicuous. Knowing the ungovernable temper of Mrs. Byron and recognising in Byron's first cousin once removed a nobleman of influence and reputation, Hanson, the solicitor of the Byron family, wished to secure the Earl of Carlisle as guardian of his young client. The Earl, who was at this time a man of about fifty, and had probably heard stories of the boy's "wildness," seems not to have been eager to undertake the charge. (Later, at Cambridge, it will be remembered, Jones, the tutor at Trinity, confided to Matthews the conviction that "Lord Byron, sir, is a young man of *tumultuous passions*.") In 1798, however, Carlisle became Byron's guardian. But, though Augusta Byron often stayed at Castle Howard, her brother seems not to have met the Earl till 1805. In 1808 Byron dedicated the 2nd edition of "Hours of Idleness" to his cousin. But that nobleman, having failed to respond to his young kinsman's request to introduce him in the House of Lords on the occasion of his taking his seat (March 13th, 1809), was attacked by the peer-poet in the following lines in "English Bards and Scotch Reviewers":—

"No Muse will cheer with renovating smile  
 The paralytic puling of Carlisle.  
 The puny schoolboy and his early lay  
 Men pardon, if his follies pass away;  
 But who forgives the Senior's ceaseless verse,  
 Whose hairs grow hoary, as his rhymes grow worse?  
 What heterogeneous honours deck the peer,  
 Lord, rhymster, petit-maitre, pamphleteer!  
 So dull in youth, so drivelling in his age,  
 His scenes alone had dammed our sinking stage.

But managers for once cried, 'Hold, enough !'  
 Nor drugged their audience with the tragic stuff.  
 Yet at their judgment let his Lordship laugh,  
 And ease his volumes in congenial calf ;  
 Yes, doff that covering whose Morocco shines,  
 And hang a calf-skin on those recreant lines.'

The satirist added a note on "pamphleteer," in which he remarked:—"It is to be hoped his Lordship will be permitted to bring forward anything for the stage—except his own tragedies." Eventually, through the intervention of Augusta Byron, some kind of accommodation was patched up between Carlisle and Byron ; but they were never on terms of cordiality, and till the end of his life the poet delighted in ridiculing the poetaster in private. He made him a public *amende*, however. In the 29th and 30th stanzas of the third canto of "Childe Harold," published on November 18th, 1816, he commemorated the early death of Carlisle's youngest son, the Hon. Frederick Howard, who, having married Miss Lambton, a granddaughter to the Countess of Jersey, had fallen at Waterloo in his thirtieth year, and added that he made this commemoration, partly as a natural tribute to a gallant young soldier,

"And partly that I did his sire some wrong."

A handsome apology for an attack as uncalled-for and as black-guardly as can be found in the history of English satire !

The obituary notice of the Earl of Carlisle, published in *The Gentleman's Magazine*, gives the following account of his personal appearance :—

"Possessing a small but elegant figure, in which symmetry was happily blended with agility and strength, he shone as one of the meteors of fashion. Elegant in his dress and manners, with his green riband across his vest, and a brilliant star sparkling at his side, he was considered one of the chief ornaments of the Court. At this period his Lordship and Mr. C. Fox, though it will scarcely be believed, were considered two of the best dressed men of their times."

At Castle Howard there are three portraits of the Earl from the brush of Sir Joshua Reynolds, and others painted by Hoppner and John Jackson.

#### LETTERS FROM THE FIFTH EARL OF CARLISLE (1748-1825)

1

DEAR SIR,

[No address and no date.]

We shall be very happy to receive you at 6 o'clock on Saturday night.

Ever yours most sincerely, &c., &c.,

CARLISLE.

## 2

Lord Carlisle will have the pleasure of conducting Mr. Jerningham to the Royal Academy on Saturday morning, if Mr. Jerningham will be so good as to come to Grosvenor Place soon after ten o'clock.

Thursday night [no other date].

## 3

Castle Howard, October 19th, 1795.

DEAR JERNINGHAM,

I am to return you my sincere thanks for your agreeable and flattering present.<sup>1</sup> The weather and the times are very congenial to the melancholy subjects of which you treat, "and suit the gloomy temper of our souls."<sup>2</sup> The address to me had more propriety than perhaps your partial friendship was aware of; for I actually wrote a sermon myself, which was preached, and made an old dotting governess of Mad<sup>me</sup> Fagniani<sup>3</sup> weep. And I believe the invaluable manuscript is at this moment in her possession.

I trust we shall meet soon, and that you will give me an account of your visit and renewal of antient habits with an old friend.<sup>4</sup> There is something so awful in the preliminaries stipulated that, if I were you, I should . . .<sup>5</sup> in going upstairs. You will tell me if this should happen.

Believe me to be ever yours,

&c., &c.,

CARLISLE.

<sup>1</sup> <sup>4</sup> I can identify neither the "flattering present" nor the "old friend."

<sup>2</sup> This seems to be a poetical quotation.

<sup>3</sup> Madame Fagniani is probably the Marchesa Fagniani, the mother of Maria Fagniani, whom Horace Walpole also calls "Mimie" and "*La Signorina*." When she was four years old, Maria, who was born in 1771, was handed over by the Marquis and Marchioness Fagniani to George Augustus Selwyn, the wit, who imagined he was her father, and on his death in 1791 left her £30,000. The 4th Duke of Queensberry, known as "old Q," and "*The Piccadilly Ambulator*," also supposed Maria to be his daughter and to her and her husband he left on his death, in 1810, £100,000, his two houses in Piccadilly and his villa at Richmond. The husband, too, was made the Duke's residuary legatee, and in that capacity is supposed to have received £200,000. Maria Fagniani married on May 18th, 1798, Francis Charles Seymour-Conway, Earl of Yarmouth, who succeeded his father in 1822 as 3rd Marquis of Hertford. His mother, the Marchioness of Hertford, was mistress to the Prince Regent, and he was Vice-Chamberlain of the Regent's household. He goes down to posterity, however, as the original of the Marquis of Steyne in Thackeray's "*Vanity Fair*" and of Lord Monmouth in D'Israeli's "*Coningsby*." His son, the 4th Marquis, about whom see Lord Redesdale's last book, lived mainly in Paris and amassed the splendid collection of pictures and articles of vertu which he left, along with his Irish estates, to Sir Richard Wallace.



Those who are interested in tracing the ramifications of genealogy may decide the exact degree of relationship subsisting between the 3rd Marquis of Hertford and the famous Lady Waldegraves.

\* A coarse phrase omitted.

4

DEAR JERNINGHAM,

As I cannot command the degree of publicity Mr. Le Noir<sup>1</sup> might give to the enclosed,<sup>2</sup> I should not wish to expose such inaccuracies of the F[rench] language, to which most of us are liable when we write or indeed speak it. I therefore commit this to your care, and to the person's discretion whom you employ in this great undertaking.<sup>3</sup>

Ever yours,

&c., &c.,

CARLISLE.

March 10th [No other date.]

Let Lord Cawdor<sup>4</sup> know what you think of the port wine. You will smile perhaps at the K.G.;<sup>5</sup> but I know it has its use.

<sup>1</sup> Who Mr. Le Noir was it is hard to say. I can find two persons of this name. Jean Baptiste le Noir de la Brosse, a French refugee, and a chevalier of the royal and military order of St. Louis, who settled as a teacher of French at Reading, is known as having married, in 1795, Elizabeth Anne Smart, the daughter of Dr. Johnson's acquaintance, Christopher ("Kit") Smart, the mad poet, author of "The Song of David," and herself a poet and novelist. And there was a Marie Alexandre Lenoir (1761-1839), the artist and antiquary who decorated Malmaison for the Empress Josephine.

<sup>2</sup> I can identify neither the "enclosed" nor the "undertaking."

<sup>3</sup> John Campbell, M.P. for Cardigan, married Earl Carlisle's eldest daughter, Lady Caroline Howard, on July 27th, 1789. He was raised to the peerage as Baron Cawdor on June 21st, 1796.

<sup>4</sup> The Earl of Carlisle had been made a Knight of the Garter on June 19th, 1793.

5

DEAR JERNINGHAM,

I flatter myself that by this time all alarm of invasion on your coasts has subsided, or that your country's cause has at least made a light horseman of you. We are so far removed from all menaces here, that, having taken every measure both in my civil and military capacity for the safety of this part of the county, I shall take leave to absent myself for a week to Naworth.<sup>1</sup> Our weather would tempt you to more repose upon the slopes in the garden; but your slumbers, I fear, would meet with some disturbance from the flies, which are indeed in great force. One might safely call the place at some hours of the day a perfect fly-ery. Poor Lady Ashburnham,<sup>2</sup> before a

great company, said an inn where she slept was a perfect buggery; so dangerous is it to coin words. The sun has given us hay, corn, and peaches all together, all disputing which should be gathered first. Lady E. Morpeth,<sup>3</sup> who is here, cannot fail of taking a favourable impression of the local, and she really seems charmed. By the way, have you heard anything of your man and his "Mirror"? I begin to think it will reflect nothing.<sup>4</sup>

After having written thus far, I receive your 2nd letter, which convinces me that, if any notice is taken of my poor "Stepmother,"<sup>5</sup> &c., &c., &c., it will not come from Mr. "Mirror." Pray do it yourself; and then at least I shall feel I am in the hands of a friend.

You remember my Delphic altar;<sup>6</sup> how it is the very altar from whence the oracles were delivered; how it would have been left at Naples if Lord Nelson had not brought it home; in short all about it. And you will comprehend this inscription enclosed. I wanted to make it in Latin, but could not satisfy myself; not that I have by any means done so in English.

Have you read *La Harpe*?<sup>7</sup> He amuses me much; and we agree in most things, in thinking Rousseau dull, particularly the "Heloise," which I could never get through. But not in his senseless abuse of Shakespeare, and [of] my old dear friend, Mad<sup>e</sup> du Deffand,<sup>8</sup> who was worth twenty of his Mad<sup>e</sup> Geofrins.<sup>9</sup>

I send you a catalogue to put you in mind of this place.

Ever yours most sincerely, &c., &c.,

CARLISLE.

August 8th, 1801.

<sup>1</sup> The Earl's seat, Naworth Castle, Brampton, Cumberland.

<sup>2</sup> As the first wife of George, 3rd Earl of Aahburnham died in 1791, this must be the second wife, Lady Charlotte Percy, sister of George, 5th Duke of Northumberland, whom the Earl married in 1795. The Countess Dowager, who, according to Horace Walpole, was bedridden in 1780, at the time of the Gordon Riots, was probably dead long before 1801.

<sup>3</sup> This seems to be an inaccurate description of Lady Howard of Morpeth, the wife of the Earl's eldest son, whom she married on March 21st of this year. She was Georgiana, eldest daughter of the 5th Duke of Devonshire.

<sup>4</sup> It was some time before I found out that "The Stepmother" which the Earl has not placed between inverted commas, is a tragedy in five acts and in verse, written by him and published in 1800, and that the "Mirror," similarly undistinguished, is a magazine called *The Monthly Mirror*, published at 13, King Street, Covent Garden, in which presumably the Earl wished to obtain a notice of his tragedy. Included in the Edward Jerningham Correspondence is a letter written by Thomas Bellamy, seemingly the editor of the magazine, and dated November 7th, 1796, asking Jerningham for a portrait of himself to be engraved for that work.

<sup>5</sup> I have looked in many quarters, but can find nothing about the "Delphic Altar," save the stanzas about them included in the Earl's poems.

† Jean François de la Harpe (1739-1808) was a beloved pupil of Voltaire and wrote many rather indifferent tragedies. His eulogies of Henri IV. of Fénelon and of Racine procured him the honour of being made a member of the Academy. Towards the end of his life he was appointed a Professor of Literature, and in that capacity he delivered lectures at the Lycée which, in their published form, constitute a body of sound literary criticism.

\* Marie Anne de Vichy Chammond, Marquise du Deffand (1697-1780), came of a noble Burgundian family and as a girl was notorious in the convent in which she was educated for her high spirits and cynical speech. In 1718 she married Jean Baptiste de la Lande, Marquis du Deffand; but the marriage proved unsuccessful, and she was separated from him in 1722. In early years her wit, beauty and *affaires de cœur*—she was the mistress for a time of the Regent, the Duc d'Orleans—attracted public attention. In later times she achieved distinction as leader of a salon and as correspondent of famous men. Although she was a friend of Voltaire, Montesquieu and D'Alembert, she was not very favourably disposed towards the Encyclopédistes, the visitors at her assemblies being chosen from the aristocratic rather than from the literary set. In 1758 she became blind, and for the next eleven years she carried on her salon with the assistance of Mlle. de l'Espinasse, who eventually quarrelled with her and left her, taking away with her D'Alembert. From 1766 till her death she conducted that correspondence with Horace Walpole, on which, and on that with Voltaire, her great fame as a letter-writer chiefly depends.

\* Marie Thérèse Rodet Geoffrin (1699-1777), Mms. du Deffand's rival as leader of a salon, came of humble stock, being the daughter of a valet de chambre called Rodet. In her fifteenth year she married M. Geoffrin, a very wealthy citizen, who shortly afterwards died, leaving her a large income. It was not till she was nearly fifty—about 1748—that she became known as a patron of learning. Distinguished foreign visitors, the "Philosophes" and the Encyclopédistes were the chief figures at her salon. She lavished money generously and delicately upon her literary friends, and she is said to have spent more than 100,000 francs on the "Encyclopédie." Among her friends were Montesquieu, Marmontel, Morellet and Stanislas Poniatowski. In 1766 she went to Warsaw to see Poniatowski, who had been elected King of Poland, subsequently going to Vienna, where she was received by the Empress Maria Theresa.

## 6

DEAR JERNINGHAM,

The present I enclose under a separate cover is not of that value as to make you blush to accept it; for the catalogues are given to those who wish, after seeing the house, to be possessed of them, and so I am very sorry for the trouble the Norwich virgin has given herself.<sup>1</sup> More would have been said of your favourite picture;<sup>2</sup> but the fear of puffing like Mr. Christie prevented me. The Marias<sup>3</sup> are placed in the Green Drawing Room, next the Museum, and have a very good light. All the Orleans pictures<sup>4</sup> are now together, and completely fill that room without any others. The pressing want of a larger eating-room has made me decide to take one division of the gallery, and fit it up for that purpose. When it is so used, it will have a temporary separation from the circular part

in the middle; at other times the comfort of the long walk will not be destroyed. Tatham<sup>5</sup> is now hard at work upon it.

Have you read Mrs. Robinson?<sup>6</sup> There is little in the work excepting the establishing Lord Malden's character<sup>7</sup> as pimp to His R. H.<sup>8</sup>. As there had been no controversy on this point, the proof is the act of supererogation. La Harpe's correspondence diverts me and brings me back to old Paris.

This house is full of goers and comers, and with those who are stationary: the dining-room runs over, but not with arrack punch at night, nor with anything in Lord Grantham's style of beauty.<sup>9</sup> For "Nelson gives it," read, "Bard, Nelson gives it?" Does your copy begin with "Pass not with careless steps"? ["With careless steps" is] better than "unheeded by." It has been translated into Latin and Greek. The Greek I have not seen, and if I had, perhaps could not have criticised; the Latin was not close enough to the original, and will be altered.

In this you will find the first lines of the prologue to "Cato" paraphrased;<sup>9</sup> the attempt was not difficult, and I think you will find some truth in it. You had better finish the remainder; if you think yourself bold enough to run a muck against this depraved taste.

Our weather continues most propitious for the finishing of the harvest. We want no rain for the turnips, the appearance of which is equally promising. Believe me to be ever yours,

Most sincerely, &c., &c.,

CARLISLE.

Castle Howard, August 9th, 1801.

<sup>1</sup> I cannot discover the identity of "the Norwich virgin," or of the "favourite picture."

<sup>2</sup> Annibale Carracci's picture of "The Three Maries," his most famous work, used to be in the Orleans Collection. In the "Descriptive Catalogue of the Pictures at Castle Howard," printed for the Earl of Carlisle at Malton in 1821, it is No. 107.

<sup>3</sup> The pictures at Castle Howard mentioned in the Catalogue as having formerly been in the Orleans Collection are: No. 1, Velasquez's "Finding of Moses," and No. 5, Ludovico Carracci's "The Entombing of Christ," in addition to Annibale Carracci's "The Three Maries."

<sup>4</sup> Charles Heathcote Tatham (1772-1842), the well-known architect, designed the sculpture gallery at Castle Howard, and did work at Naworth, Cumberland, for the 5th Earl of Carlisle, "to whose long friendship and patronage," says the author of the memoir of Tatham in "The Dict. Nat. Biography," "he owed much of his success."

<sup>5</sup> The allusion is to "Memoirs of the late Mrs. Robinson, written by Herself" (4 volumes, 1801). Mary Robinson was the heroine of that famous correspondence and love-affair with the Prince of Wales (the future King George IV.), in which he signed himself Florizel and she signed herself Perdita, taking her name from the part she had played at Drury Lane in Garrick's adaptation of "The Winter's Tale" (Dec. 3rd, 1778). The "Memoirs" were compiled partly by Mrs. Robinson's daughter.

' Lord Malden acted as go-between in the Florizel-Perdita episode. He succeeded his father as 5th Earl of Essex in 1799, and on April 19th, 1838, re-achieved notoriety by marrying Miss Catherine Stephens, the famous vocalist and actress, being then an octogenarian widower. He died a year later.

\* Thomas Robinson, 2nd Baron Grantham (1738-1786), was British Ambassador at Madrid from 1771 to 1779. He married, on August 17th, 1780, Lady Mary Jamima Grey Yorke, younger daughter and co-heiress of Philip, 2nd Earl of Hardwicke, who died at Whitehall on January 7th, 1830, aged 72. Horace Walpole alludes to the circumstance of the Baroness being a plain woman, in two letters written to the Countess of Upper Ossory. In the first, of June 29th, 1780, he says:—"I had heard of Lord Grantham's match, and suppose he has contracted some Spanish ideas, and minds blood more than beauty." In the second, of November 26th, 1780, he remarks:—"The same night at Lady Holderness's, I saw Lady Grantham; as she is not *my* wife, I really think her very tolerable. She was well dressed, behaved like a human creature, and not like her sister, or a college-tutor." It is strange, however, to find the Earl of Carlisle jesting at the lady's lack of beauty twenty-one years after her marriage!

\* I have consulted three volumes of the Earl's collected verse and can find the paraphrase of the prologue to "Cato" in none of them.

## 7

DEAR JERNINGHAM,

I feel much obliged to you for your letter, and hope my thanks for it will induce you to give me another before you leave London. We have had our hot weather with the rest of England; but were lucky enough to have returned from Cumberland before it became so violent, or we must have been sufferers from it. Here we could plunge into shade that defied the rays of the sun, and in which I literally buried myself for two days. We gave way to a sudden inclination to visit old Naworth, and passed a few days there very pleasantly; though it is too distant by fifty miles. We dined one day with the A. Bp.<sup>1</sup> and found his residence more comfortable than I had conceived it formerly. In short, with other considerations, it is good enough to make him all inclined to return to Rose Castle.<sup>2</sup> We visited him before our Northern expedition, and before his public mode of life had begun.

I have written to Clarke<sup>3</sup> for the book you mention. I hope you understood you have full liberty to send me any thing of the sort, but most particularly, if there should be any flattery in it. I do not much lay out for it; and in truth I do not think I get my share of it; and I have little comfort in the idea of posthumous fame.

Westall,<sup>4</sup> the painter of your love "Eloisa," has sent me a vol[ume] of his poems;<sup>5</sup> do you know any thing about them?

We expect the Morpeths<sup>6</sup> and all his little ones, saving the

last-born, next week. These, with the Duchess of Rutland,<sup>7</sup> will occupy a large part of this large ark; and I shall be considered somewhat older, and more respectable than the patriarch Noah himself. I conclude it is from the fear you should be so regarded that you preserve your juvenile pig-tail.

Believe me to be ever sincerely yours, &c., &c., &c.,

CARLISLE.

Castle Howard, July 17th, 1808.

<sup>1</sup> The Archbishop of York was William Markham (1719-1807), the son of a half-pay major, who lived at Kinsale. He was educated at Westminster School and at Christ Church, Oxford. From 1758 to 1765 he was Headmaster of Westminster School; he was made Dean of Rochester in 1765; he became Dean of Christ Church in 1767; and he was consecrated Bishop of Chester in 1771. From 1771 to 1776, he was preceptor to the young Prince of Wales and his brother Frederick, the future Duke of York. In January, 1777, he was translated to the archiepiscopal see of York, and sworn a member of the Privy Council. At one time he was an intimate friend of Edmund Burke's; but their friendship was finally broken off by Burke's impeachment of Warren Hastings, of whom the Archbishop was a great friend and staunch partisan. At the Hastings trial William Windham said to Fanny Burney of Markham:—"He holds Hastings to be the greatest man in the world; for Hastings promoted the interest of his son in the East Indies." Young Markham, who was private secretary to Hastings, gave evidence at the trial.

<sup>2</sup> That is "inclined" to wish himself at Carlisle, of which see Rose Castle is the episcopal residence.

<sup>3</sup> Clarke seems to have been a bookseller or publisher. I cannot identify him.

<sup>4</sup> Richard Westall (1765-1836), historical painter, became A.R.A. in 1792, and B.A. in 1794. He contributed designs to Alderman John Boydell's editions of Shakespeare and of Milton, and painted five pictures for Boydell's "Shakespeare Gallery." He did a good deal of book-illustration, and was also a painter in water-colour. His volume of poems called "A Day in Spring" was published in 1808, with plates engraved by James and Charles Heath.

<sup>5</sup> The Morpeths were the Earl's eldest son and his daughter-in-law, Viscount and Viscountess Howard of Morpeth. The "little ones" would be George William Frederick, subsequently 7th Earl of Carlisle, born April 18th, 1802, Frederick George, subsequently an officer in the army, born June 8th, 1805, with one or more of the six daughters of the marriage. The "last-born" was presumably William George, subsequently 8th Earl, born on February 23rd, 1806.

<sup>6</sup> This was not Lady Mary Isabella Somerset, youngest daughter of Charles, 4th Duke of Beaufort, who married Charles, 4th Duke of Rutland, on December 26th, 1775, when he was Marquis of Granby, and who was famous for her beauty, but her daughter-in-law, the Earl of Carlisle's second daughter, Lady Elizabeth Howard, who married John Henry, 5th Duke of Rutland, on April 22nd, 1799. The elder lady died Sept. 2nd, 1831, surviving her daughter-in-law, who died on November 29th, 1825.

8

DEAR JERNINGHAM,

Taking it for granted you are still in Norfolk, I enclose a little work, which has for its object, to enable those who frequent the theatre to hear and see something for their money and to come home alive.<sup>1</sup> I confess the idea is most extravagant, and I look for no beneficial change before half an audience shall be burned to death. As for the Opera, if the fine world chuse to assist at a representation of Hell in a powder-mill, it is no affair of mine: I am only the People's Ædile.

Ever yours most sincerely,

&amp;c., &amp;c.,

CARLISLE.

November 10th [1808], C[astle] Hd.

<sup>1</sup> The work alluded to was an anonymous pamphlet from the Earl's pen, published in 1808, and entitled, "Thoughts upon the Present Condition of the Stage and upon the Construction of a New Theatre." This pamphlet, dedicated to Mrs. Siddons, contended that the enormous size of the new theatres killed tragedy and the players' facial play, and prevented the audience from either seeing or hearing. It also pleaded for a more effective series of exits in case of fire, recommending for imitation those provided in one of the Italian theatres.

9

DEAR JERNINGHAM,

Without imputing any blame to Clarke, I fear few advertisements of my misery have found places in the papers. Have the goodness to call at his shop, and ascertain whether it has forced itself into notice, and whether or not my name in aid of the circulation has been made use of. Seize upon his pen and paper, and give me a line in answer to this, if you have not already given yourself the trouble. We think we shall be in town by X<sup>m</sup>as, though the air of this place suits me better.

Ever yours most sincerely,

&amp;c., &amp;c.,

CARLISLE.

C[astle] Hd., November 19th, 1808.

10

DEAR J<sup>r</sup>,

You may comprehend how acceptable are your letters, when I make so quick an answer to your last. As for the omission of Mrs. Pritchard's name,<sup>1</sup> I cannot well account for it myself; for I remember having a sentence in the foul copy, stating how justly great a favourite she was, when a very different audience than we see now endured her when she was fat and old in Millament,<sup>2</sup> and Mrs. Porter<sup>3</sup> [when she was]

beyond sixty in Marcia,<sup>4</sup> and obliged to use a stick from the accident of an over-turn.<sup>5</sup> Perhaps, there being something ludicrous as to the latter, I left the whole out. You will bear in mind that the comparative merits of former players with the present (and none are alluded to but to support the position of the size of the theatre) were not within the scope of my undertaking. If they are touched upon, they are so incidentally. I hope also this will appease the angry spirit of Miss F.<sup>6</sup>; and [that] I shall not have your friend Albinia<sup>7</sup> upon my back, for that would be no joke! for not mentioning her Mrs Ellis[t]on.<sup>8</sup> To have done so, I must have written another "Rosciad,"<sup>9</sup> and have engaged in polemics by no means to my fancy.

As we are not moving immediately, I trust I shall hear from you again.

Ever yours most sincerely,

&c., &c.,

CARLISLE.

If Miss F. used "astrology" for "astronomy" it must have diverted Lord Harcourt.

December 9th [1806].

<sup>1</sup> Hannah Vaughan, who married a poor actor called Pritchard, and was one of the few actresses employed by Garrick who bore a spotless reputation, was born in 1711, and made her *début* in 1738. She played important parts under "Davy" at Drury Lane from 1747 to her retirement in 1768, seems to have been equally distinguished in comedy and tragedy, and was reckoned the greatest Lady Macbeth of her time. She played the title-rôle in Dr. Johnson's tragedy "Irene," and the doctor thought little of her intelligence, declaring that she had read no more of "Macbeth" than was comprised in her own part. She died at Bath in August, 1768.

<sup>2</sup> The heroine of Congreve's greatest comedy, "The Way of the World."

<sup>3</sup> Mrs. Porter made her *début* at the theatre in Lincoln's Inn Fields in 1699, retired from the stage in 1748, and died in 1765. Walpole declared that she surpassed Garrick in passionate tragedy. Her best part was probably that of "Belvidera" in Otway's tragedy, "Venice Preserved."

<sup>4</sup> "Marcia" is the heroine of Addison's tragedy "Cato," which was produced at Drury Lane on April 14th, 1713, with Mrs. Porter in the character of "Marcia."

<sup>5</sup> Thomas Davies, bookseller and actor, says in his "Dramatic Miscellanies," that this "over-turn" was due to an unfortunate accident which happened to Mrs. Porter about 1731. At that time she occupied a house at Heywood Hill, near Hendon, and was in the habit of going home after the performance in a one-horse chaise, carrying always with her a book and a pair of pistols. Being stopped by a robber, she presented a pistol at him, and cowed him into confessing that he was not a highwayman, but a man desperate through affliction. After giving him £10, she struck suddenly her horse, which, bolting, overthrew the chaise. The result was that her thigh-bone was dislocated. This accident forced her into a retirement of nearly two years, and subsequently she always supported herself on the stage with a stick.





FREDERIC, 5th EARL OF CARLISLE

\* I cannot discover the identity either of Miss F. or of "Albinia."

† Robert William Elliston (1774-1831) made his London *debut* in 1796 at the Haymarket. From 1804 to 1826 he was connected with Drury Lane as leading actor, and for the last seven years was lessee and manager of the theatre. He was also lessee of the Surrey Theatre for many years. He was notorious for reckless theatrical management and for over-indulgence in drink. In old comedy—Charles Surface and Rover—and in such tragic parts as Hamlet, Hotspur, and Romeo, he was excellent, being an admirable stage lover and possessed of a fund of charm and high spirits. His father, Robert Elliston, was a watchmaker, his uncle, William Elliston, LL.D., was Master of Sidney Sussex College, Cambridge.

‡ The famous satire on the contemporary English stage, written by Charles Churchill, and published in March, 1761. The name is coined from that of Roscius, the well-known Roman actor whom Cicero once defended. Churchill in this poem praised Garrick and his leading actresses, Mrs. Clive, Mrs. Cibber, and Mrs. Pritchard, and ridiculed most of the other players.

## 11

DEAR JERNINGHAM,

From your absence and silence I was apprehensive your recovery had not been so rapid as you expected. I trust you will somehow be able to give your disorder its death blow by the help of my port wine. I have been twice at the play, once to see the riot,<sup>1</sup> and another time to hear the play. The senses of hearing and seeing were abundantly gratified in the first instance. I wish I could say as much as to hearing when the mob was silent; but I fear that old imperfection is not cured in this new theatre.<sup>2</sup> The tumult was disgraceful to the country; but Kemble<sup>3</sup> produced the violence by the absurdity and arrogance of [his] behaviour.

Our victory over "No Popery" and that rascally cry, by Lord Grenville's election at Oxford,<sup>4</sup> we hold to be most important. It was the most honourable mode of washing away the stain of our being enemies to the Established Church because we wished to extend substantial relief to our Catholic brethren. We had eight bishops, including our Arch B<sup>sh</sup>, who took the field in our cause, and enabled us to stem the whole force of Government, with the Princes of the Blood, His R<sup>ty</sup> H<sup>ty</sup> excepted, canvassing most indecorously in person, and making a most flippant use of the King's name.

I have not employed the health I am thankful for in any laborious exercise of mind or body. That the day, at my time of life, should pass gently and cheerfully, and that the morning should bring no reproach with it for some late act of folly or something worse, ought to satisfy one, in whom ambition is extinct, and who lives neither to offend nor court the world. There is no reason you should clasp in frozen arms the warm and willing Muse; and I hope you will return her overtures

with a better fire than that which St. Anthony<sup>6</sup> has lately bestowed upon you.

Lady Harcourt<sup>6</sup> is in great prosperity, and has got a house which suits her in Portland Place, Portman Square. Lady Carlisle has found the benefit of air and exercise in Yorkshire. Your letter implies you are not at Cossey but at Norfolk; so there I address you.

Ever yours most sincerely,  
&c., &c.,

December 19th, 1809, Grosvenor Place.

CARLISLE.

<sup>1</sup> On September 20th, 1808, Covent Garden Theatre was burnt down, involving John Philip Kemble, the manager and part-proprietor, in heavy loss. On September 18th, 1809, the new building, erected from Robert Smirke's designs, was opened with a revival of "Macbeth," at an enhanced scale of prices. Opposition to this new scale on the part of the audience prevented any part of the play being heard on the opening night. And for sixty-six more nights the O. P. (or Old Price) riots continued, till on December 14th the leaders of the O. P. party dined with Kemble at that inn of strange meetings the Crown and Anchor Tavern, and arranged a compromise. During the period of the riots the wearing of O. P. badges was almost *de rigueur*.

<sup>2</sup> The Earl is alluding to the acoustics of the new house, which he says are no better than those of the old one.

<sup>3</sup> The Earl is probably alluding to Kemble's endeavour to foil the rioters by packing the theatre with his friends and sending prize-fighters into the house, along with constables, butchers, athletic Jews and Bow Street runners.

<sup>4</sup> On December 14th, 1809, Lord Grenville, who had gone out of power in 1807, because he refused to abandon the prosecution of the Catholic claims, was elected Chancellor of the University of Oxford in the place of the Duke of Portland who had died in the previous October. The contest was a severe one; but the division of the Tory interest between Lord Eldon and the Duke of Beaufort secured Grenville's election, the votes recorded being 406 for Grenville, 390 for Lord Eldon, and 288 for the Duke. There never was so heavy a poll, 1084 persons voting out of 1974 who were qualified to vote. *The Annual Register* says that "all the bishops who have a vote for the election of Chancellor in this University, it is understood, voted for Lord Grenville, except two, who, it is reported, voted for Lord Eldon."

<sup>5</sup> Apparently Edward Jerningham had been suffering from an attack of erysipelas, a disease known as St. Anthony's fire because prayers offered to St. Anthony were said often to cure it.

<sup>6</sup> Earl Harcourt had died at his London house in Cavendish Square on April 20th, 1809. The Countess survived her husband until January 25th, 1826. It is strange to find the Earl of Carlisle speaking of the widow's "great prosperity."

DEAR J<sup>s</sup>

Upon recollecting old stories, or perhaps old scandal, I am convinced I could never have heard any thing of the fair lady in the back parlour; because she was probably at that

AND HIS FRIENDS

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time in nobody's arms except her nurse's.<sup>1</sup> Therefore I hope I expiate my fault by thus accounting for any error in ascribing the failings of her idiot sister to her, who perhaps was as chaste herself as the icicle on Dian's Temple.<sup>2</sup>

Ever yours,

C.

[No date and no address].

<sup>1</sup> I cannot explain this allusion.

<sup>2</sup> This is a quotation from "Coriolanus," v. 3, 67.

"The moon of Rome; chaste as the icicle,  
That's curded by the frost from purest snow,  
And hangs on Dian's temple:—dear Valeria!"

IV

THE EARLS AND COUNTESS  
HARCOURT

## A NOTE ON SIMON, FIRST EARL HARCOURT, AND ON ELIZABETH, COUNTESS HARCOURT

SIMON, 1st Earl Harcourt (1714–1777), was the only son of the Hon. Simon Harcourt, by his wife Elizabeth, sister of Sir John Evelyn, 1st Baronet, of Wotton, Surrey, and granddaughter of John Evelyn, author of the "Diary," and of "Sylva." He was born in 1714 and succeeded his grandfather Simon, 1st Viscount Harcourt, on July 28th, 1727. He was educated at Westminster School and then went on the Grand Tour for four years, returning to England in 1734. As Lord of the Bedchamber, a position which he held from 1735 to 1751, he was present with King George II. at the battle of Dettingen. In 1745, having raised a regiment for the protection of the realm, he was made a colonel in the army. On December 1st, 1749, he was created Viscount Harcourt of Nuneham-Courtney and Earl Harcourt of Stanton Harcourt. In April, 1751, he was appointed Governor to the Prince of Wales, afterwards King George III., then a lad of thirteen, and sworn of the Privy Council; but he resigned the former position in December 1752, as a protest against the absolutist doctrines taught the Prince by Stone, the sub-Governor, and by Scott, the sub-Preceptor. In 1755 he was promoted Major-General and in 1759 Lieutenant-General. In 1761 he went to Mecklenburg Strelitz as Ambassador Extraordinary to demand the hand of Princess Charlotte in marriage for King George III. From 1761 to 1763 he was Master of the Horse to the Queen, and from 1763 to 1768 he was Lord Chamberlain of the Queen's Household. On November 4th, 1768, he succeeded Lord Rochford as Ambassador at Paris, and on October 9th, 1772, he replaced Lord Townshend as Lord Lieutenant of Ireland. He became a full general in 1772. His vice-royalty of Ireland lasted from October 9th, 1772 to January 25th, 1777, and was marked by the winning over of the chief members of the Opposition to the government's side and by the augmentation of the existing system of corruption. His chief secretary was John (afterwards Baron de) Blaquière, who had been with him as Secretary of Legation at Paris. Lecky, in his "History of Ireland in the 18th Century," says of the Earl: "The new

Viceroy was an elderly nobleman of immense fortune, undistinguished in public life, and with no conspicuous ability, but painstaking, dignified, decorous and conciliatory; and his secretary, Sir John Blaquièrè, had some debating power and great skill and adroitness in managing men. . . . The administration of Harcourt in its opening had enjoyed great popularity; but it carried the system of corruption which Townshend had established to a still greater excess." To obtain a majority for the Government in the Irish Parliament new pensions were granted, new offices were created, increased salaries were annexed to sinecures, eighteen Irish peers were created in a single day, and seven barons and five viscounts were at the same time raised a step in the Irish peerage. On January 25th, 1777, being on strained relations both with the commander-in-chief in Ireland and with the English Government, Earl Harcourt resigned the Lord Lieutenantcy and retired to Nuneham, where he was drowned in a well on September 16th, 1777, in an attempt to rescue a favourite dog. The *Annual Register* for 1777 gives the following account of the fatal accident: "His Lordship, who had gone out to take his morning's walk in the park, and did not return at his usual hour, was found by his servants in a narrow well, nothing appearing above water but the feet and legs, occasioned, as it is imagined, by his over-reaching himself in order to save the life of a favourite dog, who was found in the well with him, standing on his lordship's feet."

The Earl married on October 16th, 1735, Rebecca, only daughter and heiress of Charles Samborne Le Bas, of Pipewell Abbey, Northamptonshire, by whom he had four children, George Simon, who succeeded him as 2nd Earl, William, Field-Marshal, who succeeded his brother as 3rd and last Earl, Elizabeth, who married Sir William Lee, 4th Baronet, of Hartwell, and Anne, who died young.

Of the 1st Earl's daughter-in-law, Elizabeth, Countess Harcourt, little is known and therefore little can be said. She was the daughter of George, 1st Baron Vernon, by his third wife, Martha, daughter of the Hon. Simon Harcourt and sister of Simon, 1st Earl Harcourt, whom he married on April 10th, 1744. She married her first cousin George Simon, 2nd Earl Harcourt, on September 26th, 1765. They had no children. He died on April 20th, 1809; and she survived him nearly seventeen years, dying on January 25th, 1826. She composed verses which Horace Walpole admired, was a courtier and an agreeable letter-writer, and seems to have possessed sincere religious feeling. That is practically all that is known about her.

## LETTERS FROM THE FIRST EARL HARCOURT

1

Paris, May 10th, 1769.

DEAR SIR,

Two of my servants have witnessed the deeds,<sup>1</sup> which Mr. Reveley<sup>2</sup> has very kindly undertaken to carry back to England, and which I hope will come safe.

I must beg my best compliments to Lady Mary Chabot<sup>3</sup> and that you would acquaint her ladyship of my readiness upon all occasions to obey her commands.

Though your time of leaving London approaches, I hope it won't deprive me of the pleasure of seeing you on my return to England either at London or Nuneham, at the latter of which places I flatter myself you will make some stay. I shall hope to remain in England till the beginning of October, which I mention with the selfish view of enjoying the company of my friends.

I am, Dear Sir,

Very sincerely yours,

HARCOURT.

<sup>1</sup> I cannot explain this reference.

<sup>2</sup> I cannot identify this person.

<sup>3</sup> This lady was Lady Mary Appolonia Scholastica Howard, eldest daughter of the 2nd Earl of Stafford, who married the Comte (afterwards the Duc) de Rohan-Chabot, in 1744. Lady Mary died without issue on May 16th, 1769, six days after this letter was written. She was born on February 17th, 1721. Writing to Anne Pitt from Paris on November 4th, 1755, Horace Walpole describes Lady Mary Chabot as "all good nature."

2

Holyhead, November 18th, 1772.

DEAR SIR,

I know it will give you pleasure to hear that I am extremely pleased with the account which Major Buchanan<sup>1</sup> gives of his fellow traveller Mr. Money,<sup>2</sup> who appears in every respect to be so amiable a youth that I think myself not a little obliged to you for recommending him to me. He is a very pretty person, very modest, and of a behaviour that does honour to those who have had the care of his education. I shall give him the best masters that Dublin affords, that I may do justice to a youth of his merit; and I can venture to foretell that he will be a real acquisition to any regiment that gets him. It will be my concern as well as my study to provide for him in such a manner as may convince you of the very



sincere and affectionate regard I have for the person who recommended him to me.

Yours, Dear Sir,  
Most affectionately,  
HARCOURT.

Mr. Money desires his respects. We wait for a fair wind.

<sup>1</sup> I can identify neither of these persons.

3

Dublin Castle, March 29th, 1773.

DEAR SIR,

I am greatly obliged to you for a late instance of your regard and attention,<sup>1</sup> and for the hopes you allow me to entertain of receiving a copy of your last performance.<sup>2</sup> I take a real pleasure in reading your books, which have every merit to recommend them; and, if I am more than ordinary fond of them, it proceeds from the very sincere esteem which I have for the author. I shall never forget what her Majesty so justly observed of your works, that she was sure the author was a man of worth and merit. I was quite struck with the justness and the propriety of the observation.

From the condition Lord Chesterfield<sup>3</sup> has been in for some time, it was a happiness to be released from the miserable state he was in. Our balls and Drawing Rooms are pretty well over for this season. Many of the ladies are already gone or are going into the country; and my country house is getting ready, and will be fit to receive me in less than a month.

I shall hope to see Lord and Lady Nuneham here towards the autumn, that, by not deferring their journey too long, they may stand the better chance of a good passage.

Mr. Money is sensible of your goodness in remembering him. He behaves very well, and I hope soon to be able to give him a commission.<sup>4</sup>

I am, Dear Sir,  
Very sincerely yours,  
HARCOURT.

P.S.—Not knowing your lodging, I send this to Leicester House.

<sup>1</sup> I cannot elucidate this reference.

<sup>2</sup> Edward Jerningham brought out two volumes of poems in 1773, "The Swedish Curate" and "Faldoni and Teresa."

<sup>3</sup> Philip Dormer Stanhope, 4th Earl of Chesterfield, died on March 24th, 1773. He had been deaf for twenty years.

<sup>4</sup> I have said that I am unable to identify Mr. Money. By this I mean that I can discover neither his origin nor his subsequent history. What he was before he found a patron in the 1st Earl Harcourt and a career in the

army is indicated by two letters addressed to Edward Jerningham by Lord Townshend from Audley Square, the first on April 15th, 1766, the second on May 17th, 1766, which show that that peer had just obtained for the youth some position at the Tower. In the latter of these letters Lord Townshend says: "The Warrant for Mr. Money's admission is already sent to the Tower; but till he makes his appearance and passes muster he is not intitled to pay"; from which I gather that the position in question was of a military or of a quasi-military character.

## LETTERS FROM ELIZABETH, COUNTESS OF THE SECOND EARL HARCOURT

### 1

Windsor, August 29th.

I thank you, my dear Mr. Jerningham, for so kindly remembering my request and giving me the pleasure of hearing from you. The little attentions in my power to show you while you was at Nuneham do not deserve to be remembered. A friendship of so old a date as ours must make me feel interested in all that relates to you; and I shall always be happy to prove my regard for you.

I am glad you are so pleasantly situated. *La belle Émilie*,<sup>1</sup> from all I have heard of her, must be entertaining. Your penchant for her will serve to amuse, and can never give you pain. *C'est la véritable rose sans épine*: you will be occupyd and interested without ever being anxious, and you may grow as fat upon such love as if you lived upon asses' milk. Her fair friend,<sup>2</sup> is too incapable of feeling a passion ever to inspire one; but esteem, approbation, and regard she must always command. I wish she could have remained in this country, and thank you for conveying my message to her.

Pray continue to let me know every thing you have from France. In the present state of that country it is impossible not to be eager for intelligence. What would Lady Hervey say, if she could put on the red satten lined with sable and take possession again of her chair by the fire in St. James's Palace?<sup>3</sup> She would no longer call the French a pretty people. The inhabitants of the Society Islands have a better claim to that title now. Perhaps Lady Hervey, Lord Chesterfield and Mad<sup>m</sup>e Charolais<sup>4</sup> are now talking over in the Elysian Fields the events of the last fourteen months and lamenting over the enraged ghost of Louis the 12th,<sup>5</sup> who, if spirits' wore cloaks, would at this moment be in a strait waistcoat.

But to turn to a more pleasing subject. What you tell us of the approbation the Bishop of London expresses of our little

institution <sup>6</sup> flatters and delights me beyond measure. Pray, if chance throws you in his way again, assure him that nothing would make us so happy as to have our little rural festival honoured by his presence, and that any year that he may be disposed to come to it we will hold it at the time that may best suit his convenience.

My Lord sends you many kind messages. He came here with me after the last Drawing Room, and we shall stay some time longer, as Princess Amelia <sup>7</sup> was innoculated last Monday, and we have promised to remain here till all danger is over. Indeed the uncommon kindness, and I may say attentions, the King and Queen show to those they admit into their private society is such that I know no place where one is more at ease, and where one passes one's time more pleasantly.

When I do return home I will not tell Patty <sup>8</sup> a word about the letter you have thought of writing to Mad<sup>me</sup> de Biron; as she would never go into my bed again for fear that some horrid individual of your horrid sex should write such a one to her.

Adieu. Let the diligence with which I have answered your letter prove the value I set upon your correspondence. And though I do not expect you to be equally alert, yet I hope when you have leisure that I shall hear from you. Always direct to Harcourt House. My plans are never certain; but the porter there generally knows where to forward my letters. Once more Adieu, and believe me

Faithfully and sincerely yours,

E. H.

<sup>1</sup> I can identify neither of these ladies.

<sup>2</sup> Mary Lepell, the future Lady Hervey (1700-1766), was maid of honour to the Princess of Wales as early as 1717. Horace Walpole dedicated his "Anecdotes of Painting in England" to her in 1763; and Chesterfield, writing to his son on October 22nd, 1750, gave him the advice, "trust, consult and apply to her without reserve" in any question of manners, air and address. As one of her letters to Edward Jerningham proves, Lady Hervey cordially reciprocated Chesterfield's admiration.

<sup>3</sup> Mlle. de Charolais was the elder sister of the infamous Charles de Bourbon (1700-1760), Comte de Charolais, of whom it is related, "En 1724 n'ayant pu séduire la femme d'un de ses valets, parce qu'elle aimait son mari, le comte tua celui-ci, pour ne plus rencontrer d'obstacle à ses désirs." She seems to have been her brother's true sister. "Elle avait l'esprit caustique et faisait les vers et les chansons avec grâce. Agée de trente-deux ans, elle fut la première à détourner Louis XV. de l'amour de sa femme, et ne craignit point de s'associer d'une manière scandaleuse aux débauches nocturnes du roi, afin de l'empêcher, disait elle, de vivre plus longtemps en bourgeois" ("Nouvelle Biographie Générale," 1845). When I add that incest was one of the pet vices of Louis XV. I give some idea of the character of that *ancien régime* the passing of which Countess Harcourt is regretting with so much more innocent sympathy than real knowledge.

\* Why Louis XII. (1462-1515) is distinguished by this mention I cannot understand. Three months before his death he took, as his third wife, Mary Tudor, sister to our own King Henry VIII.

\* I cannot elucidate this reference. The Bishop of London was Dr. Beilby Porteus, of whom some account is given in the notes to the 2nd Earl Harcourt's letters.

\* The Princess Amalia, born in 1783, was the youngest of King George III.'s daughters. She died unmarried in 1810.

\* Patty was apparently the Countess's favourite bitch.

2

October 27th [1790].

A thousand thanks to you, my dear Mr. Jerningham, for both your kind letters. It was my intention to have sent them for the first in a very few days. But the second calls for a more immediate answer; as I should be very sorry for Mrs. Damer<sup>1</sup> to leave England without knowing that I think myself honoured by her commands, and that I shall not fail to say every thing to her Majesty that can prove her regret at not having it in her power to be presented<sup>2</sup> before she goes abroad. At the same time that you repeat this message to Mrs. Damer, let me beg you to assure her of my best wishes that the air of Lisbon may be of use to her health. You may add that it is my interest to wish for her speedy return; for I know my Lord will never cease to lament her absence. He desires you will tell her that I judge right in this, and that the loss of her society will be a misfortune he shall not easily reconcile himself to; though he shall endeavour to comfort himself with the hope of her returning to England as well as he sincerely wishes her to be.

Your letters are too amusing to be willingly given up, and, as at this season of the year you probably have a little spare time upon your hands, I flatter myself you will sometimes indulge me in the pleasure of hearing from you, especially if you have any French news; for I am very eager upon that subject, and more so at this moment as I do hope that we are at the eve of a counter-revolution.<sup>3</sup> I have always thought it impossible that the gallant spirit of the French noblesse should be wholly extinguished; though no one might like to come forward without a certain prospect of being supported. But, if it is true that the King of Sardinia<sup>4</sup> means to take an active part, I have no doubt that thousands will flock to his standard.

I beg to know when this dreadful catastrophe<sup>5</sup> is to happen in London, that I may keep at a distance; for, like you, I am not ambitious of a splendid death. Seriously, I thought the age too enlightened for any one to talk of "portents and

prodigies." Yet one may as well believe anything as believe in the report of Miss G.'s match,<sup>6</sup> which seems never to have had any better foundation than a string of forgerys. But, while I wonder that even partiality can make the Duchess of A.<sup>7</sup> so credulous, I pity the poor girl who has been cruelly treated in being made the amusement of some one who has intended to be very witty, but who in reality has only been very ill natured.

I was in London last week, and in your neighbourhood too; for my own house not being habitable I was at Lady Effingham's.<sup>8</sup> But my stay was so very short (barely 24 hours) that I could not contrive to see you.

I see you think me discreet, or you would not venture to speak so disrespectfully of a certain complexion.<sup>9</sup> If I betrayed you, your poor eyes would soon be torn from their sockets; and then what would become of la belle Émilie?

Have you been lately at Richmond?<sup>10</sup> Can you tell me anything of my Lady? She says she has been ill; but I fear something fidgets her mind, and I shall be glad when her family is again settled with her.

Adieu. By to-morrow night our house will be as full as it can hold; and if I had deferred writing till Friday, I might have sent you a less stupid letter. But, if I have tired you, I expect to be forgiven in favour of the sincere friendship with which I long have been and ever shall be

Yours, &c.

My Lord assures you of his kind regard.

<sup>1</sup> Mrs. Damer left England for Portugal in November, 1790. See her letters to Edward Jerningham.

<sup>2</sup> Why Mrs. Damer should have thought of being "presented," or represented apparently, so late as 1790, I cannot explain. The Countess Harcourt, as a Lady-in-Waiting, was in attendance on the King and Queen.

<sup>3</sup> In a letter addressed to Mary Berry from Park Place, on November 8th, 1790, Horace Walpole remarks: "The third volume, expected, but not yet in the press, is a counter-revolution in France. Of that I know nothing but rumour; yet it certainly is not the most incredible event that rumour ever foretold." Writing to Edward Jerningham from Boconnor on January 29th, 1791, Lord Camelford speaks in a more dubious tone: "Whatever may have been the smothered hopes of a counter-Revolution, there is certainly at this time no expectation of relief to them [i.e. to the aristocrats] from any quarter but from the slow progress of that ruin, which, if we may believe not only the predictions of the Burkes and the Calonnes but the obvious dictates of common sense, cannot fail to be the effect of fanaticism and anarchy."

I need scarcely add that the counter-Revolution never came off.

<sup>4</sup> Victor Amadeus III. (1773-1796), Duke of Savoy and King of Sardinia, did eventually head the confederation of the Italian princes against the new French Republic, and lost his continental territory in consequence.

<sup>5</sup> I cannot elucidate this reference.

<sup>1</sup> Miss G. is, of course, Miss Gunning. For an account of "The Gunningiad," as Horace Walpole calls the affair, see the notes to Mrs. Damer's letters.

<sup>2</sup> The Duchess of Argyll, Miss Gunning's aunt and the Marquis of Lorne's mother.

<sup>3</sup> Thomas, 8rd Earl of Effingham, succeeded his father on November 19th, 1763, and died without issue on November 19th, 1791. On October 14th, 1765, he married Catherine, daughter of Metcalfe Proctor, of Thorpe, near Leeds. This Countess of Effingham died at sea on October 14th, 1791.

<sup>4</sup> I cannot explain this allusion.

<sup>5</sup> So many persons lived at or near Richmond at this time—Mrs. Crewe, the Mount Edgoumbes, Lady Di Beauclerk, and Lady Clifford, for instance—that it is impossible to say with any approach to certainty who "my lady" is. The probability, however, is that the Countess is harking back to the Duchess of Argyll. The Argylls had a house at Richmond, and the Duchess, who died two months after this letter was written, *i.e.* on December 30th, 1790, had been ill for some time. Writing to Mary Berry from Strawberry Hill on July 29th of this year, Horace Walpole remarks: "The Argyles are returned, the Duchess, I hear, looking very ill. They have got a foolish notion at Richmond that Lord Blandford is to marry Miss Gunning; an idea so improbable that even the luck of the Gunnings cannot make one believe it."

## 3

[Nuneham, December 14th, 1790.<sup>1</sup>]

I began to grow very impatient for your letter, my dear Mr. Jerningham, and to fear that your return would be deferred till we should have left the country; but, if you hold your resolution of being here the 21st, we shall still be able to enjoy your society for two or three days.

I am very glad that I have proved a false prophetess. From all I have heard of your fair friend,<sup>2</sup> she, as well as yourself is too amiable to be involved in embarrassments which your mutual sensibility would render doubly poignant.

"For each would easier their own sorrows bear  
Than the sad knowledge of each other's care."

A quotation from our old friend Lord <sup>3</sup> may with peculiar propriety be sent into Warwickshire.

I shall only add further that I thank you for your foreign news, that Lord H. and Mr. H.<sup>4</sup> send their kindest remembrances to you, and that we shall all be happy to see you and *all your oddities*.

I am ever yours with sincere esteem and amitié,

Tuesday.

E. H.

<sup>1</sup> The address and date are taken from the cover of the letter.

<sup>2</sup> I cannot identify the lady.

<sup>3</sup> Fulke Greville (Lord Brooke) and Michael Drayton were both poets of Warwickshire; but I must confess, firstly, that I cannot decipher the name of the peer, and secondly, that I do not recognise the quotation.

<sup>4</sup> Mr. H. is the Rev. Francis Haggitt, chaplain to the Harcourts.

4

[No date and no address].

DEAR MR. JERNINGHAM,

I am just come from the Nuns,<sup>1</sup> and found them so agreeable that I regret that they are going to such a distance. I shall like to talk to you about them; but do *not* call to-morrow, as we shall be out. On Sunday you will find us both at home.

Ever affectionately yours,

E. HARCOURT.

Friday night.

<sup>1</sup> Who the Nuns are I cannot say.

5

[1811.]

MY DEAR MR. JERNINGHAM,

I have read "The Old Bard's Farewell"<sup>1</sup> with that pleasure which good poetry must give to any one who is at all capable of testing it, if the author were totally unknown. But since the *Old Bard* is also an *old friend* it is natural that the pleasure should be increased. I thank you for your attention to me; but I will not hear of a *farewell*, while you are still so able "to build the lofty rhyme."<sup>2</sup>

I was sorry not to see you the other day; but any day, except to-morrow, I shall be happy if you will call upon me, and, if it be not inconvenient to you, let it be about twelve, that I may be more certain of being at home.

Ever very sincerely yours,

E. HARCOURT.

Saturday night.

<sup>1</sup> This was Edward Jerningham's last poem and was published in 1811. The poet died at Green Street on November 17th, 1812.

<sup>2</sup> Milton's "Lycidas," l. 11.

"Who would not sing for Lycidas? He knew  
Himself to sing, and build the lofty rhyme."

#### A NOTE ON GEORGE SIMON, SECOND EARL HARCOURT (1736-1809)

George Simon, 2nd Earl Harcourt, was born on August 1st, 1736, and became M.P. for St. Albans in 1761. In 1765 he married his first cousin, Elizabeth, daughter of George Venables Vernon, 1st Baron Vernon, and of Martha, sister of Simon, 1st Earl Harcourt. He succeeded his father in the family honours and estates in 1777; was made a D.C.L. of Oxford in 1786, on the occasion of King George III's paying a visit to Nuneham and to Oxford; was Master of the Horse to Queen

Charlotte from 1790 to his death; and died at his house in Cavendish Square on April 20th, 1809, leaving most of his property to his brother and heir, General Harcourt. In his early years, remembering perhaps his connection with the famous French family of Harcourt, to whose head; the Duc d'Harcourt, he offered an asylum when the outbreak of the French Revolution forced him into exile, Viscount Nuneham (as he then was) was very Gallophile, his preference for French manners, fashions and dress being marked in the extreme. And all his life he had a fancy for interlarding his letters, and presumably his conversation, with French phrases. It was during his Gallophile period that he produced the etchings which Horace Walpole praised so ecstasically, telling his correspondent (March 16th, 1763), "You have already gone beyond what I have ever seen in etching," and asserting in his "Essay on Modern Gardening," that "Lord Nuneham's etchings are superior in boldness and freedom of stroke to anything we have seen from established artists." But though he was a lover of literature and celebrated by urns and tablets in the gardens at Nuneham, his friends, William Whitehead, the Poet Laureate and his former travelling tutor, and William Mason, the poet and friend of Gray, he only published one book, "An Account of the Church and Remains of the Manor House of Stanton Harcourt in the County of Oxford" (Collingwood & Co., Oxford, 1808). Nor was he more attracted to politics or diplomacy; for he refused the Embassy to Spain which the Earl of Shelburne offered him in 1782, about the time of the negotiations for peace with America, France and Spain. In fact, a constitutional indolence and lack of ambition, which he admits to in one of his letters to Edward Jerningham, seem always to have characterised him, his main pursuits having been seemingly gardening and print-collecting. Horace Walpole's letters to him throw little light on his (*i. e.* Harcourt's) life and character. They are generally fulsome in their flattery. His Lordship's etchings, his position as son of the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, her ladyship's poetry, their lord- and lady-ship's presents, more particularly that of a pair of spurs worn by King William III. at the Battle of the Boyne, all come in for an adulation which is almost nauseating. Apart from all this, these letters tell us that Lady Harcourt wrote a good deal of poetry, that Miss Fauquier was more or less domesticated with the Harcourts, and that Walpole's three grand-nieces, the Lady Waldegraves, were welcome and fairly frequent visitors at Nuneham.

A passage in one of the letters relating to Miss Fauquier, whom Walpole calls his "cousin," is so strange that it seems worth quoting. "I have so high an opinion of Miss Fauquiere,



that, with all her regard for your lordship, I believe you are the last man from whom she would bear to hear a gallantry. So you see, my Lord, how awkwardly you set about mischief. It is plain you are a novice, and have no talent for it; and therefore I advise you as a friend not to attempt what would not become you. You are like a young tragic author, that meaning to draw a politic villain, makes him so very wicked and lays such gross traps, that they would not catch an elephant." (October 18th, 1777.)

LETTERS FROM GEORGE SIMON, SECOND EARL  
HARCOURT

1

Nuneham, Thursday,

I received, dear Sir, with great satisfaction, the obliging mark you gave me of your remembrance, for which I beg leave to thank you, as well as for the delicacy of your attention in not writing at a time when it was impossible to be sensible to any thing but the horrid scene with which I was surrounded.<sup>1</sup> Lady N. desires me to add her thanks, and I beg leave to assure Lady Jerningham of my affectionate respect. Yours with great regard, &c. &c.

<sup>1</sup> The reference is obscure; should it be to the death of the 1st Earl Harcourt, who was drowned in a well in attempting to rescue a dog, it would date Letter 1 at 1777, and so cause it to follow (instead of to precede) Letters 2 and 3, which were written when the future Earl was still Lord Nuneham.

2

Nuneham, Sunday.

DEAR SIR,

The notification of your obliging intention of visiting this place gives me great pleasure, and I shall be very glad to receive your poetical and papistical benediction myself, instead of my garden. The latter advantage I am so wicked as not to be ambitious of; for, as it is at present under the protection of various heathen divinities, in order to its becoming holy ground, not only all the representations of the above-mentioned patrons must be thrown down, but even those of the ancient heroes, who make a part of the decoration. A sacrifice I would not make to obtain the blessing of the Pope Himself! In order however that your Catholic and Christian feelings may not be shocked, I will, if you please, conceal the inscriptions; and then Venus may be called St. Genevieve, Apollo St. Apollonius and Faunus St. Fiacre, an alteration surely very allowable, since even in St. Peter's an antique statue of Jupiter is called

by the name of that [patron] Saint, and hourly receives on its toe the devout slabber of the faithful sons of old Mother Church.

My Father and Lady Nuneham send their compliments and so does likewise Miss Fauquier,<sup>1</sup> to whom, "par parenthese," you are not a little unjust in the suspicion (I can perceive) that you have formed, but which, believe me, she has not in the slightest degree merited.

Yours, my dear Sir, with regards, &c. &c.

N[UNEHAM].

If Lady Jerningham is still in town, do me the honour to assure her of my respectful attachment.

<sup>1</sup> Jane Georgiana, daughter of William Fauquier, of Hanover, seems to have been more or less domesticated with the Harcourts. She married on May 25th, 1786, as his second wife, the 2nd Baron Vernon, Countess Harcourt's half-brother.

3

July 7th.

MY DEAR MR. EDWARD,

The print you were so good as to send me was quite new to me, and to every body here, and I feel myself (not like Mr. Whitehead<sup>1</sup>) much obliged to you for your kind remembrance and attention. The "dejeuné" pleased me much, but your letter still more, and I "éclaté" with laughter when I came to your idea of Sir B. Bolus<sup>2</sup> with rouge on his cheeks making an admirable French comtesse. The thought is full of humour. You know, I have told you a thousand times that you had an uncommon share of comic humour; but I never could persuade you to believe me, "tant pis" for you, but still more "tant pis" for the world, who ought to profit by it.

London is empty of second-rate company, but full still of good, which is the only thing that prevents this dusty town being perfectly agreeable to me; for liberty and retirement are my two favourite goddesses. By the way, retirement never was personified, or made into a saint or a goddess before, which she ought to take ill; for sure she has more merit than most in *your* Calendar, and had as good a right to the worship of the ancients as M<sup>ms</sup> . . . ,<sup>3</sup> or the protectress of close-stools and necessary-houses.

I rejoice that we are to have something more of l'Abbé Reynal,<sup>4</sup> and I lament that I cannot be of any use to him in procuring Sir George Macartney's "History of Russia"<sup>5</sup>; which I thought existed only in manuscript, and I know no single person in possession of it.

Lady N. sends her compliments, and I beg to be remembered to Le Chevalier,<sup>6</sup> and to all the Comtes and Comtesses of my acquaintance. May their clysters be properly received and rendered; may their indigestions and the vomitings after them

be less frequent; may their physis purge them properly; may their urine be of a good colour, their "grossesses" [*i.e.* pregnancies] less uneasy, and their miscarriages less frequent; and may you, my dear Mr. Edward, not be plagued with the histories and particulars of all these remedies and disorders! As I was hourly! Adieu.

I am so happy as to have procured two very like portraits of J. J. Rousseau; so will give you no trouble on that subject.

À Mons<sup>r</sup> Mons<sup>r</sup> de Jerningham,  
chez Mons<sup>r</sup> Le Chev<sup>r</sup> de Jerningham,  
rue St. Dominique,  
F. S. G.  
à Paris  
France

a London  
to Mr.  
Conduit Street,  
London.

<sup>1</sup> William Whitehead (1715-1785), Poet-Laureate, and a great friend of the 2nd Earl Harcourt's and of the 4th Earl of Jersey's. He was travelling tutor to these noblemen, when they were respectively Lord Nuneham and Lord Villiers.

<sup>2</sup> Whether Bolus is a real or a theatrical character I cannot discover.

<sup>3</sup> A coarse word omitted.

<sup>4</sup> The Earl misspells the Abbé's name, which should be not Reynal but Raynal. Guillaume Thomas François Raynal (1718-1796) took priest's orders; but for some inexplicable or unexplained reason was dismissed from his parish, and devoted himself to society and literature. He wrote for the *Mercure de France*, and by compiling some popular histories succeeded in getting admission to the salons of Mme. Geoffrin, Baron d'Holbach and Helvétius. In the composition of his chief work, "L'Histoire Philosophique et Politique des Établissements et du commerce des Européens dans les deux Indes" (Amsterdam, 4 volumes, 1770), a work lacking historical knowledge and tinged with the declamation of the "philosophes" of the time, he had the assistance of Diderot and d'Holbach. But the "History," though translated into most European languages, was in 1779 forbidden circulation in France owing to its democratic tendencies, and was actually burnt by the public executioner. The author's name was not printed on the title-page of the first edition; but it appeared on that of the Geneva edition of 1780, and the Abbé, to escape arrest, had to fly from his country. He went first to Berlin, where Frederick the Great, despite his friendship for Voltaire and the "philosophes," received him coldly. He was more cordially greeted by the Empress Catherine II. at St. Petersburg. And in 1787 he was allowed to return to France, though debarred from visiting Paris. In subsequent years he rather recanted his liberal and democratic views. During the Terror he lived in retirement at Pasy and at Monthéry; but on the establishment of the Directory in 1795 he emerged, and was made a member of the newly elected Institute of France.

<sup>5</sup> Macartney's "Account of An Embassy to Russia" was printed for private circulation in 1768, but was not published till it was included in Sir John Borrow's "Life of Earl Macartney" (1807). Macartney was Ambassador to Russia and to China, and Governor of Madras and of the Cape.

<sup>6</sup> This gentleman was Charles, a brother of Edward Jerningham, and for many years a general officer in the French service. He was a Knight of Malta and of St. Louis, and died November 25th, 1814.

Nuneham, Wednesday [1778].

DEAR SIR,

Though I received a letter from Paris at the same time with yours, yet it mentioned nothing of the event you acquaint me with. But this is not surprising; as the person I heard from would be more shocked at the Queen of France's miscarrying, or Mons<sup>r</sup> de Vergennes<sup>1</sup> being costive, or Père Collifichet,<sup>2</sup> the fashionable preacher, having an indigestion, than at the death of J. J. Rousseau.<sup>3</sup> This year seems fatal to genius; for in the short space of a few weeks we have lost three of the most illustrious men the age could boast of.<sup>4</sup> I do not mean to place them on an equality, and perhaps you and I should not agree how to assign to each his rank; yet we shall both of us, I believe, allow that each possessed a degree of excellence very rare. Posterity will unite in admiring Rousseau; and the ill-invented falsehoods so industriously propagated to injure his private character, will then appear to have been (what they really are) the effects of malice, and envy of his superior genius, and because he preached the cause of virtue to an age remarkable for its selfishness, and the silly viciousness of all its pursuits.

Your letter was so agreeable a picture of yourself and your way of life, that it made some amends for the disagreeable intelligence it conveyed. You and your Abbé<sup>5</sup> are most delightfully affected, by your own account of yourselves. And I am sure I should like him; because he was an "élève" of Mr. Gray's, because I was much pleased with something you showed me of his writing, and because I am of Mrs. Abigail's opinion (I think it is Mrs. Abigail's) that a man of sense with a dash of the coxcomb is irresistible.

Pray assure my Lady Jerningham of my respectful regard, and desire she will pray to St. Hackney Coach (the Priapus of her Religion) to send a shower of rain on my flower-garden, where the turf now vies with the mould in brownness, and the flowers are all parched up. Adieu, my dear Mr. Jerningham, and accept my thanks and the assurances of my attachment.

H.

Remember me affectionately to the Pope.

<sup>1</sup> Charles Gravier, Comte de Vergennes (1717-1787) was French Ambassador at Constantinople and then at Stockholm. Later, under Louis XVI, he became Minister for Foreign Affairs, in which capacity his hatred of England made him support the American States in their quarrel with the mother country. An enemy to Necker, he got Calonne appointed to manage the Finances in 1783, and is said to have persuaded Louis XVI. to summon the meeting of the Assembly of Notables, which met just after he died.

<sup>1</sup> I can find nothing about this preacher.

<sup>2</sup> Rousseau died July 2nd, 1778.

<sup>3</sup> The two other "illustrious men" are probably Chatham and Voltaire, both of whom died in 1778.

<sup>4</sup> Judged by the references, the Abbé must be Norton Nicholls. Horace Walpole alludes to Nicholls as "the Abbé," and Brydges calls him "a supreme coxcomb."

## 5

MY DEAR MR. JERNINGHAM,

Your kind attention and remembrance of me were received with the gratitude they merited. The strictures on D'Allembert,<sup>1</sup> had not reached me; but I had heard of his impudent attack on the memory of J.J., and that the *Éloge* on my Lord Maréchal<sup>2</sup> was only meant as a vehicle of unjust abuse on his protégé. Indeed that benevolent design "*saute aux yeux*"; for the Scottish Earl was not a character of sufficient éclat to be honoured by an eulogium from a member of the French Academy. And his having been a rebel to the two first kings of the Brunswick line could not entitle him to such distinctions at Paris; whatever they might do here, under the reign of the third.

My summer has been passed as usual in sauntering, which is no unpleasant way of spending time, and had you but kept your promise of coming here, it would have been still more agreeable.

The lady on the first floor<sup>3</sup> strangely misplaces her congratulations; for she should have bestowed them on *her own friends and party*, who have so happily contributed to produce the present confusion into which this country is fallen. And it would be supposing them fools as well as knaves not to believe that they foresaw all that has happened, as clearly as the Opposition, who have repeatedly prophesied what would be the consequence of measures such as those they (the Ministers) pursued. Adieu, my dear Sir: accept again my thanks and Lady H.'s compliments. My affectionate respects to your charming Mother; for notwithstanding the severity and frequency of her attacks on me, I love and honour and admire her.

<sup>1</sup> D'Alembert (1717-1783), the famous French philosopher and Encyclopaedist, delivered the *Éloge* on Keith in 1779.

<sup>2</sup> George Keith, 10th Earl Marischal (1693-1776), took part in the Rebellion of 1715 but no part in that of 1745. A brother of Maréchal Keith, he became Frederick the Great's ambassador, first at Paris and then at Madrid. He was intimate with both Voltaire and Rousseau.

<sup>3</sup> I cannot understand the reference.

## 6

MY DEAR MR. JERNINGHAM,

On various melancholy events that have happened to me, I have suffered so much from letters of condolence, that to those I love I never write them. But even had I usually observed that cruel ceremony, it would not have been in my power to have paid you such a mark of my attention; as till within these very few days I have not been able to write. For a slow fever which I brought with me from St. Leonard's three weeks ago changed to an acute one, and fixed itself in my head. However I [am] now much better, though not yet well.

It was a consolation to me to learn that my dear old friend quitted this life without either apprehension or pain. You know how sincerely I loved and honoured her during a long and intimate connection of above thirty years; and will therefore easily conceive how much I now lament, and shall feel her loss next winter. I never knew a more respectable or valuable woman, nor any human being half so agreeable. Your exemplary conduct towards her will justly gain the highest respect and admiration during your life; and your reflexion on it administer ease and comfort to you, when you are going out of it.

Knowing as I do your disinterestedness, and too great disregard of what others regard too much, I am particularly pleased at hearing that your situation will be so much better than I expected.

Lady Harcourt sends her compliments, and I am very affectionately yours.

The death of Lady Jerningham fixes the date of this letter as at some time in September, 1786.

## 7

DEAR MR. JERNINGHAM,

Though your kind intention towards me has not been executed, I do not feel it the less sensibly; and, as "*ce qui est differé n'est pas perdu*," I look forward to the approaching time, when I shall be indulged with the sight of a work,<sup>1</sup> which, I see by the papers, meets with the approbation even of those who in political sentiments differ from you. As for me, I am still less of a politician than you are; for in those matters, as in all others, I am ever ready eagerly to seize the present certain good without looking forward to future and uncertain evils. More especially as the amazing events of these few last years have been such as to have rendered the experience of all those which preceded them of no use.

Your gazette of friendship and of private society was very acceptable; because it placed me "au courant" of the situation of persons who either amuse or interest me. Among the latter, and at the head of the list, is Mrs. Damer; and sorry am I to find that the sad impressions made upon her mind during her anxious and painful attendance at Goodwood<sup>2</sup> do not begin to wear away. Your description of the atrabiliary priestess of sour religion and uncharitable chastity<sup>3</sup> made me laugh. And yet that poor woman is herself more to be pitied than any of the objects of her *virtuous* detestation; for it is a constitutional malady, and after having indiscriminately scattered her libels of . . .<sup>4</sup> and adultery over half the land, she will ascend her wooden tripod, her bib will take a downward course, she will enjoy a temporary calm, and the world a cessation from her hostilities.

The Duke of York is returned here; and therefore I conclude that the Prince is well again. The account of his illness<sup>5</sup> alarmed me, and every person here who is acquainted with his captivating accomplishments. And I, in particular, who well know how many great and good qualities he *really* possesses, and who moreover am attached to him from motives of gratitude, felt much anxiety when I first heard of his being attacked with a disorder that was here called a scarlet fever. H.R.H.'s manner to me is coldly gracious (if it be allowable to join two such words together); but time may show that in conducting myself as I have done, I have been not only a sincere but a useful friend to him, and thank God! my conscience does not reproach me upon his account. Those injudicious persons who go about vindicating *imprudence* will never be believed or attended to, when they endeavour to repel the ill-founded and slanderous attacks of inventive malevolence; but often have I had it in my power loudly and with effect to contradict the detestable and mischievous falsehoods I have heard. Lady H—— sends her affectionate compliments, and I am, dear Mr. Jerningham, ever yours, &c.

H

<sup>1</sup> I cannot identify the poem in question.

<sup>2</sup> I do not understand this reference. Goodwood was one of the Duke of Richmond's seats. The Duchess, Mrs. Damer's half-sister, died in November, 1796.

<sup>3</sup> Possibly this lady is Lady Cecilia Johnston, whose censorious character Horace Walpole dwells on in a letter to one of the Miss Barrys. Gillray attacks Lady Cecilia in several of his caricatures, and one of Edward Jerningham's young women correspondents comments on her lack of charity.

<sup>4</sup> A coarse word omitted.

<sup>5</sup> I can discover nothing about this illness of the P. of W.'s.

## 8

DEAR MR. JERNINGHAM,

In consequence of your letter I gave orders that, if Mr. Combe<sup>1</sup> came to this place, I should be informed of his arrival, meaning to show him all the attention due to a man of his literary eminence, and to a person recommended to me by you. Since which, I have received from him one of the most obliging and best-written letters I ever saw, to which I have returned a not less civil, though an extremely stupid and ill-written reply.

I have hitherto passed a very pleasant summer. What remains I do not expect to be equally so, nay the very reverse; for I am going to Weymouth after the Ball at Windsor, and to the Castle. I am to go to-morrow morning. I am a volunteer in the Weymouth party;<sup>2</sup> but, as Lady Harcourt is not, I did not choose to be so long separated from her, and to remain here with little or no society. For, though in my youth I delighted in solitude, I am now so far advanced in years that I soon grow as weary of myself as other people are of me, when they have no other company. I envy you your dinner at the Count's. Your portrait was à la Hogarth, and in no other style would the original be picturesque; for even the pencil of Sir Joshua could not have blended such a discordant variety of colours into a pleasing effect.

Lady Harcourt sends her compliments, and believe me, my dear Mr. Jerningham, ever faithfully yours,

H.

<sup>1</sup> Possibly this is William Combe (1741-1838), the author of "Dr. Syntax."

<sup>2</sup> George III. made his first visit to Weymouth, stopping at Gloucester Lodge, in 1789. In 1797 Gillray caricatures him, shuffling along the front, in a print called "The Esplanade."

## 9

Your remembrance of me, my dear Mr. Jerningham, is at all times flattering, and a letter containing so curious and interesting a detail of Madame de Biron's<sup>1</sup> escape from the Savages at this dull place, and in this little *eventless* Court, more particularly acceptable. Her virtues and her gentle manners, I should have concluded, would have secured her against either insult or danger from her barbarous countrymen.

This Bay,<sup>2</sup> which you have probably heard admired, is very convenient for bathers, and the air from it salutary and mild; but in no other respect has it, in my opinion, the smallest merit to boast of. The hills are barren, uninhabited and ill-shaped, and are too insignificant to be either romantic or sublime, and consequently bear no proportion to the expanse of water at



their base. There are not six people here whom I ever saw before, and not one with whom I have any intimacy. The play is good enough to amuse me; and if the King went to it four times instead of twice a week I should be very glad. The K[ing], Q[ueen] and all the Princesses except the P[rincess] R[oyal] are sailing about the Bay for their amusement; and Lady C. Waldegrave [Lady Maria Charlotte, one of the three famous Waldegraves, grand-nieces of Horace Walpole] and myself are the only persons of the family who are not of the party. A party of pleasure by land is bad enough; but upon the sea it must be the very devil. A tolerably comfortable room, with some slices of high flavoured and "moelleux [*i.e.* 'juicy']" jambons, d'Hanovre" (I dare not use the word Sandwich<sup>2</sup>) which I am now eating, is preferable to dancing up and down upon the waves; and to this opinion I am very sure you will subscribe. It will never be worth your trouble to come here to eat fish; for I think none of it very excellent, except the diminutive lobsters and the fresh prawns. The Dorys are not better here than at Bath, and red mullets are so scarce that they do not often appear at the King's table, and seldom more than two at a time. In short, I believe that, without the assistance of Miss Meode's cook, you would not make so good a "repas maigre" here as at her house. When you either see or hear from Mrs. Damer, lay me at her feet. Lady H. sends her affectionate compliments, and I am ever, dear Mr. Jerningham, your faithful and obliged

H.

<sup>1</sup> Amélie, daughter and heiress of the Duc de Boufflers, married in 1766 Armand Louis de Gontaut (1747-1793), Duc de Lauzun, and afterwards (in 1788), Duc de Biron. He attached himself to the Revolutionary cause in 1793, commanded the Army of the Rhine in 1792, the army of La Rochelle against the Vendéans in 1793, and then, owing to the difficulty of maintaining discipline and the complaints of his leniency towards the rebel Royalists, resigned his command. Accused by the notorious Carrier of "incivisme," he was condemned to death by the Revolutionary Tribunal and guillotined in 1793. Of Madame de Biron's fate I cannot be certain. She is frequently mentioned by Horace Walpole, and in 1793 seems to have been imprisoned in Paris.

<sup>2</sup> Weymouth Bay.

<sup>3</sup> John Montagu, the notorious Earl of Sandwich (4th Earl) and First Lord of the Admiralty, gave his name to this comestible, which, to prevent his being interrupted at the gaming table, he used to have served up to him instead of dinner.

## 10

I must, my dear Mr. Jerningham, disobey your obliging and friendly injunction not to write, though merely to thank you for the pleasure I received from your charming poem; which pleasure will, I am confident, be increased by a second perusal. It has the merit of novelty, though the story itself on which it

is founded one would have imagined not capable of affording any, and as for the versification it is admirable. If I were in the highest state of health and spirits, I should not be such a fool as to attempt to write an entertaining letter to *you*; but I am still (as "la bette du Buisson"<sup>1</sup> used to express herself, when she meant to say that she was not perfectly well) rather *flippity floppitty*, an expression, however, better suited I think to the male than to the female sex.

Lady Harcourt and Mr. Haggitt desire to be affectionately remembered to you; the latter is perfectly cured, and it will be his own fault if he does not in future enjoy a good, though perhaps not a robust, state of health.

I am gratefully and affectionately yours,

H.

<sup>1</sup> Who "la bette de Buisson" was I cannot discover.

11

DEAR MR. JERNINGHAM,

Could any thing have made me amends for the disappointment of not seeing you, who are one of the very few I ever wish to see at our humble festival, it would have been a letter such as that you favoured me with, every line of which contains some stroke of true humour and originality. I believe the *brilliant* Pearson, who was combing my hair when I received it, imagined I had lost my senses; so repeated were the bursts of laughter occasioned by your wit.

Your reason for not coming I cannot quite acknowledge to be good; since I think you might pay your visit at Park Place as well at one time of the year as at another, and our fête is postponed till Monday next.

I agree with you that the Presbyterians<sup>1</sup> have brought upon themselves the evil that has fallen upon them, and with which it was their kind intention to have overwhelmed the constitution and established religion of their country. It is a nasty, canting, hypocritical sect, who, whenever they had power, made the very worst and oppressive use of it, and would do so again, if their plots had succeeded. But I hope and believe these sturdy beggars will remain quiet and silent for the future; as the body of the nation seems to hate their "damned and sneaking religion" as much as the Chancellor and I do.

Lady H. and Mr. Haggitt desire to be affectionately remembered to you; and with the utmost sincerity I assure you of my friendly esteem and regard

H.

<sup>1</sup> Owing to the strong inoculation of the Presbyterians and Independents of the eighteenth century with Socinian views, the term Presbyterian

became practically synonymous with Unitarian. Earl Harcourt seems to be alluding to an attempt made by Charles James Fox in 1792 to repeal the Act of William III. under which the Unitarians were still liable to punishment, and to secure for them the legal protection enjoyed under the Toleration Act by other Protestant Dissenters. Owing to the opposition of Burke, who pointed out that Unitarianism, as vouched for in the writings of leading members, such as Drs. Priestley and Kippis, was a new society animated by hostility to the Established Church and by sympathy with French Revolutionary principles, Fox's motion was defeated in the Commons by 142 to 68; and it was not till 1812 and 1813 that the Unitarians obtained in England a legal toleration for their opinions and their worship.

12

DEAR MR. JERNINGHAM,

I read with sincere satisfaction the newspaper accounts of the brilliant success of your Tragedy,<sup>1</sup> on which I beg leave to congratulate you. And I thank you for the Epilogue, which is a very good one; though it contains a blunder which, although it might escape the observation of the generality of readers or auditors, could not pass unnoticed by a dull and correct old (I beg pardon, middle-aged) antiquary. I mean the appellation of Sovereign, which you have given to the Queen, who is no Sovereign.

In the whole business of bringing out this tragedy you have acted with your usual contempt of money, and your incorrigible ignorance of the interested arts of professional men. For who, my good friend, except yourself, would have thought of exposing the first child they had begotten on Miss Melpomene to the chilling damps of a theatre in November? And [have] thrust the poor infant into so hazardous a situation, without consulting some experienced mother or nurse, to know whether it had sufficient strength to support so rude a trial? Perhaps there is no example in the annals of the stage of a conduct so neglectful; and I take it for granted, that, by your *wise* management, a play that has met with universal approbation will produce nothing to you except applauses. Which, at the end of two days, you will be as indifferent to, as you would have been to a finale of hisses and catcalls.

I am told the managers have fobbed you off with only two nights, because you had the sense and modesty not to set your audience asleep by spinning out the play to 5 acts, when your subject did not permit incidents for more than 4. The zeal of Mrs. Damer's friendship for you does not surprise me. And my conviction of her infallibility in matters of taste (and indeed in all other matters) silences any doubts I might otherwise entertain as to the propriety of altering a catastrophe,<sup>2</sup> however faulty in point of rules, which, according to your

account, has produced such sympathetic duos of sobs and screams.

I trust your news of the untimely end of M<sup>me</sup> de Biron is not true. However, she was so gentle, so amiable, and so inoffensive a character that one cannot but conclude her to have been an object of hatred to the atheistical murderers who at present tyrannise over France, nor be surprised at her fate.

Lady H. and "l'aimable et bon curé"<sup>2</sup> send their affectionate compliments, and I am ever truly yours, &c., &c.

H.

<sup>1</sup> The article on Edward Jerningham in "The Dictionary of National Biography," which says that he was born in 1727, whereas his father, Sir George Jerningham, was only married in 1733, and he himself was born in 1737, declares that "The Siege of Berwick" was produced at Convent Garden on December 18th, 1793. As a matter of fact, Earl Harcourt alludes to the production as taking place in November, and Genest gives the date as November 18th, describing the piece as "a dull T[ragedy] in 4 acts by Jerningham," and asserting that "there is so striking a resemblance in some minute and fictitious circumstances [between Home's play, 'The Siege of Aquileia,' and 'The Siege of Berwick'] that it is clear Jerningham has borrowed considerably from Home." Pope played Sir Alexander Seaton, the Governor of Berwick, Mrs. Pope acted Ethelberta, the wife of Seaton, and Macready was seen in the part of Donaldson, one of Sir Alexander's officers. The play was acted in all five nights.

<sup>2</sup> On the first night Ethelberta died; at the succeeding representations her life was spared.

<sup>3</sup> Probably this is an allusion to the Rev. Francis Haggitt, who, from his frequent mention, would seem to have been a kind of domestic chaplain to the Harcourts, as well as Rector of Nuneham. He wrote a tragedy called "Villeroi," which Horace Walpole discusses in a letter written from Berkeley Square to Earl Harcourt on January 7th, 1794. Fanny Burney (see her "Diary and Letters") found him at Nuneham, when the King and Queen visited the Harcourts there in 1788, and describes him as "chaplain to Lord Harcourt and rector of a living in his lordship's gift and neighbourhood; a young man, sensible, easy, and remarkably handsome, in very high favour with all the family."

13

DEAR MR. JERNINGHAM,

Though I did not acknowledge and thank you for your friendly and obliging attention by the return of the post, do not therefore conclude that I postponed the reading of your tragedy beyond the evening on which I received it; for I am always too much interested in what you write, and too certain of being pleased with your productions, to wish to delay the amusement I expect from them. Therefore, on Sunday evening, though Bishop Patrick and Bishop Secker, and a long line of distinguished prelates, whose holy works grace the shelves

H

of my library, were near at hand, I read (but I fear with not very good emphasis) your tragedy to Lady Harcourt and Mr. Haggitt. That it has many striking passages is certain; but *that* for which I value it still more, and which is perhaps more difficult than "to elevate and surprise," is the interest being kept up from the first to the concluding scene, and the scenes naturally following each other without "remplissage" [*i.e.* "padding"]. I dare say the effect is better on the stage than if the versification had been more highly ornamented.

I am grieved at finding that my predictions respecting your negotiations with the managers have actually been accomplished, and that your generosity and simplicity has been so shamefully over-reached by their interested craftiness. If you should finish your comedy, I hope you will employ some persons with more worldly wisdom than you possess to make your agreement for you. And that you may produce a comedy I do most earnestly wish; for it will be strange indeed, if, with your knowledge of character, and a fund of humour as inexhaustible as it is peculiar and original, you should not write such a play as would delight the town, fill your purse with gold, and raise your reputation as an author to an equality even with Congreve himself.

Lady H. and Mr. Haggitt send a thousand compliments and thanks; and pray assure Mrs. Damer of my affectionate respect.

Believe me,  
Faithfully and affectionately yours.

14

DEAR MR. JERNINGHAM,

The poems you sent me,<sup>1</sup> for which I return you a thousand thanks, do not require the assistance of "la belle la jeunesse,"<sup>2</sup> to make them appear to advantage; for were you yourself to read them (excuse my impertinence) I am certain I should like them. There are lines and sentiments in the first for which, had they been written some years ago, you would have been privately stabbed, or publicly burnt; but they do you infinite honour. And though every good Catholic might not have the courage to avow so humane a heresy, yet all the worthy and sensible of that persuasion, I doubt not, are exactly of the same opinion.

I am much pleased with "Sensibility," and among many lines in your other poems I am particularly pleased with the last but two in "The Oak," and the expression of "enamel'd rules" applied to Lord C[hesterfield]'s frippery receipt for composing a rascal.

Miss F.<sup>3</sup> writes wonders about the good sense and flashes of genius "la Jeunesse" exhibits in the Countess of Narbonne, and has expressed her admiration in two separate letters. She says she was so much pleased with her acting that she intended to take a box for another night; but that there was something so inexpressibly touching in M.Y.'s<sup>4</sup> manner of speaking "O, Lord of Earth and Heaven" that she was overcome by it, to a degree not to be able to hear or to know one word that was said afterwards, and is firmly resolved never to hear her speak that speech again. What you say about Lauragais's<sup>5</sup> book is Greek to such a "campagnard" as I am; for I never heard of it. But by your account it must be the work of an absolute madman.

Half the next sheet is cut off. The letter then proceeds:—

Your history of Sir Fretful Plagiary<sup>6</sup> was delectable, and your whole letter full of humour. It has always appeared strange to me that you should possess that talent in so eminent a degree, and not only never have discovered it yourself, but appear to have no taste for it.

Adieu. Accept the repetition of my thanks, and compliments of Lady H. and the whole party now assembled here. And pray do not fail to assure Lady J[ersey] of my affectionate respect.

H.

<sup>1</sup> I cannot identify this volume of poems.

<sup>2, 3, 4</sup> Who "la belle la jeunesse," otherwise alluded to as "M.Y.," was, it is difficult to say. In the original production of Robert Jephson's tragedy, "The Count of Narbonne," a work founded on Horace Walpole's Gothic romance "The Castle of Otranto," and brought out at Covent Garden Theatre on November 17th, 1781, Elizabeth Younge, the first wife of Alexander Pope, the actor, played the Countess (see Genest). But she was then not extremely young, having been born in 1744. The part of Adelaide, daughter to the Count and Countess, was played by Miss Satchell.

If "Miss F." refers to Miss Fauquier, who became Lady Vernon in 1766, this letter should date at least 7th or 8th in the series.

<sup>5</sup> The only approximation to this name I can find is that of Louis Léon Félicité de Brancas-Lauraguais, Duc de Brancas. Under his name in the Catalogue of the British Museum are indexed several works, including "Memoire sur la prochaine tenue des Etats-Généraux."

<sup>6</sup> Is this an allusion to Cumberland the dramatist?

DEAR MR. JERNINGHAM,

A tribute of respect from your muse to the memory of my late and long-loved friend<sup>1</sup> could not but be acceptable to me; nor can I be insensible to the friendly kindness which induced you to communicate it to me. That the lines in question are both poetical and true cannot be denied; but

my objection to them is that they are not suited to the situation in which the monument is intended to be placed. Where, though they might occasionally be read by some "kindred spirit" [they] would be as unintelligible to the unlettered peasants of an obscure village in Yorkshire, and perhaps even to the neighbouring esquires; as French metaphysics are to me who do not pretend, and to free-thinking lords and ladies, who do pretend, to comprehend them.

I am sorry for the death of Dr. Warren;<sup>1</sup> because I am persuaded that he understood the Prince's constitution, and because he has left a wife and family, who loved him. As for the man himself, I did not like, could not esteem him, and had no opinion of his general medical skill. Any other physician who may have the address to magnify the insignificant complaints of some fine and fashionable ladies, and to discover their inclinations, will do just as well to prescribe to them chalk and water juleps, breasts of chicken, water drinking, plain and cosmetic clysters, and will soon become, like him, the unerring Esculapius of good company.<sup>2</sup>

We have had such a party here as you would have been pleased with. One of those who contributed towards making it so, Mrs. Kennicott,<sup>3</sup> still remains here; but the Bishop of London,<sup>4</sup> and Mrs. Porteus,<sup>5</sup> to our very sincere regret, left us this morning.

Mr. and Mrs. Haggitt set forward on their long Northern journey on Monday. He is become healthy, ruddy, and robust; of which the Wirtembergian shape of his wife<sup>6</sup> is, I think, some proof.

Lady Harcourt sends her friendly remembrance. And I, with sincerity, assure you of my very affectionate regard.

H.

<sup>1</sup> Who "my late and long-loved friend" was it is not easy to determine. Horace Walpole (Earl of Orford) died on March 2nd, 1797, William Mason died on April 7th, 1797; both were intimate friends of Earl Harcourt. The Countess Harcourt erected a cenotaph to the memory of Mason in the garden of Nuneham Park. William Mason was, of course, the friend and biographer of Gray, and the author of two rather well-known plays, "Elfrida" and "Caractacus." He was a correspondent, too, of Horace Walpole's. Unpublished letters of his are included in the Edward Jerningham Correspondence.

<sup>2</sup> Dr. Richard Warren (1731-1797) died on June 22nd, 1797. He was a younger brother of John Warren, Bishop of Bangor, and was 4th Wrangler of Cambridge. He was at first physician to the Princess Amelia, and became physician to King George III in 1762. Despite Earl Harcourt's disparagement, he had the reputation of being the ablest medical man of his time.

<sup>3</sup> Mrs. Kennicott was Ann Chamberlayne, the sister of Edward Chamberlayne, and the widow of Benjamin Kennicott (1718-1783), the well-known Biblical scholar. She died in 1830, and, in honour of her husband's memory, and to encourage the study of Hebrew literature, she left money to found two

scholarships at Oxford, and is still officially remembered among the benefactors of the University. Richard Owen Cambridge (three of whose unpublished letters are included in the Edward Jerningham Correspondence), Hannah More (also a correspondent of Edward Jerningham's), Mrs. Garrick, and Fanny Burney (one at least of whose letters is addressed to Edward Jerningham) were among her friends. Bishop Barrington left her an annuity of £100, and Dr. Bellby Porteus, Bishop of London, left her a legacy of \$500.

<sup>5</sup> Bellby Porteus, Bishop of London (1731-1808), was educated at Christ's College, Cambridge. He inclined to the Evangelical Party in the Church; but he was an anti-Calvinist, and he was a great stickler for the observance of Sunday and holy-days. He is noticed elsewhere in this work; and it only remains to be said of him that he was connected with most of the philanthropic movements of his time, and that several of his unpublished letters are included in the Edward Jerningham Correspondence.

<sup>6</sup> Mrs. Porteus was Margaret, eldest daughter of Bryan Hodgson, landlord of the George Inn, St. Martin's, Stamford, and afterwards of Ashbourne, Derbyshire. She married Dr. Porteus on May 18th, 1765, and survived him.

<sup>7</sup> This jocular and somewhat Rabelaisian allusion is a little recondite. It refers to the enormous proportions of the Duke of Wirtemberg, whom the wits of the time called "The great Belly-gerent." He is the subject of three of James Gillray's most characteristic caricatures. A marriage having been arranged between the Princess Royal and the Duke in the autumn of 1796, Gillray took an early opportunity of presenting the public with the great man's portrait. On October 24th, 1796, appeared a print called "Sketch'd at Wirtemberg," which offered a portrait in profile of the Duke's figure in court dress. In the spring of 1797 the Duke came over to London to claim his bride, and Gillray commemorated his reception by publishing on April 15th, a cartoon called "Le Baiser à la Wirtembourg." I quote from Joseph Grego's work on Gillray, "The Princess Royal, who was portly and well-favoured, is saluted by her High German Suitor. The Prince is finely dressed; orders hang from every button-hole, stars and cordons innumerable, of every size and shape, are bespattered all over his court-habit, and suspended round his stout person."

The marriage took place on May 19th, 1797; and on May 18th Gillray anticipated the popular interest by publishing a burlesque of the great personages of the English Court under the title of "The Bridal Night." The guests are conducting the illustrious pair to the nuptial chamber. "The husband's portly figure forms a base for the suspension of innumerable ribands crossed and recessed, chains, stars, orders, garters, devices; even the tie of the Duke's bag-wig is decorated." Prominent on the walls hangs a suggestive picture, 'Le Triomphe de l'Amour,' representing Cupid seated on the head of an enormous elephant and leading the animal captive by the strains of his flute. Pitt, the Prime Minister, figures in the caricature as the man who pays the piper. He bears a sack marked £80,000. Queen Charlotte is represented as almost extinguished by one of the unbecoming coal-scuttle bonnets which she was fond of wearing. King George, his profile cut off by a pillar, is striding along, bearing a couple of candles.



16

Bath, November 17, 1797.

[Address and date taken from the endorsement.]

DEAR MR. JERNINGHAM,

With truth I can declare that I am much pleased with the verses you sent me. They cannot but do great credit to the author; for they remind us of his master Pope, and breathe the spirit of poetry.

Many thanks also for your chit-chat gazette. For the *Miss I* am sorry; though I know her not. For the escape of the *Lady* out of this island I am glad; for she is one of those bold defiers of order and decency, that ought long since to have been ignominiously hissed off the stage.

Friends who have quarrelled may be reconciled; [but] those, who have been separated on other grounds than those of personal disagreement, can never again enjoy each other's confidence. Had *Lady H*[arcourt] stood alone and unconnected, she might possibly have acted differently; but it was necessary that she should make an option. And, situated as she was, she had indisputably no right to sacrifice the character and peace of mind of the wisest and most virtuous, as well as the greatest, woman in this country to the gratification of her own private feelings. For my own part, I cannot but subscribe to the truth of the old Latin adage; for I cannot boast of possessing a mind sufficiently illuminated, or sufficiently bold, to treat the public voice with contempt, a tremendous voice, that no mortal can resist with impunity.

Pray *by the return of the post* acknowledge the receipt of the enclosed draft, and believe me, with great regard, yours, &c., &c.  
H.

The quarrel alluded to seems to have been one in which Countess Harcourt had to make her choice between Queen Charlotte and some lesser person. The Countess was one of the Queen's Ladies-in-Waiting.

17

DEAR MR. JERNINGHAM,

The daily expectation of seeing you has prevented me hitherto from thanking you for the very pretty lines you were so obliging as to send to me; but I cannot longer postpone my acknowledgment. I have given them to the Princess Elizabeth,<sup>1</sup> who was extremely pleased with your poetical praise of her work.

Ever yours, &amp;c.

H.

<sup>1</sup> Princess Elizabeth (1770-1840), the seventh child and third daughter of King George III. and of Queen Charlotte, was the artist of the family. Her pictures, "The Birth and Triumph of Cupid," were engraved by Tomkins,

and William Combe, the author of "Dr. Syntax," collaborated with her. In 1818 she married the Hereditary Prince of Hesse Homburg, who became Landgrave in 1820.

18

Sunday.<sup>1</sup>

DEAR MR. JERNINGHAM,

Though literally on the eve of my departure from hence, yet my *bottom* does not require so much *winding up* but that it will allow me leisure to thank you both for your letter and for your present, which "à plus d'un titre" (I wish I knew an English phrase that would have answered my purpose equally as well) were highly acceptable to me. To-morrow we dine at Windsor, and we shall dine and sup there every day till Thursday sevensnight, when we mean to proceed to Bath. For there will be no Drawing Room to carry us to London; which, considering the gloomy state of public affairs, and the gloomy language and countenances such events naturally produce, is a fortunate circumstance for me.

I hope the treaty of peace you mention will be ratified to the mutual satisfaction of the two belligerent powers; for you certainly have the talent of contributing to each other's entertainment. Besides, life is too short to allow of long enmities; and a quarrel, to a mind like yours, must, I am persuaded, be a sort of constant clinging burden. As for a perfect renewal of friendship, and unreserved confidence between parties who have once disagreed, I do not believe it possible. Did Lord Carlisle and Mr. Storer<sup>1</sup> ever feel the same affection for each other after their reconciliation, as they did before their intimacy was broken off? And did not Lord Orford and Mr. Gray<sup>2</sup> amicably and very civilly hate each other; though they called themselves, and the world supposed they were again, very dear friends? What you wrote to the lady in question was not only witty but wise. And the idea of the old carriage; with new wheels was truly in your own original style, and in your very best manner. Every person engaged in the tragical interlude exhibited to the public at the old theatre in Warrick Street<sup>3</sup> will feel, himself and herself, happier than when they were the objects of public attention. At least most sincerely do I wish that my prediction may prove true.

Adieu, dear Mr. Jerningham. Lady H. sends her thanks and affectionate remembrances; and I am ever yours, &c.

<sup>1</sup> Anthony Morris Storer (1746-1799) was a collector and man of fashion (dancer, skater, conversationalist, and musician), who was a great friend of the 5th Earl of Carlisle's at Eton and Cambridge, and was with him in America in 1778 and 1779. On what grounds he incurred the quarrel with the Earl (about 1768, seemingly), and on what terms he made it up, I cannot discover.

\* Horace Walpole and Thomas Gray travelled in Italy between 1789 and 1741. They quarrelled at Reggio and separated. Walpole took the blame. Despite what Earl Harcourt says, their subsequent reconciliation was a genuine instance of "redintegratio amoris."

\* I cannot explain this reference, which seems to allude to General Conway and his family, who lived at Warwick Street when they were in London.

## 19

MY DEAR MR. JERNINGHAM,

Your kind enquiries, and your friendly expressions of regard were highly flattering (no, I recall that word, and in lieu of it will substitute that of *gratifying*) to me. As for your medical advice, though you are a son of Apollo, I do not believe that your brother Æsculapius has imparted to you any of his secrets. And your odd prescription may be well calculated to give strength to a enfeebled Alderman, but not to restore the very small share of it I could ever boast of; particularly as all my complaints arise from weakness of digestion, the cause of which is to be attributed to fast approaching old age. I do indeed so far conform to the repeated exhortations I have received as to drink one glass of wine after dinner, begging leave, notwithstanding, to retain my former opinion as to the pernicious quality of every variety of that liquor. I am not ill, and am certainly stronger than I have been; though I cannot yet walk as much as I was accustomed to do. However I am satisfied with being able to *toddle* about, and amuse myself with those important trifles which always engage my attention in the country.

Whatever the society of Brighton may be without doors, I am persuaded that it is pleasant within; and I am not surprised at your admiration of the manners and abilities of the P. of Wales. In both which he perfectly resembles the Queen; who is one of the most captivating women I ever knew. The P. of Wales has strong and right feelings; and whenever he attends to them, and follows their direction, he is a respectable as well as an amiable man. I feel the warmest gratitude towards him for his goodness to me, a sentiment that is still heightened by the circumstance of his having formerly shown the most marked dislike to me; thanks to the malicious insinuations and base misrepresentations of some of those most despicable, as well as most hateful, of all creatures, *true courtiers*.

Mrs. Damer promised to write to me from Park Place; but I have not heard from her. My pity for poor Lady Ailesbury<sup>1</sup> will never be exhausted; for I know not any object so deserving of it. On Mrs. D.'s account I am glad P. Place is to be disposed of<sup>2</sup>; yet it is in some measure a classical spot, and I hate the idea of its refined hospitalities being exchanged for

the clumsy festivities and vulgar amusements of a society from Blow Bladder Street.

I wish I had been an unseen witness at your *exhibition*<sup>3</sup> at the theatre. Surely there never was such a contrast as that between the English and the Dutch cousin. The latter is the strongest medley of sense, folly, information and buffoonery, that ever existed. And yet a pinch of him (as Lord Ogleby says) is sometimes a delicious treat.

Mrs. V.<sup>4</sup> is not now here. Lady H. sends her affectionate remembrance. Pray present my duty to the Prince, and believe me ever yours.

<sup>3</sup> General Henry Seymour Conway (1721-1795) died at Park Place, October 12th, 1795. Hence presumably Earl Harcourt's "pity" for Lady Ailesbury, Conway's widow.

<sup>4</sup> Park Place was bought by the famous ambassador, the first Earl of Malmesbury.

<sup>5</sup> This may be a reference to the appearance together at the theatre of the Prince of Orange and the Duke of Clarence (the future King William IV.); but the allusion is very dubious.

<sup>6</sup> Who Mrs. V. is I cannot guess.

## 20

MY DEAR MR. JERNINGHAM,

Till Mr. Willoughby returned from Henley, where I found you were dancing in the same set with himself, Mr. Poyntz, and other "jeunes gens agés de 26 ans," I flattered myself with the hope of your return. Perhaps I had not much reason for entertaining such an expectation; but as I earnestly wished to see it realized, I fall into the common error of persuading myself that it might possibly be so. However the ice at length is broken, and I feel myself secure, that, after having suffered me to please myself with the idea of your resuming the long interrupted habit of passing part of the summer here, you will not be so very unkind as to disappoint me. No body esteems and values you more than I do; and I believe I need not tell you how much I am always amused with the originality of your conversation.

I am sorry to hear that my poor *Lady* made herself so disagreeable and ridiculous; but neither you nor I, who know her, can be surprised at any trait of her wrongheadedness. For, to be sure, never was there so much good sense and absolute folly, so many admirable virtues and agreeable qualities jumbled together with their reverse as are to be met with in her strange composition.

Lady Harcourt answers for herself, and will tell you that after various huntings all over the house, and repeated enquiries

of *Betsy* and her "aide de balaye," it was discovered that it was *not a case* but a cane that you had lost.

"Mon aimable curé,"<sup>1</sup> who really deserves the obliging title you have conferred on him, desires me to return his thanks for your remembrance of him.

Believe me affectionately,

Yours, &c.,  
H.

<sup>1</sup> "L'aimable curé" is applied as a description of Mr. Haggitt in Letter 12. Possibly therefore this Letter 20 should precede Letter 12. Who "my poor Lady" was, I cannot discover or guess.

21

Sunday.<sup>1</sup>

MY DEAR MR. JERNINGHAM,

If you should ramble this summer beyond the reach of the London smog I wish you would come and receive my thanks for all the trouble you have so obligingly taken on my account; for I have not room in a letter to thank you as I ought.

I am glad my letters have been received; but no answer is yet come from M<sup>me</sup> R., nor have I heard from Mons<sup>r</sup> Girardin. Should I ever pass the sea again, my pilgrimage will neither be made to La Santa Casa, nor the Sculls of the 3 Kings, nor the Virgin Mary's Milk, nor Christ's prepusa, but to the tomb of Jean Jacques. I respect Mons<sup>r</sup> Girardin for the honour he pays to the ashes of a departed Genius, who never was, nor ever will be equalled. Had Rousseau died in my house, I would never have allowed a single article of the furniture of the room where it happened to be removed out of it, nor suffer it to be prophaned by receiving any other guest. It is however enough for me that he preserved my portrait; though I do not like *all* the company it was found in. Gratitude for what he thought a benevolent intention towards him (for he never reaped any advantage from the pension) and a respect for that person's domestic virtues, made R. think higher of him than he deserved; for he could not know that, without the circle of his own family, the said person's virtues are but mere semblances, and that, in a public point of view, no lover of his country can love *him*.

I shall be impatient for the "Memoires," and shall have many opportunities of learning whether they are forged or authentic.

A thousand thanks for your good wishes. I am contented (for I do not believe that there is such a thing as happiness) and have as much fortune as I want, and should not be

dissatisfied had I less; though mine is by no means what is called a large one. Adieu.

<sup>1</sup> This letter bears no date; but possibly it should be placed much earlier in the series, judged by its references to Rousseau, who died on July 2nd, 1778, at the residence of a rich financier at Ermenonville, the M. de Girardin alluded to in the letter. The "person" mentioned in such disparaging terms is seemingly David Hume, who, assisted by Boswell, brought Rousseau over to England in 1766 and through his influence with General Conway, Secretary of State, procured him a pension of \$100 a year from the English Government. The subsequent morbid suspicions of Hume cherished by Rousseau are matters too well known to make it necessary to go into them.

22

Oxford, August 4th, 1808.

[Address and date taken from the endorsement.]

MY DEAR MR. JERNINGHAM,

As I have not any of your original epistolary wit, so have I not an atom of that vanity with which it is accompanied, and which, you inform me, prevented your writing to me sooner. However, after all, your silence might more properly have been attributed to your indolence; for as Lord Orford could have made any catalogue of old lumber amusing, and have given importance and interest to a worm-eaten close-stool with a cracked pan, so you can extract and impart entertainment to others from the silly gentry, or the dirty beggars, with whom you converse in your daily walks in the streets.

The intelligence you sent me was very curious, and such as you alone, among all my acquaintances, would have been able to communicate, even supposing that I had many friends left in London; whereas I have only one, *the Dutch Ambassador*,<sup>1</sup> by name, who is engaged in the melancholy office of watching over the faint embers of a friend's life.

Our party here has hitherto been small, and of the feminine gender; and from the newspapers alone do we hear what is doing in the world. But ignorance by no means lessens anxiety, and the danger of invasion is seldom out of my thoughts. A state of suspense is to me particularly irksome; and when our all is staked upon the game, who can look forward to the contest without alarm? For my own part, I am not certain that I had not rather hear Bonaparte were actually upon our coasts, than continue much longer in hourly expectation of receiving from him a visit; especially as the national spirit is now at length roused, and I know my countrymen too well not to expect that the ebullitions of patriotism will subside even more quickly than they have been raised.

Lady Harcourt, and her chaste sisters,<sup>2</sup> desire to be remembered to you. The former is well in health; but, not being as strong as she used to be, has suffered much from what was

called the hot weather. It is now uncertain whether there will or will not be any exfoliation of the bone;<sup>8</sup> but it is hoped that the wound may be, for some time to come, prevented from closing.

Pray remember me to my old friend Sir William [Jerningham], and accept the assurance of my very sincere regard.

H.

<sup>1</sup> I have looked into various histories; but I cannot find who was ambassador from Holland at this time.

<sup>2</sup> Miss Martha and Miss Anne Vernon: both died unmarried. Fanny Burney describes the elder as "plain, a little old-maidish" and, when better known, "sensible, well-read, and well-bred," the younger "many years junior, fat, handsome, good humoured, and pleasing in her smiles."

<sup>3</sup> It is impossible to gather from this account, obviously a continuation of a previous one, what Lady Harcourt was suffering from.

23

Wednesday.

I write, my dear Mr. Jerningham, "de provision"; for I mean to defer sending my letter until I have received the present you promised me, which I expected last night, but it is not yet arrived. I am certain beforehand that I shall like it; because I am certain it will contain things entertaining and original. To have unhacknied ideas, and to express them in an original manner, peculiar to yourself, is an advantage you possess both in your writings and in your conversation. And a very great charm it is, in my opinion; for I am quite sick of that spirit, or rather that dulness of imitation, that pervades every book and every person. One might be led to suppose that one mould and one model served for every body; so universal is the insipid similarity that now prevails.

Which I apprehend is the cause why our new five-act farces, which by the courtesy of nonsense are called plays, exhibit characters which do not exist, and incidents which cannot happen. Originality of character is no where to be met with, and unless an author will be content with the snoring approbation of an audience he must people his piece with a set of imaginary beings, the mere creation of his own fantastic brain. It was very kind and obliging in you to send us an account of the boy-actor.<sup>1</sup> And on the very morning on which I received it, "Why will not Mr. Jerningham write?" had been echoed through our breakfast room. On your account, who have seen the best performers, and are so excellent and discriminating a critic on players and on plays, I can depend; for you do presume to judge for yourself, instead of *baaring* with the flock that submissively follows the fashionable ewe or ram by which it is led. Till I received your letter I was at least a sceptic with

respect to the powers of that wonderful boy ; for such, by your account of him, he really appears to be. Though you do not allow him to possess such a degree of excellence as it is quite *impossible* that he should possess. After all this I have, however, but little, or rather no, curiosity to see him ; unless that entertainment could be obtained without my encountering any of the fatigue and confusion and danger and "Damn you, sir!" to which every person who wishes to see any popular play, or popular player, is liable.

This is Thursday, and I hear from my porter that I shall not receive your book (for which I am all impatience) before Saturday night. Therefore accept "d'avance" of my thanks<sup>1</sup> for it ; as I cannot postpone those which are due to you for your very acceptable letter so long.

Lady Harcourt sends her affectionate compliments, and Mr. and Mrs. Haggitt desire me to name them to you. They go westward in the Christmas Week, and we shall proceed to London immediately after. I congratulate you upon the marriage of your nephew,<sup>2</sup> for whom I conceived a strong partiality at our first interview, and consequently made such advances to him, as I very seldom make to any person, and especially to one so young as he is. Which he, having rather avoided than met, our acquaintance ended, almost as soon as it commenced.

Lady H. has been ill with an erysipelas, which still occasionally makes its appearance. In other [respects] she is well. And I, abating many outward and visible signs of old age, and a few "memento-mori's" within, such as occasional spasms in my stomach, &c., have continued as well as any man "*agé de vingt ans passé*" has any reason to expect. Here, my dear Mr. Jerningham, concludes my insipid letter and history, and now, after repeating my acknowledgments, I bid you a friendly farewell.

<sup>1</sup> Master William Henry West Betty, who, born 1792, made his first appearance in London at Covent Garden on December 1st, 1804, as Selim in "Barbarossa." There and at Drury Lane, in such parts as Young Norval and Hamlet, he created a furore for two or three years, but eventually retired from the stage by the time he was thirty, having amassed a fortune. He died in 1874.

<sup>2</sup> This was a younger son of Sir William Jerningham, Bart., Edward, of Painswick, Gloucestershire, barrister-at-law (1774-1833), who married on Oct. 16th, 1804, Emily, eldest surviving daughter of Nathaniel Middleton, of Townhill, Hampshire.

The contents of Lady Harcourt's note to you I know not ; but of this I am certain, namely, that she will be equally glad



with myself to see you here. And Mrs. Preston<sup>1</sup> (Mr. Edward Hamilton's sister) has heard so much of "*vosre singularité*," a title Anne Pitt<sup>2</sup> bestowed on me, but to which you have a far better claim, that she longs to be acquainted with you.

Farewell.

H.

<sup>1</sup> I can find nothing about Mrs. Preston (see, however, Note 2 to Letter 26); but Mr. Edward Hamilton is possibly the Edward Hamilton (1772-1851) who while in command of the *Surprise*, took or destroyed 80 privateers and merchantmen. He was created a baronet in 1818, became vice-admiral in 1837, and admiral in 1846.

<sup>2</sup> This lady was neither Ann Pitt, the actress (1720-1799), famous for her soubrettes and elderly coquettes, nor the Hon. Anne Pitt (1772-1864), the only daughter of Thomas, 1st Baron Camelford, who became the wife of Lord Grenville, the future Prime Minister, in 1792, but Ann Pitt, the daughter of Robert Pitt, of Bocconoc, and the sister of William Pitt, the great Earl of Chatham. She was maid-of-honour to Queen Caroline, consort of King George II, Keeper of the Privy Purse to the Princess Dowager of Wales, and a friend and correspondent of Horace Walpole's. Resembling her famous brother greatly in character, she passed from eccentricity into downright madness in her old age, and in 1778 had to be placed in confinement. In this condition she died in 1781.

25

Oxford, September 23rd, 1806.

[Address and date taken from the endorsement.]

MY DEAR MR. JERNINGHAM,

We shall be happy to see you at the time you mention. And I hope you will return to us in as good health and spirits, and with as many amiable and entertaining singularities, as when you left us. No man can laugh at you; but dull indeed must be he who could refrain from laughing with you.

Adieu. Lady Harcourt desires to be particularly remembered to you.

26

Oxford, December 24th, 1806.

[Address and date taken from the endorsement.]

Though, as well in years as in other respects, I suspect, I am the oldest woman of the two, yet Lady Harcourt is so constantly engaged with steward's accounts and household accounts (to say nothing of the preparatory agonies of a Birthday trimming), that I must undertake to carry her "*en croupe*," to thank you for her share of your letter. Which, like all yours, was as amusing as it is original, friendly and kind. My gazette from hence will not have either of the two first merits; for seeing nobody, and being surrounded with mud and flood, our way of life is monotonous and dull, and we have remained here long enough to make me rejoice that the time

for our leaving this place approaches so near. Indeed so little do I think Nuneham calculated for a winter residence that, should I drag on my life to another year, and Lady Harcourt (whose seasons are directed not by nature's but by fashion's calender) not object to going to town so early, I will remove from hence a month earlier.

I felt, upon your account, very sorry for the death of my Lady Kenmare.<sup>1</sup> Of whom all I knew was that she was very handsome, dignified and well bred; and consequently very unlike those pert or hoydening *things*, that not only pass current, but obtain admiration, with us.

Mrs. Preston,<sup>2</sup> not Prescott<sup>3</sup> (for none of us have had recourse to that impudent magnetiser, to remove our ailments) has left us long; as has likewise the Dowager Lady Spencer,<sup>4</sup> who delighted us all. And so did you too; for you were the whole time in your very best manner.

I hate elections, and every thing relating to them; and am never surprised at any evil they may happen to produce. I was born with too much indolence, with too little ambition, ever to engage in such pursuits.

Of the embryo duel we have heard nothing;<sup>5</sup> and I am happy it never was brought forth, to mischief.

Does my Lord Carlisle confess that Kemble can be good in any character he performs? If he does, I might. I have received a very obliging letter from him [*i.e.* Lord Carlisle], inclosing the catalogue of his fine collection of pictures; which I was very much gratified with, as I wished to know what treasures of that sort he possessed. In the description of Nuneham the poetry will, I trust, make some amends for the quantity of *antiquarianism* with which it is loaded.

I never believed the Prince to be half as ill as he was represented to be, and I am glad to hear your favourable report of his looks; for at *all* times, you know, I thought of him, wrote of him, and talked of him, with respect and regard. Though I cannot say that H.R.H.'s conduct towards me was equally uniform.

The Haggitts go Westward on Monday, and they desire to be particularly remembered to you. The history of the solitary apricot and of the motherly hen still amuses them and us, when we think of it. The arch-virgin, and her sister also, send their remembrances. And now I will release you. Farewell.

<sup>1</sup> Lady Kenmare was the second wife of Valentine, 1st Earl of Kenmare (1754-1812), and the eldest daughter of Michael Aylmer, of Lyons, county Kildare. According to *Burke*, Mary Aylmer married the Earl in 1785; but according to *The Annual Register* for 1806, she became his wife on August 24th, 1783. She died in Portman Square on October 16th, 1806. The Earl of Kenmare was a Catholic peer; and his first wife was Charlotte, daughter of

Henry, 11th Viscount Dillon, and sister of Lady Jerningham, wife of Sir William Jerningham, Bart.

<sup>2</sup> A Mrs. Preston, "daughter of a most intimate friend of Mrs. Delany's," is mentioned by Fanny Burney ("Diary and Letters") as having called on her, with her daughter Miss Preston, in September, 1791, at Queen's Square, Bath. The diarist describes Mrs. Preston as "not pleasing, and she has too much pretension, under a forced veil of humility, to improve upon acquaintance."

<sup>3</sup> I can find nothing relating to this person.

<sup>4</sup> This lady (Margaret Georgiana, eldest daughter of the Right Hon. Stephen Poyntz, of Midgham, Berks) was the widow of the 1st Earl Spencer, whom she married in 1755, and the mother of the famous Georgiana, Duchess of Devonshire, who had died on March 30th of this present year, 1806. The Dowager Countess, who was a favourite with Fanny Burney, died on March 18th, 1814. The 1st Earl Spencer had died in 1783.

<sup>5</sup> I cannot discover who were involved in this "embryo duel."

27

Oxford, November 4th, 1807.

[Address and date taken from the endorsement.]

DEAR MR. JERNINGHAM,

Instead of finding me the high-seasoned morsel you so pleasantly describe in your letter, I fear after "la sauce piquante à la Jersey," which you have lately been pampered with, I shall appear to have no more relish than a tough boiled leg of veal. However, if you can deign to pick a bit of me, such as I am, I will serve myself up to you with great satisfaction on Wednesday or Thursday next.

Pray tell Mr. Stonehewer,<sup>1</sup> that I do flatter myself he will not leave this neighbourhood without making me [a] visit. Dicky gives me hope of seeing him on Wednesday; and I shall be really disappointed if he does not come. Lady Harcourt sends her compliments, and I am, with great regard,

Yours faithfully,

HARCOURT.

<sup>1</sup> Richard Stonehewer (1728-1809) was a Cambridge don, Fellow of Peterhouse, and a friend of Gray's, "my best friend" says the poet. All his life long he was intimate with the 3rd Duke of Grafton, to whom he was tutor at Cambridge, then private secretary, and subsequently Under-Secretary for State. Through his influence with the Duke, who was Chancellor of Cambridge University, Gray obtained his Professorship of History. Stonehewer was a friend of Earl Harcourt's and of Horace Walpole's.

V

LADY BEAUCHAMP PROCTOR

## A NOTE ON LADY BEAUCHAMP PROCTOR AND HER HUSBAND'S FAMILY CONNECTIONS

CONCERNING Lady Beauchamp Proctor I can unfortunately procure no further information than is contained in her own letters to Edward Jerningham. Inasmuch, however, as Sir William, the 1st Baronet, of Langley Park, his children and his grandchildren, became united by marriage with such well-known East Anglian families as the Bacons of Mildenhall, the Custances of Weston House, the Hobarts of Blickling, and the Wodehouses of Kimberley, and were twice allied with the Towers of Huntsmore Park, Bucks; in view, too, of the rather remarkable circumstances attending the second marriage of Sir William, a union that associated him with the ill-fated Charles Yorke, the Lord Chancellor who survived his elevation to the Woolsack four days only, I think it advisable to furnish some genealogical particulars as to the family connections of the first two baronets.

William Beauchamp, who was baptised on May 11th, 1722, and educated at Oxford, assumed the surname and arms of Proctor by Act of Parliament, 18 George II., in compliance with the testamentary injunction of his maternal uncle, George Proctor, of Langley Park, Norfolk. He was created a baronet on February 20th, 1745, and was M.P. for Middlesex from 1746 to 1768. He was a Knight of the Bath and Colonel of the East Middlesex Militia, and died on September 13th, 1773.

Sir William married, firstly, in 1746, Jane, his cousin, daughter of Christopher Tower, of Huntsmore Park, Bucks, and by her (who died on May 10th, 1761) had issue:—

1. Sir Thomas, the 2nd Baronet.

2. Anne, who married on January 28th, 1778, Sir Edmund Bacon, 8th Baronet of Mildenhall, and Premier Baronet of England, and died on August 26th, 1813, leaving issue.

3. Frances, who married John Custance, of Weston House, Norfolk, and died April 10th, 1836.

Sir Thomas Beauchamp Proctor, the 2nd Baronet, was born on September 29th, 1756, was educated at Christ's College, Cambridge, and died June 29th, 1827. He married on March

5th, 1778, Mary, second daughter of Robert Palmer, of Sonning, Berks. By her, who died on December 25th, 1847, aged 88, he had issue:—

1. Sir William, the 3rd Baronet, and an Admiral in the Navy. He was born on October 14th, 1781, married on May 20th, 1812, Anne, daughter of Thomas Gregory, and niece and heiress of Thomas Brograve, and died on March 14th, 1861.

2. George Edward Beauchamp, of Thetford, born July 23rd, 1785, died December 21st, 1868.

3. Robert, a Captain in the Madras Artillery, born April 1st, 1787, died May 23rd, 1813.

4. Thomas William Henry, Rector of Buckenham and Hassingham, Norfolk, born June 11th, 1790, died May 9th, 1863.

5. Richard, Lieut.-Colonel in the Army, born January 30th, 1793, died August 11th, 1850.

6. Mary, who married on May 5th, 1800, Rev. Henry Hobart, and died on March 15th, 1854.

7. Harriet, who married in 1803 Christopher James Tower, of Weald Hall, Essex, and had issue.

8. Amelia, who married on December 23rd, 1815, the Hon. and Rev. Armine Wodehouse, and died without issue on November 24th, 1874.

It is small wonder, then, that Lady Beauchamp Proctor, blessed with a family of eight children to look after, turned a deaf ear to the amorous protestations of Edward Jerningham. She was probably the less flattered by these attentions owing to the fact that the poet seems to have preferred to do his love-making by letter, and always to have shown a considerable reluctance against paying his devoirs in person at Langley Park. Probably, however, the arduous which Lady Beauchamp Proctor rebukes in her tenth and eleventh letters, with a charming oscillation from outraged self-respect to grateful affection, were the mere natural and habitual ebullitions of "the charming man's" epistolary gallantry. Judged by his letters to other women correspondents, Edward Jerningham appears to have been a man of sentiments who deviated into the language of love out of sheer deference and compliment to the sex, and would have been mightily surprised to find his overtures taken seriously. That rather vulgar little minx, Mrs. Anderson, seems to have taken the measure of this elderly flirt pretty accurately.

Lady Beauchamp Proctor's father-in-law, Sir William, took for his second wife Letitia, the eldest of the three wealthy daughters of Henry Johnstone, of Berkhamstead, Herts, each of whom brought her husband a fortune of £25,000. He married her on May 13th, 1762, and she died on January

12th, 1798, leaving issue. Agneta, the second daughter, became the second wife of Charles Yorke (1722-1770), the second son of Philip Yorke, 1st Earl of Hardwicke, on December 30th, 1762, and was the grandmother of Charles Philip, 4th Earl of Hardwicke. How ambition prompted Charles Yorke, formerly Solicitor-General and Attorney-General, to break his promise to his brother and to accept King George III.'s offer of the Chancellorship, and how remorse made him take to his bed immediately after and to die, probably by his own hand, four days later, is a story tragical enough but merely collateral to this account of the Beauchamp Proctor family ramifications. It remains to add that the youngest of the three Johnstone girls, Henrietta, married William Cane, of Erith, a prosperous merchant, about whom a good deal may be read in the second volume of the delightful "Memoirs of William Hickey." Owing to the fact that her father died while she was still an infant, her fortune accumulated to £30,000.

It was the 4th Baronet, Sir Thomas William Brograve, who reversed the order of the family surnames and caused the baronetcy to take the style of Proctor Beauchamp in place of Beauchamp Proctor. He was born on July 2nd, 1815, was High Sheriff in 1859, was D.L. for Norfolk, and died on October 7th, 1874. On July 9th, 1852, he assumed by Royal license the surname of Proctor Beauchamp, in that sequence, instead of Beauchamp Proctor.

In affirming that I can procure no information concerning Lady Beauchamp Proctor save what is contained in her own letters to Edward Jerningham, I am not strictly accurate. The Rev. Norton Nicholls, the friend and correspondent of Gray, makes the following reference to her in a letter written to Edward Jerningham on December 22nd, 1778:—"I was at Langley one day last week. Lady B[eauchamp] knows Italian perfectly, and might be made something of in good hands. Don't spoil her in your abominable town!"

## LETTERS FROM LADY BEAUCHAMP PROCTOR

### I

If you can spare a moment from your severe studies, I shall be happy to meet you at Romney's to-morrow between one and two, to pass judgment on two portraits of some friends of yours.<sup>1</sup>

It occurs to me you told me you had no use for a little French watch. If that be really the case, it would, in my present exigency, be charity to give it me. Whether in good or bad condition, whole or broken, it would answer my

purposes. But remember, I will not accept it, unless you assure me you have renounced it.

I am your obliged and obedient humble servant,  
M. B. PROCTOR.

Russell Street, January 24th, Wednesday [1781].<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> I cannot discover the identity of these friends. A mere knowledge of whom Romney was painting at this time hardly affords sufficient clue.

<sup>2</sup> I assign Letter 1 to the year 1781 as it obviously is prior in date to Letter 2, judged by the reference to the "little French watch."

2

[1781.]

If I had spirits I would tell you how kind Mr. Nicholls<sup>1</sup> says you were to him: it made me laugh much at the time.

Sir Thomas met the Cossey family at the prodigious annual dinner at Norwich. They were then all perfectly well; though Sir William did not escape the horrid ague in the spring. I think you are a fortunate being not to have shared the least in it; owing I believe to your constant use of your great coat. That same valuable thing, prudence, is an inestimable treasure; how many evils does it avoid! and how much good does it produce!

Your watch goes vastly well. I was sorry you thought it necessary to apologize for a deficiency of thanks [on your own part] upon [my] accepting it. Was that the case, which really did not strike me, your letter fully atones for all former omissions.

I will not at present borrow Mr. Keates' Poems<sup>2</sup>; in the winter I will beg you to lend them me. I like much the character you give me of Dr. Beattie. I know nothing of him; but remember being much pleased with his "Minstrel." It is very probable you are not at this time in town; but I must direct to you there.

Have you seen some odes by a Mr. Mathias of Trinity College, Cambridge,<sup>3</sup> in which, I am informed, he has very happily imitated Mr. Gray's manner? I wish to have your opinion about them; as I suspect my authority<sup>4</sup> is partial. You say not one word about the Harp; how goes it on? I frequently wish for Miss Guest here. I played a good deal upon first coming, and thought (perhaps vainly) that I was much improved.

I am sensible that this letter will not be worth postage; what your partiality may think of it is another affair.

I forgot to tell you Sir Thomas is going next Thursday to Mr. Nicholls', at whose house he means to pass a day. I was very politely solicited to be of the party; but, having no inclination, I think I shall decline it. Having mentioned him again, and [thinking that] possibly you may be anxious to know



what he said of you, I will not leave you in suspense; but tell you it was only complaining what a bad correspondent (I mean a silent one) you were. But the drollery of it consisted in your writing to him five months ago, in which letter you lamented much not hearing from him oftener, and expressed a desire that you might both become better correspondents. Upon which he wrote to you immediately; and has never heard one word from you since. I hope you will not tell him I was your informer; though Sir Thomas told him he should acquaint you with his accusation.

You talk of going to Richmond; why don't you as usual go to Twickenham? London must now be deserted.—I cannot boast much of my eyes: every little complaint rather increases their weakness. But I hope time and attention will wear it off. I do not apply to Italian. I smiled when I read *Prnc<sup>e</sup> Tante Coma's* question: <sup>5</sup> he certainly must have an idea people staid only a fortnight or three weeks (upon an emergency) in the country to ask, as soon as I was gone, when I meant to return. I assure you, I have a very small passion or inclination to see London again. I love the country best, and am convinced I am much happier in it. Adieu. My candle has been burning this hour; if it will seal my letter, that is all I require.

<sup>1</sup> The Rev. Norton Nicholls, the friend of Gray, and one of Edward Jerningham's correspondents.

<sup>2</sup> George Keate (1729-1797) was an artist, naturalist, antiquary and miscellaneous writer who traced his descent from Catherine Seymour, sister of Lady Jane Grey, and was an intimate friend of Voltaire's. He published several volumes of verse, including "An Epistle from Lady Jane Grey to Lord Guilford Dudley," supposed to have been written on the eve of their execution. He was elected an F.R.S. in 1766, and his "Poetical Works" were issued in 1781. These are presumably "Mr. Keates' Poems."

<sup>3</sup> Thomas James Mathias (1754-1835), author of "The Pursuits of Literature" (1794-1797), was a great admirer of Gray. In 1781 he brought out "Runic Odes, imitated from the Norse tongue in the manner of Mr. Gray"—the work to which Lady Beauchamp Proctor alludes—and in 1814 he published a costly edition of the poet's works which, issued at seven guineas, well-nigh ruined him, so small was its sale.

<sup>4</sup> Lady Beauchamp Proctor's authority was probably that of her husband, who, having been up at Cambridge about the same time as Mathias, may have met him there. If this be the case, Sir Thomas may also have been responsible for introducing Mathias shortly afterwards to both Norton Nicholls and Edward Jerningham.

<sup>5</sup> I have been unable to discover the identity of the *Principe Tante Coma*. It seems an unusual name.

Your very obliging letter demanded an earlier acknowledgement; but, as Sir Thomas has talked of writing to you himself

for some time past, I deferred it till I thought necessity required it from one or the other. Must I say anything further in my defence; or is this apparent neglect forgiven? Could I think it was, I would be silent; but, as I very much fear it is not, I must allege want of health as a principal cause of it. I am sorry to say I have had a return of the intermitting fever, which has brought me so low (notwithstanding I take the bark in manner and quantity as before) that I feel myself a being fitter for bed than to rise at six to write letters, which I absolutely have done this morning. This is my fever day; therefore I am not so much surprised at the very great languor I feel, and I shall be extremely well pleased if it ends with nothing more.

You ask me if I enjoy the morning air, which I used to anticipate with so much pleasure. I fear it is to that enjoyment I may attribute my relapse; but however I still love it most excessively, and shall, as soon as I am well, endeavour to partake of its delights, with this restriction—of never sitting down in it, but walking all the time.

Mr. Nicholls called here last Monday in his way to Cossey. He declared to me that he and his mother had breakfasted and dined by the water-side at that time for a fortnight past. I had presumption enough to suppose that what so old a woman was able to do, I certainly might attempt without danger; but as I found it otherwise, I shall discontinue the practice. Sir Thomas is now vastly well. He had a slight fit of the ague about a fortnight since; though I believe he has never been guilty of any imprudence. But however I do not give him the sole merit of his present good health; as I am convinced it is in a great measure owing to his use of the cold bath<sup>1</sup> every other morning. Could I do the same thing, I don't doubt I should find equal benefit from it. I hope you will excuse my leaving many parts of your letter unanswered. It is a piece of incivility I would not willingly commit; but I really feel a total inability to write or to exert myself in the smallest degree this morning. I have just comprehension enough at present to read Mr. Sherlock's "*Lettres d'un Voyageur Anglois*,"<sup>2</sup> which I opened yesterday for the first time, and was charmed with them, as they amused me without requiring much attention. I read Mr. Hayley's "*Triumphs of Temper*" twice.<sup>3</sup> I have now cut out your name, and lent it to Mrs. Cooper; but I did not take this liberty till I had received your letter, with the elegant style you there desired me to call it my own. Sir Thomas is much obliged to you for the lovely little head you sent him. I have read the *Life of Edward the Black Prince*;<sup>4</sup> and shall have my little lecturer read it again to me when she arrives. I have lately been engaged with some of Sir Joshua Reynolds's

discourses to the students of the Academy,<sup>5</sup> lent me by Dr. Cooper. This is merely accidental; for I follow your advice of not reading every book that is recommended to me. My schools go on very well; but I have not yet disposed of all my books. I have heard from the Sisterhood twice:<sup>6</sup> they informed me of the death of a cousin, for whom I am now in mourning. They wrote first as you wished; so I hope and trust all is in a good way. I felt myself upon coming here (until my illness came to put a period to my happiness) in a perfect paradise, so tranquil, so unmolested. Sir Thomas well, my dear little girl much grown and improved: in short, everything seemed to form a wish to recompense me for what I had so lately suffered in town. I am just returned from breakfast. I think I am a little better, though not less stupid.

<sup>1</sup> It is refreshing to come across a reference to the use of the cold bath in a collection of eighteenth-century letters; for the century was one in which men of the highest rank and eminence were "very imperfect ablutioners." Dr. Johnson and Charles James Fox were, in their latter years, very little addicted to soap and water and very remiss about changing their linen. The Duke of Norfolk only took a bath on the occasions on which he fell dead drunk into the kennel; his footmen were then ordered to pick him up and to wash him. And Topham Beauclerk, the leader of fashion and the best beloved of Dr. Johnson's younger friends, was addicted to an unpleasant habit of scratching himself, which Boswell and General Paoli attributed to sheer lousiness!

<sup>2</sup> Martin Sherlock (1750-1797), writer of travel-letters and chaplain to the notorious Frederick Augustus Hervey, Bishop of Derry and 4th Earl of Bristol, was one of Edward Jerningham's correspondents. In 1779 he published at Geneva two volumes of correspondence in French, styled "*Lettres d'un Voyageur Anglois*," the letters of which are dated from The Hague, Berlin, Dresden, Vienna, Rome, Naples and Ferney, at which last-named place he visited Voltaire. In 1780 he published at Paris a second series, which gives impressions, under the title of "*Nouvelles Lettres*," of Italy, Geneva, Lausanne, Strasburg, Paris, and other French cities. He had an interview with Frederick the Great at Potsdam on July 20th, 1779. In his latter years he held various not very lucrative livings in Ireland, and became Archdeacon of Killala.

<sup>3</sup> William Hayley (1745-1820), poet, friend and biographer of Cowper and of Romney, was educated at Eton and at Trinity Hall, Cambridge, and published his best-known poem, "The Triumph of Tamper," in 1781. It ran into fourteen editions.

<sup>4</sup> Who the author of this particular life of the Black Prince was I am unable definitely to determine. But Arthur Collins (1690-1760), bookseller and author of the first "Peerage" (1709), published in 1740 "The Life and Glorious Actions of Edward, Prince of Wales, commonly called the Black Prince." This is possibly the work to which Lady Beauchamp Proctor refers.

<sup>5</sup> Sir Joshua Reynolds's first Discourse was delivered in 1769, the fourteenth, on Gainsborough, in 1788, the fifteenth and last, which concluded with the eulogium on Michael Angelo, in 1790.

<sup>6</sup> I fail to understand this reference.

[1788.]

Believing it will give you pleasure to hear I am better, I take the earliest opportunity of informing you of it. A few days after I wrote to you I mended sufficiently to go to Holkham,<sup>1</sup> where we spent nearly a week.—To-morrow we go to Mr. Custance's; and on Monday, I understand, we shall see Sir William and Lady Jerningham there. This is an annual visit I make with reluctance. I leave all my little endearments behind me, my children, my books, my morning and evening rides and walks, my solitary room (which I have completed to my wishes), my music, in short all, but my husband, I have here.

The catalogue of French books you promised me, I believe you have forgot. I beg to know if all Hamilton's works<sup>2</sup> are worth buying? I mean Hamilton, author of the "Memoires de Grammont." Mr. Wilson sent me some time ago "The Village"<sup>3</sup> by Mr. Crabbe. It did not please me at all; I think it greatly inferior to "The Library" he produced two years since.—I just now said I had completed my little room. I assure you it is a delightful retreat, the most undisturbed little spot in the house. In one point (if not in many) it would suit you: it possesses the western sun.—I rejoice with you on Lady Jerningham's uninterrupted health.—I feel sorry there should arise any obstacle to Miss A—— B——k's happiness.<sup>4</sup>—All this family desire to return you their kind remembrance and best wishes.—You say your studies have only been loitering lectures, productive not of knowledge, but *quiet*, composure, resignation, and a cheerful melancholy. It is so exact a representation of what mine always are that I cannot help transcribing it.—Adieu.

<sup>1</sup> Holkham was the seat of the famous Whig and agriculturist, Coke of Norfolk (1752–1842), who was created Earl of Leicester in 1837.

<sup>2</sup> In addition to the "Memoirs of the Comte de Gramont," Anthony Hamilton wrote five cantos, or fantasies, to satirise the love of the marvellous that prevailed in his day. Like the "Memoires," they were originally written in French.

<sup>3</sup> Crabbe's "The Village" was published in 1783. "The Library" appeared in 1781.

<sup>4</sup> The reference is to Miss Anne Beauclerk, one of Edward Jerningham's woman correspondents. She married a Mr. Talbot in 1795 or 1796.

[1788.]

Sunday, 2 o'clock.

The most perfect way to comply with your desire of writing soon is to do it immediately. I have been contemplating [so

much] longer than I intended since Church, that I find I have but half an hour left for writing; as I must meet Sir Thomas at Sir Edmund Bacon's at three. I received your charming letter last night, as I was preparing myself for sleep; I read it then. I repeated the same pleasure at 7 o'clock; and again entertained Sir Thomas with it in our way from Church. He exclaimed with pleasure, "How charmingly he writes," when I was reading the paragraph where you mention Mrs. Rowe as my guardian angel. I confess I felt secret pleasure at that passage, which I cannot describe. I can only thank my kind friend for giving me his feelings so explicitly.—I have a great deal to tell you; but must for the present break off.—I must mention before I quit my paper that I have this day commemorated the death of our blessed Saviour, a circumstance that will, I believe, afford you the same satisfaction it has done me.

Monday.

Behold me at this time (7 in the morning) feeling somewhat as I did once last year when I wrote to you, heavy and languid. But I can very easily account for it. I was up at half-past three this morning to see the sun rise. I mounted to the top of the house with great expedition; when to my great mortification I found that it had just emerged from the horizon as I arrived. I however settled my concern very easily by forming a resolution to visit my little sacred spot frequently; which will give me, I hope, more fortunate opportunities. This circumstance afforded me a few philosophical reflections; but, as they are totally confined to myself, you may perhaps guess them. I will not take up your time by relating them.

Lady Jerningham wrote me a very polite note a week before the great day at Norwich to tell me she was engaged upon some visit, and was sorry she should not be there. However, when the day came, she was confined with the influenza, and not able to perform her engagement. Sir William was there, and looked vastly well. He said he had just received a letter from you.

Sir Thomas desires to be kindly remembered to you, and thanks [you] for the Violincello Book.

As it will be some time, nay probably till next winter, before I shall have Mr. Hayley's Poems<sup>1</sup> from Payne, I should be obliged to you to lend me yours, when you have intirely done with it. But don't send it me yet.

How is the poem to William Pitt bad?<sup>2</sup> You say "very, very bad," which expression conveys to me an idea of indelicacy, which surely the subject would not admit of. I am vastly pleased with Hayley's advice to Mason.<sup>3</sup>

Apropos. My political rage rather subsides.<sup>4</sup> If starving

it will produce that effect, it will very soon cease to exist; as I find very little food for it here.

I don't forget your literary companions, Shakespeare, Montaigne, and Ariosto: they, as well as their reader, have frequently my thoughts.

I am obliged to you for the Burney.<sup>5</sup> If it is only in sheets, I would not have it sent; if in boards with a leather back, like my own first volume, I will thank you to send it.

Don't forget to give me your direction when at Richmond. I am sorry for poor Romney;<sup>6</sup> I feel myself a little interested about him. Walton is expected in Norfolk in ten days.

I am very glad Miss Harland<sup>7</sup> does not partake of my fears; indeed I pity every one who does. It is almost needless for me to repeat that I shall be happy in Miss A. Beauclerk's acquaintance; as I have so often said the same thing. I think I had formed a very true idea of Miss Reynolds. Is she as engaging in her manner as Miss Guest?<sup>8</sup> I rather imagine not. Mrs. Lovbry<sup>9</sup> will make no small addition to a noisy wedding.

I have every reason to give you the best account in the world of my health. I have now and then a fear for Sir Thomas, who (though by no means ill) is not so well as when in London. I am writing in a prodigious hurry: I mean to take this to Norwich myself.—The little creatures are well. The little Dryden, as you call him, grows very much. Addio.

<sup>1</sup> What poems of Hayley's these were I cannot determine.

<sup>2</sup> What poem this was I cannot guess.

<sup>3</sup> I do not understand this reference.

<sup>4</sup> On what political side Lady Beauchamp Proctor "raged" does not appear.

<sup>5</sup> This reference to "Burney" is no more susceptible of probable explanation than the one in Letter 10.

<sup>6</sup> I cannot explain this reference to Romney, whose final failure of mental power occurred as late as 1798.

<sup>7</sup> Miss Harland was one of Edward Jerningham's women correspondents. She was the daughter of Admiral Sir Robert Harland.

The reference to Miss Harland is the only clue to the date of this letter. Since she became Mrs. Dalrymple about the end of August or the beginning of September, 1783, the letter must be prior to that time, and the reference it makes to "a noisy wedding" may be to her wedding.

<sup>8</sup> Miss J. M. Guest was a noted pianist of the time and one of the correspondents of Edward Jerningham, who, writing to his niece, Charlotte Georgiana Jerningham, the future Lady Bedingfield, in 1792, says of the Parisian ladies, "The ladies here in general do not cultivate the fine arts; but, when they do apply, I think they surpass the nymphs of Albion. The daughter-in-law of Mme. de Bonfleurs plays on the harp superior to anything I have ever heard; another lady plays pianoforte beyond Miss Guest by many degrees." ("The Jerningham Letters," vol. i. p. 64.)

<sup>9</sup> I cannot identify this lady.

Monday, August 19th [1783].

I received your last letter yesterday. I believe I may say it occasioned my being very ill all day; but I am now totally recovered, and solicitous to make any satisfaction *I am able* (and you require) for my long silence. I am infinitely obliged to you for your very great attention and anxiety about me; but I think you allow it sometimes to carry you rather too far. And that period, which to a *colder* imagination would appear short and trifling, to one of so ardent a texture as yours is may appear an age. I was not surprised at your letter, nor am I angry.—I own myself wrong. I should have answered your long letter sooner; though, believe me, it has been answered every day of my life in idea.—Mr. Warton<sup>1</sup> is here now, finishing Sir Thomas's picture.—I was much obliged to you for Mr. Hayley's poem<sup>2</sup> and the volume of Burney (?);<sup>3</sup> but until your letter arrived I was at a loss to account for your sending me books, without one line from yourself, a measure so totally new. But when your letter from Richmond arrived I was very well satisfied.—I have been much engaged lately making an intire new arrangement in the Library; and, though it has taken me up very much, I allow nothing to interrupt a little daily exercise both in the air and on the harpsichord. The latter is infinitely less than it ought to be; but I really have not sufficient time to do every thing I wish. I usually rise at seven, and take an hour's ride on horseback with the children upon the very horse which Sir Thomas offered you and which you begged I would use. It is the best and gentlest creature imaginable; otherwise I should not chuse to ride him at this time.<sup>4</sup>—I was excessively entertained with the description of your situation at Richmond: I hope to receive many such letters from you.—Little Ned is still at Cossey; that ended as you foresaw it would.—I am writing in a prodigious hurry. I am sorry to say we expect a crowd of people to-day. I am quite ashamed to put this letter in a cover. I wish I had some franks to you; surely you might send me some?—Adieu. I have a thousand things to say to you; but have no time. Sir Thomas was very well at the Assizes; but he was detained so long upon the jury that he did not chuse to attend the Assemblies. He desires to be kindly remembered to you. I must write to the last minute; though I know the consequences of it.—Perhaps it is presumption in me to say I was disappointed in Mr. Hayley's last poem; but I must own I was a little. But how few things fully answer the idea one forms of them! I have dropt Dr. Mead<sup>5</sup> for the present: I am not yet qualified to take a degree on any of his subjects.—I was happy to hear Lady Jerningham was well, and [has]

the unexpected pleasure she enjoys in your brother's company. —We shall rejoice to see you in September.—I hope you will find the little Dryden<sup>6</sup> much grown; he has got five teeth.—Once more, Adieu.

<sup>1</sup> I can discover no painter of this name.

<sup>2</sup> I cannot understand to what poem of Hayley's *Lady Beauchamp Proctor* refers. The difficulty is created by the impossibility of assigning with certainty any particular year to the writing of this letter. Most of *Lady Beauchamp Proctor's* letters are either undated altogether or only partially dated.

<sup>3</sup> The name seems to be Burney; but whether the reference is to a work of Dr. Burney, the musician, or to a novel written by his daughter, Fanny Burney, it is impossible to say. The first volume of Dr. Burney's famous "*History of Music*" appeared in 1776, the second in 1782, the third and fourth in 1789. Fanny Burney brought out "*Evelina*" in 1778, "*Cecilia*" in 1782, and "*Camilla*" in 1796.

<sup>4</sup> Apparently this is a reference to *Lady Beauchamp Proctor's* approaching confinement.

<sup>5</sup> Dr. Mead (1678-1754) was physician to King George I., to King George II., and to Sir Robert Walpole, and numbered Pope, Newton, and Bentley among his friends. His two chief writings are "*A Short Discourse concerning Pestilential Contagion*" (1720) and "*Monita et Precepta Medica*" (1751), a summary of his practical experience as physician. His "*Medical Works*" were published in 1762.

<sup>6</sup> This must refer to *Lady Beauchamp Proctor's* eldest son, William.

## 7

[1784.]

I feel that it will be a satisfaction to you to hear that I am well, and that I have read your letter of the 16th. I am extremely obliged to you for it. I thought your silence longer lived than usual; but the quality and quantity of your letter, at length arrived, freed me from all apprehensions.—I am gratefully proud of your good mother's remembrance of me. Your conjecture respecting Sir William's return without *Lady Jerningham* is exactly what I had suggested in this house.—I should like very well <sup>1</sup> *bonnet de nuit*; but I am particularly desirous of having Gilpin's "*Life of Archbishop Cranmer*."<sup>2</sup> If it is not inconvenient to you, pray send it me. I am charmed with Lunardi's success:<sup>3</sup> I think he must feel great triumph on the occasion. How much should I like to converse with him upon his sensations and the scenes he beheld when so much elevated!—Tell me, are Hayley's comedies worth buying?<sup>4</sup> I have never seen them: I am much prejudiced against them.—Is there no chance of seeing you in Norfolk this autumn? The sisterhood will be here next month.—I hope to be in town sooner than usual this winter, I mean immediately after Xmas. I want to do a good deal in music this year, before my children engage more of my time.—I agree



in this instance with Mad. Genlis, that a methodical plan of reading is infinitely preferable to a desultory one. In short I begin to think the latter is not worth having; and I believe my want of the retentive faculty, which I sometimes complain of, arises from a too dissipated and wandering attention, never allowing the mind to rest sufficiently upon any object for that object to make an impression upon it. If I can once regulate my reading (however painful it may be to me at first; as I have hitherto followed only the impulse of the moment), I feel that it would be attended with the very best consequences.—Adieu. Accept the best wishes of this house.—I hope Miss Paston<sup>5</sup> will spend the winter with Lady Jerningham.—Remember me in your best thoughts.—Walton<sup>6</sup> has been here.—I thank you for the preference you give me respecting La Fleur.<sup>7</sup> He would probably suit you best; and, as il padrone dislikes foreigners, an Englishman who speaks French well would suit me better.

<sup>1</sup> Two words illegible.

<sup>2</sup> The Rev. William Gilpin (1724-1804), clergyman, educationist, artist, and miscellaneous writer, published a life of Archbishop Cranmer in 1784. He was the brother of Sawrey Gilpin, the animal painter, and a cousin of Benjamin West, the historical painter and President of the Royal Academy.

<sup>3</sup> Vincent Lunardi, an Italian, was the first person to make an ascent into the air in a balloon from British ground. His initial ascent took place from the Artillery Ground on September 15th, 1784, in the presence of the Prince of Wales and an enormous crowd. His balloon measured 83 feet in circumference, and was exhibited to the public at the Lyceum in the Strand, where it was visited by more than 20,000 persons. The aeronaut, who became the lion of the hour and was presented to King George III., was secretary to Prince Caramanico, the Neapolitan Ambassador.

<sup>4</sup> Hayley published "The Two Connoisseurs," a comedy, in 1785, and "Les Préjugés Abolis," a comedy written in French, in 1790. He also brought out "Plays in three acts and in verse, written for a private theatre" in 1784, and "Three Plays" with a preface in 1811. Early in his career he published two tragedies, "The Afflicted Father" in 1770, and "The Syrian Queen," a version of Corneille's "Rodogune," in 1771. But none of his tragedies or of his comedies was ever acted.

<sup>5 6 7</sup> I can identify none of these persons.

## 8

I don't inquire why I have incurred your displeasure: that must be explained when I can have a personal interview with you. I now write to inquire after Lady Jerningham's health; I was informed some little time since she had been or was most unusually ill. I hope, was this the case then, that she is now perfectly recovered. I at the same time heard you intended coming into Norfolk very soon. I flatter myself that you would not come so near us without allowing us, as usual, a

day or two either in coming or going—if it would not suit you to do both.—I very well remember you are acquainted with Mrs. Barbauld at Palgrave. I wish to be informed how she is related to the governor at Marlborough House; and which it is who writes the little books for children, whether your friend or the Lady Spencer's governess.<sup>1</sup>

If you favour us with a visit, it will suit us best after the month of July is over; as I shall keep my room the greatest part of that month, and probably some time in August.—The Chevalier did us the honour of dining with us once whilst he was resident at Cossey. I thought I could discover in him a strong resemblance to you both in person and character.—I shall be happy to hear you are all well in Grosvenor Square. The united best wishes of this family attend yourself and Lady Jerningham.

I am your much obliged friend,  
M. B. P.

June 27th and 28th, 1785.

Compliments to Miss Paston.

<sup>1</sup> Mrs. Barbauld, *née* Anna Letitia Aikin (1743–1825), poet, essayist, and schoolmistress, wrote books for children; but certainly none of her near relations was governess to Lady Spencer. Her niece, Lucy Aikin, was only four years old in 1785. Mrs. Barbauld was one of Edward Jerningham's correspondents.

9

Your note affects me very much.—Could I send you any comfort on this occasion, it would make me truly happy.—I rejoice to hear she is better.—But at her time of life God knows it may not last long.—You should prepare yourself for the worst.—Heaven help you.—Permit me to implore a blessing for myself—May I be such a mother deserving of such a son!

10

I don't pretend to sit down to write to you at this moment with an idea of affording you consolation; <sup>1</sup> all I mean to say is that you are frequently the subject of my thoughts and commiseration.—I most sincerely condole with you upon this melancholy event; and I fervently pray that the same Omnipotent Being who preserves us all may protect and support you under this heavy affliction!

I remain as ever your obliged friend and obedient humble servant,

M. B. PROCTOR.

Langley Park, September 26th, 1785.

<sup>1</sup> Lady Jerningham, who lived with her second son, Edward Jerningham, in Grosvenor Square, died in September, 1785.

11

Thursday morning.

As I am convinced you will be glad to have an account of us before you leave the country, I send a line to Norwich upon this day, just to say we are all well. Sir Thomas has had since you left us two violent fits of the ague, attended with an acute pain in his bowels; but I sincerely hope all his complaints are removed. He is this day gone out riding with Mr. Wilson;<sup>1</sup> though he does not find himself inclined to accept Major Money's<sup>2</sup> invitation this evening. I know he would willingly meet you there, was he in perfect health; as indeed he told you. Therefore this will prevent all your fears and apprehensions at not seeing him; which otherwise I am clear your kind anxiety for me would excite in your mind. I could say a good deal about my own health, which is abundantly beyond my expectations: I am, and ought to be, extremely thankful for it. When I write next to you, may I be able to say the same thing! I now wish you a happy journey, and a happy meeting in Grosvenor Square, and every other blessing. Adieu.

<sup>1</sup> Who Mr. Wilson was, who so frequently figures in Lady Beauchamp Proctor's letters, I cannot discover.

<sup>2</sup> I cannot make out the identity of Major Money. In 1766 Viscount Townshend (1724-1807), 4th Viscount and 1st Marquess, wrote two letters to Edward Jerningham, announcing that he had procured, at his correspondent's request, a post for a Mr. Money at the Tower. Whether Major Money is the Mr. Money of the Viscount's letters it is impossible to say.

12

I received your Thursday's letter of inquiry and concern for our health. I should have complied with your request of writing on Saturday; but I thought, as I had then given you so recent an account, it would be more satisfactory to you to hear from me on this day. I can say at present that we are all well; though you know it is impossible I should long continue so. When I wrote to you last Thursday (which by the bye was singular enough; as probably we were writing to each other at the same instant of time) I had not the smallest thought or intention of giving you another line before all was over, as part of my last letter intimated. I am very anxious about Sir Thomas's health; for, though he calls himself well, I know he is not altogether free from the pain in his stomach which I mentioned in my last letter as a complaint he was a stranger to. I hope at least he will keep well till I am able to nurse him. Mr. Wilson leaves us on Thursday or Friday next,

K

which circumstance I cannot say concerns me; as it may incline Sir Thomas to stay more in the house and to attend to his health. I know you will think I am not in spirits. I confess they fluctuate very much; and I believe I have been graver than usual upon writing to you. When I reflect at all, I feel every reason to rejoice; as I am fully persuaded the Supreme Being will conduct all things to the best and wisest conclusion.—I was very glad Lady Jerningham had prevailed upon you to stay at Cossey a few days longer than you at first intended. Once more, Adieu.

Monday morning, October 8th.

## 13

The subject of your first letter must at present pass unregarded by me. It contains in it something so obscure, so unexpected that, until I am more enlightened about it, I think I do right to be silent. I must however say that I sensibly feel the diminution of your friendship and regard towards me; but I also feel an intire acquital of myself respecting the cause of it. My sentiments have been, and ever will be, the same with regard to you. There are few people I know who so much deserve my approbation and esteem. You possess both in a high degree; and, if I have been a little reserved in telling it to you in my letters, that reserve has arisen from thinking your letters contained sometimes a little too much warmth.—I am conscious you will ask me how I came not to see this objection some time ago? I might indeed say years ago. In answer to which I acknowledge I did see it; but I thought time would probably abate the ardours of your style.—You cannot forget our agreement—that love should have no part in our friendship. I should detest the name of that person who would dare to suppose, or call himself my lover. I am warm upon the subject. I would have you know that I suspect *myself*, that your lesson to me on that subject has not been thrown away. I can occasionally show some fire; though I am quite proud to merit the appellation of “the warm statue.”—You accuse me of being reserved about myself. I was designedly so. I had nothing to tell you but what, had I been in town immediately after Christmas (as I expected), I should have communicated freely to you. To tell you we were to stay in the country all the winter was a circumstance so unknown to me that it was impossible. I left town last year with more than common concern; and I had a stronger inclination to return than I ever before felt. But it was convenient to mon mari to stay here beyond the time we proposed; and it was necessary for me to return

sooner. Therefore, when these circumstances were weighed, there was so short an intermediate space left for town, that upon the whole it was better not to go at all.—I could give a thousand other domestic reasons for this determination, which I conceive would give you neither satisfaction nor entertainment. Such as my children's maid, Fanny, being married to a servant in the house, who would have left me had we been in town; and the inoculation of my youngest children, which I thought better postponed. I don't apologize for writing these kind of trifles (for such they must appear in your eyes); as you have absolutely drawn them from me.—I now begin to feel that, if I allow myself to read this, I shall hastily throw it in the fire. I will therefore conclude without giving myself time to think about it, thanking you for the little parcel you sent me by Sir Thomas, and hoping it is almost unnecessary for me to say that, whatever escaped your lips at the time when our friendship was in its meridian, will be buried to Eternity in my breast.

I should have written to you before; but I have been from home. Adieu. May every blessing attend you!

## 14

Sunday, January 13th.

It was some time before I could bring myself to a resolution to send you my letter dated the 5th of this month; and since I have sent it I have been perpetually miserable about it. It bears so many marks of ingratitude towards you that I cannot indure the thought of it; this is therefore (if you will permit it) to cancel all I there said. Only suffer me to intreat you to be less vehement in your expressions of regard and affection for the future. Let me again beg of you to disregard my former letter intirely; and when you write to pass it over unnoticed. Let this hint suffice for the present. Every thing further I will give a more satisfactory account of when we meet, which will be (I believe) in about a fortnight.—I cannot explain to you how unhappy many circumstances have made me for some time past. Any thing that carries with it the appearance of an intrigue I cannot support. Neither can I support the idea of ingratitude towards you, to whom I am so much indebted. If this does not sufficiently atone for all the disrespect my last letter contained, and you are resolved to consider me as a being unworthy your esteem, allow me to repeat what I once before had occasion to say. Which is, that whatever confidence you may have placed in me will remain buried in oblivion to all Eternity.—I think myself beyond expression obliged to you for numberless civilities conferred upon me,

which no period of time can ever efface from my memory. I thank you for the trouble you put yourself to in procuring me the children's books; many of them are distributed. I join with you in wishing they may answer the best of purposes. I also give you thanks for the last parcel of books (hitherto unacknowledged), in which were two copies of your last publication. I read every poem with infinite delight; some I was well acquainted with, others I knew nothing of. "Honoris"<sup>1</sup> pleased me excessively; there are some lines in it most uncommonly charming. But I don't mean to write your panegyrick; was I equal to the task, it might now only be considered by you as adulation, which I totally abhor. I will only say that this is written in a prodigious hurry. I have my doubts whether you can read it; but I forbear making either compliments or apologies, as I am no friend to either. It is sufficient to say that if it reaches you *il mio Cuore sara contento*. A Dio.

<sup>1</sup> Edward Jerningham's poem, "Honoris; or the Day of All Souls," appeared anonymously in 1782.

## 15

I am excessively obliged to you for the variety of entertainment you have lately afforded me. I received great pleasure in the perusal of the "Essai sur l'histoire;"<sup>1</sup> I must look it over again before I return it. On the subject and intention of Mr. Young's *intuism*<sup>2</sup> I do thoroughly agree with you: it strikes me as a total perversion of the author's meaning to suppose any part of it ironical.—You know I am ever ready to grasp at any book that may tend, either remotely or immediately, to the improvement of my children. I must therefore trouble you to procure those books for me which you tell me are in request at Paris. I must also beg to remind you of the "Treatise on Education"<sup>3</sup> you mentioned in your first letter.—You talk of calling here for a day or two in your way to Cossey this month. You know we shall ever be happy to see you; but, lest either you, or a letter informing us of your arrival, should come here when we are from home, I must inform you that from the 13th to the 21st is the only interval of time I can with certainty say we shall be at home together this month. Thetford and its rural sports will occupy the time and attention of the "maitre du logis;" but few occupations excepting the ordinary ones will employ those of the "maitresse."—I was much concerned, and indeed surprised, to hear your eldest nephew was going abroad; but, however great my astonishment on that occasion, I think it was surpassed at Ned's<sup>4</sup> going to school, a circumstance I never expected. Lady Jerningham seems to mourn his loss. She spoke of him at

Weston with tears in her eyes, and unusually absented herself in the Assize Week.—Our united best wishes attend you. I am as usual in great haste; but I have written to you too often to plead an excuse.—Adieu.

<sup>1</sup> I can identify neither of these works.

<sup>2</sup> Who Mr. Young was, and in what his "intuism" consisted, I cannot guess.

<sup>3</sup> This refers to Edward Jerningham, born in 1774, younger son of Sir William Jerningham, and nephew to the poet.

## 16

Come when you will, we shall be always happy to see you; we have nobody with us but Mr. Wilson, nor do we at present expect any company. Sir Thomas has this moment desired me to give you his kindest respects, and to say that he hopes you will not put off coming 'till the end of the week; as the sooner he sees you, and the longer you stay, the happier you will make him. Adieu.—If this would reach you sooner, it should be conveyed to Cossey by the bearer.

Langley Park, Monday, 3rd October.

## 17

With infinite satisfaction I received your letter last night. Had it arrived only two days later, we should have been [here] no more. To-morrow we commence our long-talked-of "Northern Tour." I feel inconceivably hurt at its approach; but I know this would ever be the case. I am so strange a creature: I wish to go, and I wish to stay. But you can define all this. Four little strings that are united to my heart are drawing me home; and various others, such as half-promises, obligations, &c., are pulling in a direct contrary position. And, as the hour approaches, the conflict increases. But my doom is sealed; and I trust in Providence we shall meet again in perfect unison.—I am much obliged to you for the brochures. I expect them by return of the messenger who carries this. I believe they will be my fellow-travellers.—I had once an inclination to write to you in French to-day; but, what with my hand and my French, I thought you would be put to some difficulty, and therefore I have followed the old road.—I am very happy to hear Lady Jerningham is so well: I hope she will long continue so. Poor Miss P—— has my pity.—I am half inclined to say I don't believe what Elmsley<sup>1</sup> says. Had the books been on board some time, I should have heard of or from them.—I am sorry there is any doubt about the Opera next year: it always held in my esteem the first place

among the public amusements of London.—We expect to be returned to this dear spot about the middle of August.—I have been rather idle since I saw you; but I have had time to be charmed with Rousseau.—Adieu.

Sunday, July 9th.—I am going to church.

<sup>1</sup> A well-known bookseller of the time, established in the Strand.

## 18

I am quite ashamed at having kept your servant so long; his delay is occasioned by my particular desire to send you "The Library," which I have this instant procured from Lady Bacon. I look upon the short visit to Cossey the other morning in the light of a vision; it was of so transitory a nature that I cannot persuade myself it was real. The little journey that day I am clear was of service to me: I did not suffer in the smallest degree from it. And I am at present, I thank God, as well as I can hope or expect to be.

The principal part of your letter I have hitherto passed unnoticed, I mean where you talk of coming here. I am delighted at the thoughts of it; and, if nothing should occur to prevent me, I will certainly be at Norwich on Monday about twelve o'clock, if that will suit you. Sir Thomas would join me in expressions of pleasure at your intended visit to Langley, was he at home; but he and Mr. Wilson have been out as usual since nine o'clock this morning.

I am ever obliged to you for your kind and good wishes; but more especially at this present time, as I feel a certain "quelque chose," which tells me that I have given occasion for them, and that they will be granted you. Adieu.—The fineness of the writing is produced from my hand's shaking and my pen being split: the former is owing to my coming this moment from driving in the cabriolet.

## 19

Thursday, April 11th [1799?].

I am going to trouble you to ask, when you see Lady Harcourt, if she employs Cripps and Francillon in Norfolk Street in the Strand as jewellers. I want to have something done, and I by chance was directed to them; and, knowing how much roguery is and may be practised in that way, I am unwilling to deposit a large amount till I can by some means hear their characters. They say they have done business for Lady Harcourt.

I am going to ask another favour. Which is to tell me how I could get introduced to the Duchess of Gordon's.



Mary<sup>1</sup> has so much wish to go to her balls, in case she should give any more.

And will you be so good as to inform me, when you can, who is to be in waiting at St. James's on Thursday next; as we meditate our second visit on that day, if it is Lady Harcourt, as she would be our friend again. Her Ladyship answered politely my note; but made no visit.—Sir Thomas unites in best regards, and believe me,

Truly yours,  
M. B. PROCTOR.

Does not Sir William Jerningham visit the Duchess of Gordon?

<sup>1</sup> Mary, Lady Beauchamp Proctor's eldest daughter, was married on May 6th, 1800, to the Rev. Henry Hobart. Probably, therefore, this letter should be dated 1799.

20

Lowestoft, August 13th, 1812.

Your very kind letters claim an early attention. I am sorry to find you are not as well as we all wish. I am unable to give a very good account either of myself or of Sir Thomas. We are both rather upon the invalid list; but I trust we shall soon hear a better report. Since my sojourn here, now more than three weeks, my time has been spent in reading, and chiefly in that best of all books, or in some way relating to it. I have here Cudworth;<sup>1</sup> but as my second volume begins at Page 433 I have guessed that I may add P 43 to it and find in Page 476<sup>2</sup> the passage to which you allude in your first letter. Still I think I am disappointed; but if you will be kind enough to look at Page 43 and tell me *what book, what chapter, and what is indicated at the top of the leaf*, as every page has its peculiar index, I think I should make it out with ease.

I confess myself anxious for news from Spain, [for] some decision about the defeat of Marmont; the suspense is irksome to a degree. We need not be very learned to discover we are living at an awful crisis. Great and momentous things are about to happen, perhaps not in our day!

Pray tell me if you think it will be useful to me to read Cudworth through; as it is long and must take a little time. I have been trying to put Mr. Von Feinagli's plan<sup>3</sup> in execution in the Latin language; but no other than the New Testament would have induced such a perseverance. And as every word of that sacred book might be engrafted on my mind with, I hope, profit and advantage, I have not felt my time lost; though I have not arrived at that knowledge as to the language as I had

hoped. I have not however totally declined the experiment; but in a little more trial I shall, unless I derive more knowledge or insight into what he calls the spirit of the language than I have hitherto done.

I should have noticed, respecting the venison, that we have disparked<sup>4</sup> nearly 20 years; and nothing is worth your acceptance from this place, except it be a turbot, which I will send if you say "Do so."—Emily<sup>5</sup> is gone, as you suppose.—I have been trying the effect of both warm and cold sea-bathing; but I believe I had better let both alone—and leave myself to Dame Nature, she is a never-failing guide.—Rest I enjoy here in perfection, and reading is my sole pursuit.—Sir Thomas is this day gone to Yarmouth. I did not feel myself quite equal to it; and he has a companion in my son, Thomas.<sup>6</sup>—I am glad Lady Jerningham is recovered. I had been told that she was at one period unusually ill, even to be in danger.—I shall be happy to hear of the complete re-establishment of your health, and that your visit into Norfolk is more than a gaudy vision; in which wish all unite that belong to me. Hoping you will accept my esteem, I have the honour to remain your most truly obliged and obedient

M. B. PROCTOR.

I think of being here about ten days longer. No harvest yet.

<sup>1</sup> Ralph Cudworth (1617-1688) was a famous seventeenth-century divine, whose main work, "The True Intellectual System of the Universe," published in 1678, was an attack on atheists which was aimed indirectly against the philosopher Hobbes.

<sup>2</sup> I confess that the pagination of Lady Beauchamp Proctor's edition of Cudworth completely puzzles me.

<sup>3</sup> Gregor Von Feinaigle (1765-1819) was a famous mnemonist who was born at Baden and died in Dublin. He visited Paris in 1806 and London in 1811. His *modus operandi* is explained in "The New Art of Memory," edited by John Millard of the Surrey Institution and published in 1812. So far as I know, the last well-known memory trainer was a Dr. Stokes, who gave lectures on his system in most of the provincial towns about 1880 or 1881. He was known as "Stokes on Memory"; and among the aids he provided for this faculty was a rhyming catalogue of the names and positions of all the counties of England.

<sup>4</sup> "Disparked" apparently means "given up preserving deer."

<sup>5</sup> I cannot identify Emily.

<sup>6</sup> Thomas, who subsequently took orders, was at this date twenty-two years old.

I have an opportunity of sending a note to town without heavy postage, which gives me another opportunity to say how

much we sympathize with you in your present sufferings, and how greatly we shall rejoice at your convalescence. This is in reply to the bulletin just received; the former I answered a post or two back, which went under cover to London. That your next may bring better accounts is the united wish of your friends under Langley roof. I shall look out anxiously for the next week's report.<sup>1</sup>

Believe me, with much esteem, your very faithful humble servant,

M. B. PROCTOR.

Excuse the haste in which this departs.

Langley Park, Saturday, September 5th, 1812.

<sup>1</sup> Edward Jerningham died on November 17th, 1812.

## 22

*From Sir Thomas Beauchamp Proctor to Edward Jerningham.*

MY DEAR SIR,

We are much obliged to you for your kind enquiries; we are all pretty well. I shall send you half a buck on Sunday next, which I hope will arrive safe and good. If I understand you, it is to be dressed on the tenth. I desire, if you wish to have any more at any time, either for yourself or your friends, that you will apply to me for it. Lady Beauchamp begs to be kindly remembered to you, and desires me to persuade you to pay us a visit this autumn.

I remain, Dear Sir,

Your very sincere and affectionate friend,

T. B. PROCTOR.

Langley, September 3rd, 1789.

VI

TWO YOUNG WOMEN CORRE-  
SPONDENTS

## LETTERS FROM CAROLINE G. ANDERSON

As an appendix or contrast to Lady Beauchamp Proctor's dignified and matronly correspondence with Edward Jerningham, ten skittish letters to the poet may be quoted, written by a young married lady who signs herself Caroline G. Anderson. A grass widow, she seems to have been a lively and rather flighty coquette, who was fond of interlarding her sentences with scraps of very bad French. As, however, her mistakes in the use of the language are so gross and palpable as to be amusing I have thought it as well to follow Edward Jerningham's example, and to leave them uncorrected. Mrs. Anderson had a habit of fastening her letters with impressions of seals bearing sentimental mottoes in French. One seal represents a bird escaping from a cage, and bears the legend, "Qui me néglige me rend"; while another depicts a horse rampant, and is inscribed, "Fier mais fidèle." One of the letters, the one beginning "My dear Jerningham," seems to call for comment. Even at the present day a woman who addresses a man friend in this style, without the customary prefix of "Mr." is considered to be not very happily inspired: she is committing a solecism which no degree of intimacy can justify. But to persons bound by the strict convention of eighteenth-century manners such a practice must have appeared an almost intolerable lapse from decorum and good taste. I know of no parallel case.

### 1

The night I had the pleasure of being with Lady Jerningham I was so enchanted with Mr. Godfrey, that the instant Mama came to town I told her what a very pleasant evening I spent on Monday at your house. She wishes very much to be acquainted with Monsieur de Boullion, and begs the favour of you to have him at your house some evening that she may have the pleasure of seeing him. I mean to be of the party, if you will allow me; and I hope to see Le Marquis de Lusignan.

I am, Dear Sir,  
Your very obedient humble servant,  
C. G. ANDERSON.

## 2

I believe I must say to you, as Lord Chesterfield did, that I can only thank you in very humble prose for the very elegant verses you have wrote in the book of your poems which I received yesterday. If I was not conscious that poets always deal in fiction, I should be very vain of the flattering things you say of me. I could do nothing else yesterday but read your book. I admire all the things that are in it, but particularly those verses addressed to "the little embryo King." (He is anything but little at present). We all know you are a poet; but it is as yet doubtful if you will be as good a prophet. You have complimented me so much and so frequently about my writing that the few ideas I had are flown. Therefore, toutes les bêtises je viens de vous écrire il faut les pardonner pour l'amour du cause. Je sait que Lady Beauchamp Proctor occupe votre cœur; mais faites au moins que j'occupe quelque fois votre souvenir. Adieu, bien des amitiés de ma part à Lady Jerningham. Et faites moi la grâce de croire que je suis avec estime et reconnaissance.

Votre très obéissante, &c., &c.,

CAROLINE G. ANDERSON.

P.S.—Mama desires me to tell you that she hopes you will come and dine here.

Hampton, July 16th, 1782.

## 3

DEAR POET,

My pretty maid is quite alarmed at *your wrath*; she says you vowed you would never call again. *I am sure you will*, was it only for the pleasure of seeing her; who certainly is a *lilly*,—and one of the first class. But pray come to see me, who alas! am grown a perfect jonquille. But in their way all flowers to amateurs are pleasing. Come soon, any day but to-morrow, before one, and you will be sure of finding

Yours very sincerely,

C. G. ANDERSON.

Wednesday.

So bad a pen, I cannot write half what I intended; as I am out of patience. So Addio.

## 4

You really must come to Mama's this evening. Your presence can never bring bad luck; on the contrary, where ever you are l'esprit, les talents et l'amabilité vous suivent. So pray, pray come. The party consists of Wheeler, *The Mounts*,<sup>1</sup> and Dr. and Mrs. Bostock; and we are to have some catches

and glees.<sup>2</sup> Adieu. Remember I expect you; for nous sommes deux malades, and my head va toute de travers. Mon cœur can't go wrong; for that is with you. Adio.

C. G. ANDERSON.

<sup>1</sup> "The Mounts" are the Earl and Countess of Mount Edgcumbe, or perhaps some younger members of the family.

<sup>2</sup> Probably Edward Jerningham was expected to bring his harp and to sing to his own accompaniment on that instrument.

## 5

Hampton, November 2nd, 1786.

A thousand thanks for your agreeable letter, my dear *Je ne sait quoi*. For really I know not what to call you; as you are not to be my passionate admirer nor my constant friend. And the medium between them I can't find; because de l'amitié à l'amour il n'y qu'un pas. Therefore *Je ne sait quoi* you must remain. You can't take it amiss; because in that appellation is comprised every thing that is charming and agreeable. But, seriously, I never read any thing equal to the ending of your letter: it is new, and there is a pathetic simplicity in that little curfew toll that makes one almost drop a tear and bid Adieu.—I wonder the Gideons could think of having a conjugal ball and not invite me; what a sarcasm, had I been at it. That well told would do very well for the Memoires that are to be published sous nos auspice.—I am glad to think that I have some chance of seeing you at Park Place; it would be very agreeable of you to write me word when you go, that I might meet you there.

I ought to make an apology for this stupid letter; but who could receive one from Mr. Jerningham, and not wish to answer it, if it was only for the air of being known to a Blue Stocking. Then what a temptation have I, who not only like the air of being known to a savant, but wish also to assure him of the regard and esteem with which I remain his

Obedient humble servant,

C. G. ANDERSON.

Mama and Papa desire a thousand compliments to Il signior poeta.

## 6

You flatter me so very much, and I feel myself so undeserving of the fine things you are so good to say, that it is quite impossible for me to answer them. I shall wait upon you and Lady Jerningham this evening with pleasure; but

must first go to the Baron's concert.<sup>1</sup> If you was a courteous knight, you would meet me there. Adieu.

C. G. ANDERSON.

<sup>1</sup> The concert was probably one given by Edward Jerningham's friend, the Baroness Nolcken, who was fond of inviting her intimates to musical entertainments at her house.

## 7

[1792].

As I am just come to town, and since my arrival have heard of nothing but "Abelard to Eloisa,"<sup>1</sup> I confess I shall feel flattered at having a visit from l'aimable auteur in my boudoir to-morrow morning. But perhaps

"Now that thy spirit is divinely wrought,  
To nobler objects flies *thy* soaring thought."

You will no longer condescend to call upon one who is very

Sincerely yours,

C. G. ANDERSON.

<sup>1</sup> Edward Jerningham's poem, "Abelard to Eloisa," was published in 1792.

## 8

MY DEAR JERNINGHAM,

I have such a great favour to ask of you, which I hope you will grant, indeed you must, which is to come to me this evening, as it is Good Friday. I can't have more than *one* or two people; and I beg you will be so *gracious* as to come. And let it be early, any time before *eight* o'clock. Pray, pray come. Adieu.

C. G. ANDERSON.

Un petit mot de reponse.

## 9

I am much hurt that *you* should have so mean an opinion of me as to imagine that I was either vain, flattered, or encouraged the attentions of E. You little know me, if you think that such a thing as that could alter my sentiment for Crawford.<sup>1</sup> Never! though, entre nous, I don't think he merits the sentiments I have for him. A woman is not justifiable in my situation for having those sentiments; but what would she be were she fickel as the wind, and changed as often. Adieu.

<sup>1</sup> Crawford is probably the name of the lady's husband—Mr. Crawford Anderson, a Scotchman apparently.



## 10

A thousand thanks to my dear poet for thinking of sending the brochur. I really believe the letters to be genuine; as I think they are very like some *I have seen*. Tho' I assure you, you will never see them in print, I don't answer but that, if you are very good, you may see them [in MS.] some time next winter.<sup>1</sup> I can't tell you how I was flattered at receiving your note, not for the sake of the book (tho' I am glad I have it), but to find you have not totally forgot me. If the Chevalier is not gone, give him the enclosed note. If he is, the first time you write, pray send it in one of your *highroglifick* letters, if it is not very inconvenient. Adieu, mon cher. Je vous embrasse de tout mon cœur.

Hampton, Thursday.

"My spouse comes home to-night.  
O! the dear delight."

Lord M<sup>r</sup> Edgcumbe is the Poet Lauriat.

<sup>1</sup> I cannot elucidate these references.

#### A NOTE ON MISS HARLAND'S FATHER, ADMIRAL HARLAND

Of Miss Harland herself I can discover nothing but what is conveyed in her letters, save that she was known to the Countess of Mount Edgcumbe and probably to Lady Beauchamp Proctor, and that she was one of Admiral Harland's three daughters by his second wife.

Admiral Sir Robert Harland, Bart. (1715-1784), was the only son of Captain Robert Harland, R.N., of Sproughton, by Frances Clyatt, and entered the service on February 10th, 1728-29, on board the *Falkland*, of 50 guns, with Captain Samuel Atkins. Particulars of his career will be found in "The Dictionary of National Biography" and in "The Complete Baronetage," edited by "G. E. C." Here it must be sufficient to state that he became Lieutenant in 1742 and Captain in 1745, that he took part in the action off Toulon on February 11th, 1744, that he was on the *Tilbury* in Hawke's victory over *L'Étendure* on October 14th, 1747, and that he had a large share in the capture of the *Magnanime*, a French ship of 74 guns, on January 31st, 1748. He was made Rear-Admiral of the Blue on October 18th, 1770, and having been made a baronet on March 13th, 1771, sailed to take up the command in the East Indies, a post which he held till 1775. In 1778 he became Vice-Admiral of the Red, and second in command of the Channel Fleet under Admiral Keppel, taking

part on July 27th of that year in that indecisive action off Ushant in which Palliser failed to obey Keppel's orders. As a result of the courts-martial held on Keppel and on Palliser, which acquitted them both he resigned his command on May 10th, 1779. On the accession to power in the spring of 1782 of his friends the Marquis of Rockingham and Keppel, he was made a member of the Board of Admiralty, and on April 8th he became Admiral of the Blue. He left the Admiralty with Keppel on January 28th, 1783, and died at Sproughton on February 21st, 1784, aged sixty-nine, having evidently been ill, as his daughter's letters show, since the autumn of 1782. Admiral Harland, it seems, believed in the soundness of the Quaker's advice to marry where money is. His first wife, a Miss Marlow of Ipswich, whom he married on May 15th, 1736, brought him £20,000 but no children. His second wife, whom he married in 1749, brought him £40,000 and four children, a son and three daughters. She was Susanna, daughter of Colonel Rowland Reynold by the daughter and heiress of Colonel John Duncombe. With the fortunes brought him by his wives the Admiral purchased the estates of Belstead and Wherstead in Suffolk.

## LETTERS FROM MISS M. D. HARLAND

### I

Portman Square, June 7th [1782].

We thank you for your intention of visiting us at Sproughton, my good friend. But at present it is very doubtful when we can go thither; as my father cannot leave London next week. My mother did not like the idea of going into the country without him, and our journey is deferred. Therefore we hope to see you in Portman Square before we leave these noisy, unsweet, iniquitous regions. We are all very well recovered from the little plague in which you left us; and the hot weather which has succeeded to the immoderate rain gives some hopes that we still may have a summer.—The Birth Day was neither crowded nor brilliant. Nothing worth mentioning but the astonishing magnificence of the Queen's dress, which surpassed anything I ever had seen before.—Lady Mount Edgumbe has had a slight attack of the influenza, but goes to Oxford to-morrow.—I have sent back the four horrible volumes,<sup>1</sup> and shall keep the reasonable sensible Boucher<sup>2</sup> till your return.—You must see by my writing that I am in haste; therefore excuse my leaving you abruptly.

M. D. H.

I wish I might venture to make my compliments to Lady

Jerningham. That would perhaps be impertinent; but I may venture to tell *you* that I esteem and respect the character I have heard of her, and wish much for an opportunity of obtaining the honor of her acquaintance.

<sup>1</sup> I cannot determine to what work Miss Harland alludes.

<sup>2</sup> I cannot identify this Boucher. Jonathan Boucher, divine, philologist, friend of General Washington, and correspondent of Edward Jerningham, did not publish until 1797 his sermons entitled "A View of the Causes and Consequences of the American Revolution."

## 2

Wednesday, July 3rd [1782].

Many thanks to you, my good friend, for the long letter which I received last night; I really intended writing to you sooner, as I can give no good reason for not putting my design into execution. I will say no more on the subject; but [I will] inform you that we are all in perfect health, and have felt nothing more of the dreadful influenza,<sup>1</sup> though all our neighbours are much afflicted by it.

My father left us last night to go to his duty at the Admiralty. We are all in great affliction at Lord Rockingham's death:<sup>2</sup> it is a great loss to the nation at this moment. There are few men in this kingdom so truly independent as he was. In every respect a very excellent man; and his loss will be severely felt by all his friends. I fear it will make great confusion in the present politics. It will almost kill our dear little Lord Keppel;<sup>3</sup> for I believe he did not think him in a dangerous way.

I *condole* with you and Lady Jerningham on the loss of your *amiable Austrians*.<sup>4</sup> The story of the fat Princess is as good in its way as is that of Mrs. Robinson. I think Lord Malden must be quite mad to let that woman make such a fool of him.<sup>5</sup>

This day finished *our races*: they have not been brilliant. The Vannecks<sup>6</sup> and a few men is all we can boast. Susan dances, and is very happy. I play at cards, and fall asleep at eleven o'clock. If Rousseau really ordered his confessions to be published, it is *one more* proof of his extreme vanity. I fear, by what you tell me of them, that I must not read them,<sup>7</sup> which I am sorry for; as I could like to read every performance of the author *des lettres de Montmorenci*.

Your account of the *Volcano*<sup>8</sup> is very natural. I think I see it, raving at distresses which are perfectly imaginary. They need not now fear a Dissolution of Parliament: I should think Lord Rockingham's death will put a stop to that.

What a dreadful week this is! The capture of Admiral Campbell's convoy<sup>9</sup> is a great misfortune. If Lord Howe<sup>10</sup>

cannot do something with the combined fleets, we shall all be in the dumps.

Mamma and Susan return best compliments for yours, and all their roses, and se jettent à vos pieds in gratitude for your kind remembrance of them.

<sup>1</sup> During the summer of 1782 an epidemic of influenza, caused probably by the immoderate rains, raged in London, and brought into prominence a number of quacks and of quack remedies for the complaint.

<sup>2</sup> Charles Watson Wentworth, 2nd Marquis of Rockingham (1730-1782), died on July 1st, 1782, at one o'clock at noon. He had been ill for more than a week.

<sup>3</sup> Admiral Keppel was a staunch Whig and adherent to Rockingham's party.

<sup>4</sup> I cannot elucidate this reference.

<sup>5</sup> In what way Mrs. Robinson was making a fool of Lord Malden so late as 1782 I cannot discover. In her "Memoirs" Mrs. Robinson says, that though he was the agent between her and the Prince of Wales, he was in love with her himself.

<sup>6</sup> The Vannecks are of Dutch extraction. Cornelius Vanneck was Paymaster of the land forces of the United Provinces. His second son, Joshua, became a wealthy London merchant, and was created a baronet on December 14th, 1751. He married on February 20th, 1731-32, Mary Anne, youngest daughter of Stephen Daubuz, and died on March 6th, 1777. His eldest son, Gerard, the 2nd Baronet, was M.P. for Dunwich from 1768 to 1790, and died unmarried on May 23rd, 1791. Gerard's brother, Joshua, the 3rd Baronet, was born on December 31st, 1745, and died on August 15th, 1816. He married on September 29th, 1777, Maria, second daughter of Andrew Tompson, of Roehampton, Surrey, and was M.P. for Dunwich from 1790 to 1816. He was created an Irish peer by the title of Baron Huntingfield, of Heveningham Hall, on July 9th, 1796. At the time at which this letter was written the only child born to Sir Joshua and Lady Vanneck was Joshua (subsequently 2nd Baron), a boy nearly four years old. I should perhaps state that between 1758 and 1757 the Vannecks had established, or rather regularised, their position as an East Anglian family by a double alliance with the younger branch of the Walpoles. On November 14th, 1753, Elizabeth, eldest daughter of Sir Joshua Vanneck, 1st Bart., and sister of Joshua, 1st Baron Huntingfield, was married to the Hon. Thomas Walpole, second son of Horatio, 1st Baron Walpole of Wolterton, and first cousin to Horace Walpole. On November 22nd, 1757, Margaret, third daughter of Sir Joshua Vanneck, 1st Bart., was married to the Hon. Richard Walpole, third son of the 1st Baron Walpole of Wolterton.

<sup>7</sup> As will be gathered from the next letter, Miss Harland probably borrowed the "Confessions" from Edward Jerningham.

<sup>8</sup> I cannot explain this allusion.

<sup>9</sup> John Campbell (1720-1790), Vice-Admiral, sailed in the *Centurion* round the world with Anson, from 1740 to 1744, and subsequently served under Sir Edward Hawke in 1759 in the blockade of Brest and in the action of Quiberon Bay. In the spring of 1778 he was appointed by Admiral Keppel first captain of the *Victory*, and he took part in the unsuccessful operations round Brest of July 27th, 1778, for which Keppel was court-martialled and acquitted, acting as Keppel's loyal subordinate. In April, 1782, when Keppel was First Lord of the Admiralty, Campbell was appointed Governor of

Newfoundland and Commander-in-Chief on that station, a position he held for four years. I cannot explain the allusion to the loss of the convoy.

<sup>10</sup> Howe was at this time in command of the Channel fleet. He had twenty-two ships as against the forty of the combined squadrons of France and Spain, which had sailed north from Cadiz and had captured on their way a great part of the trade for Newfoundland. But no action took place, the jealousies arising between the Spanish and French admirals causing the allied fleet to retire to Cadiz towards the end of July. Horace Walpole at this time had one of his patriotic moods. Writing to Mason on July 8th, 1782, he says, "At this moment perhaps Lord Howe may be fighting the combined squadrons. . . . We have a better chance by seamen than by politicians. O Neptune, ora pro nobis."

## 3

Sproughton, July 29th, 1782.

I beg that you will always follow your impulses, when they are likely to produce such long letters as that which I received last night: it was quite a treat, and I hasten to thank you for it.

I really wish it were possible for you to spare some of those neighbours que vous avez de trop; for our evenings, without my father, are very dull here. His, I believe, are as much so, away from us. But I see no probability of our meeting of some time; as his duty keeps him in London, and he does not like that we should go there to him. The country is certainly charming at this season. Ten thousand sweet smells vie with each other to please the senses of those whose minds are calm enough not to be frightened at solitude and reflection. The hay-makers, the labourer at his plough, his faithful dog, the bee-hives, and even the owls, furnish matter of contemplation and pleasure to a speculative mind.

The appearance of your brother <sup>1</sup> must have surprised you very agreeably. I wish I could have some conversation with him; for I have a thousand questions to ask about my Parisian friends, and I fear you will not have patience enough to ask them for me. I suppose it very probable that you will visit Cossey sooner than you intended, on your brother's account. In that case we shall have the pleasure of your company here sooner than the end of next month; and my mother desires I will tell you that she will be very glad to see *you both* at her farm, if we are here at the time you pass.

Mad<sup>m</sup>. Dumenil's story <sup>2</sup> is a strange and melancholy one. The protection she will receive from those to whom she is recommended cannot be of any service to her. In such an uncomfortable situation how can she play on the Spanish guitar? Do you know the name of the gentleman who has forsaken her? Has he absolutely married another woman? Apropos of matrimony, I am surprised that you say nothing of

your friend, the Duc de Sangro,<sup>2</sup> who waits only for the permission of the King of Naples to marry Miss Charlotte Clavering.<sup>4</sup> Some people think neither his King nor his family will approve the match. What can be the little man's motive for marrying such a tall lady? She has not a great fortune, which is what I thought he was looking for. I suppose he thinks as (*The Tatler* tells us) did one of the ancestors of Isaac Bickerstaff.<sup>5</sup> My mother and Susan desire their compliments to Lady Jerningham and your brother and yourself. I will wait your arrival here to read J. J.'s "Confessions;" as I have not yet finished those books which you lent me.

M. D. H.

I shall direct my letter to Grosvenor Square; as all those I directed to Richmond last year were lost.

I envy nothing so much as your visits to Mr. Walpole. You flatter me too much in saying I am worthy of his acquaintance. That is not true; unless you judge of my merit by the desire I have of obtaining it.

<sup>1</sup> That is the Chevalier Jerningham.

<sup>2</sup> I cannot identify this lady. She must not be confused with Madame Dumesnil, Horace Walpole's favourite French tragédienne.

<sup>3</sup> I cannot identify the Duc de Sangro.

<sup>4</sup> Writing to Sir Horace Mann from Berkeley Square on May 14th, 1781, Horace Walpole says:—"The disconsolate widower, your friend Sir John Dick, is going to be married already; and, which is still more rash at his age, to a giantess. She is the eldest daughter of the late Sir John Clavering, and was ripened by the climate of India, like an orange to a shaddock. I suppose she intends to be a relict, and then to marry some young Gargantua." He continues the subject in a letter addressed to the same person and from the same place on August 1st, 1781:—"Lord Walpole's son was married last week to my niece, Sophia Churchill. It is more than your friend, Sir John Dick, is to his betrothed. He has acted very foolishly both in engaging and disengaged himself. He sent his future bride an abrupt letter, to say he found himself too old and infirm to proceed. Did not he know three months ago that he was sixty-four? Some say, he discovered that Mademoiselle was not very fond of him: did he expect she would be? In short it is unlucky to look well at three score; for, in reality, nobody can fall in love with one at that age but oneself."

<sup>5</sup> I have consulted *The Tatler*; but I have not been able to find the reference.

You will forgive my troubling you with another letter so soon after my last; but I have just recollected that I forgot to beg that you will be so kind as to enquire of Mrs. Aston,<sup>1</sup> if she is in town, if not, of Mrs. Townly,<sup>2</sup> where Mr. Theobald Dillon<sup>3</sup> is. I think I am certain that he left Heath Hall last

year, and that somebody told me he was gone to India. But I wish very much to know all particulars; as Mad<sup>me</sup>. de Martinville <sup>4</sup> has sent a letter for him, desiring we will let him have it as soon as possible, and we know not where to direct it. Therefore I hope you will take the trouble of enquiring where he is and how letters may be sent to him.

The death of Mad<sup>me</sup> de Lavie <sup>5</sup> is a great misfortune to all her family. She leaves three children. Our last accounts from Bourdeaux mention this sad event, and all their sorrow on the occasion. Edouard <sup>6</sup> also tells us that Le Comte D'Artois <sup>7</sup> did him the honor to prefer his bad supper to all the fine ones which were offered him from *the great people* of Bourdeaux.

Pray continue to give me an account of Mad<sup>me</sup> Dumenil: I am quite interested about her. My mother says her name is an improper one: Dumalheur would have suited her situation better. Is it from the Dowager Dutchess, <sup>8</sup> or the reigning Dutchess, of Portland <sup>9</sup> she expects protection?

Matrimony seems to be a rage at present. I shall soon expect to hear that you have followed the crowd. How lucky it would be were General J. <sup>10</sup> to die: his *gentle* widow <sup>11</sup> would be a charming companion for you. Good night. I feel very stupid and sleepy, and shall leave you.

M. D. H.

P.S.—Pray ask your brother what Miss Seymour and her father are doing at Paris.

<sup>1, 2, 3, 4, 5</sup> I can identify none of these persons.

<sup>6</sup> I have looked carefully through the entries relating to the Viscounts Dillon in *Burke*; but I can find no Theobald Dillon extant about this time.

<sup>7</sup> This was the future Charles X., who succeeded his brother, Louis XVIII., as King of France, and reigned from 1824 to 1830. The Comte D'Artois was the title he bore before his accession to the throne and after his abdication.

<sup>8</sup> Mrs. Delany's friend. See the notes to the Countess of Mount Edgcombe's letters for an account of her.

<sup>9</sup> Lady Dorothy Cavendish, only daughter of William, 4th Duke of Devonshire, was married to William Henry Cavendish Bentinck, 3rd Duke of Portland, on November 8th, 1766.

<sup>10, 11</sup> I can identify neither of these persons; but possibly General J. is General Johnston, husband of Lady Cecilia Johnston.

9 o'clock. Heaveningham Hall, August 21st [1782].

Whilst the worthy inhabitants of this magnificent mansion are finishing *their night's* rest, I shall take half an hour from *my morning* walk to talk with you, and still have time to spare; as we breakfast only at eleven o'clock. Così passonno i giorni nostri: some labourers I see working before my windows, by

their example, tell me it is not exactly the life we ought to lead.

You cannot imagine how much I am interested in Mad<sup>me</sup> Dumenil's concerns. There are some questions relative to her, which, however, I wish answered. *Viz.*, why her relations nor her husband cannot afford her a maintenance? And, if her infidèle is again married, what prevents her returning to her family? You will be able to clear these doubts; and if she really is, what she appears to be, an unfortunate worthy young woman, I have not a doubt that something may be done for her, without her having recourse to Mr. Storer's desperate expedient.<sup>1</sup> Those you mention as her protectors are not likely to prove very comfortable ones to her. Sir G. Colbrooke<sup>2</sup> has nothing to bestow; and Mrs. Smith,<sup>3</sup> though immensely rich, will probably not like to speak French all day. And, I suppose, poor Mad<sup>me</sup> Dumenil's pride would make her averse to undertaking the care of her children as a governess. I wish you could, with delicacy, find out whether she is above such an employment in some great family; for, if she is not, I do think I could assist her. But any other way, with the warmest inclination to serve her, I do not see how it will be in my power. How strange it is that good-will should constantly attend incapacity! How many people might, with little trouble, make that poor woman's life easy at least, if not happy; and yet you will find a cautious fear of being entangled in some trouble on her account will prevent every woman to whom she is recommended doing anything for her but satisfying their own curiosity by making her one or two visits! Oh, *le monde, le monde!* whose vile customs oblige one to give up, through foolish timidity of what others will think, the exquisite pleasure of relieving the unhappy! I am, you may perceive, in a moralising humour this morning. You must forgive me, when I assure you my friends lose nothing; as in these humours I love them, as much as I esteem myself, for abhorring some of the prejudices of the world.

My father has obtained leave to stay at Sproughton till the last day of this month. Therefore, if you are in town the first of September, we beg you will call in Portman Square, where probably you will find the Harland family; and we shall want some comfort, as we are not to return to Sproughton this year. Pray return our compliments and thanks to the Chevalier, your brother, for taking the charge of a small parcel. Which, however, he will, I believe, not receive; as his stay in London will not allow of our sending it to him.

<sup>1</sup> What this "desperate expedient" was I cannot suggest. For Mr. Storer see Note 1 to Earl Harcourt's 18th letter.

<sup>2</sup> Sir George Colebrooke, 2nd Baronet, was born in 1729, succeeded his



brother in 1761, and died in 1809. He was married, and was chairman of the Court of Directors of the East India Company in 1769 and 1771.

<sup>2</sup> I cannot identify this lady.

## 6

[Neither dated nor addressed, but probably written in the autumn, that is in September or October, of 1782.]

Many thanks. The last letter I received from Mamma tells me that my father's appetite continues very good, but that he still was languid as when in London, and had not begun the waters. I wait with impatience the arrival of this day's post; for I own I am not quite easy. Such days as these do not raise one's spirits.—Though you must not visit me, I know no law for my not visiting Lady Jerningham.<sup>1</sup> I intend myself the pleasure of calling on her to-morrow about one o'clock, and shall be very happy to find you, my little quarrelsome friend, there.—My pen will not write.

M. D. H.

<sup>1</sup> In the interval between the time at which Miss Harland wrote the first of this series of letters and the present one she must have been introduced by Edward Jerningham to his mother, with whom she evidently was not personally acquainted on June 7th, 1782.

## 7

Saturday evening,  
[probably September or October, 1782].

I was in hopes, my good little *ami grondeur*, that I should have seen you this evening; mais le ciel en ordonne autrement; and, though I fully intended and wished to go to the Opera, it is impossible. This tells you sufficiently that my good father continues mending. I know not when he will leave Bath. And [I] have no hopes of seeing my mother till he arrives; as he cannot spare her, she is too good a nurse. Therefore malgré moi my doors must still be shut against you. I hope I am treasuring up a large store of good fame; for we lead most saint-like lives in our convent. Neighbour Pigot<sup>1</sup> keeps house, and sees only females. Neighbour Keppel<sup>2</sup> has given up all thought of her intended marriage. Mr. Katterfelto's<sup>3</sup> wonderful wonders are nothing compared with those I could relate of the Admiralty Saints. Adieu, mon cher grondeur.

M. D. H.

<sup>1</sup> Hugh Pigot (1721–1792), brother of Lieut.-General Sir Robert Pigot and of the better known George Pigot, Baron Pigot, Governor of Madras and owner of the Pigot diamond, started in the Navy as able seaman, and on December 7th, 1775, was made Vice-Admiral of the Blue. On the accession to office of the Marquis of Rockingham in March, 1782, he was appointed

one of the Lords of the Admiralty by Admiral Keppel, and on April 8th was promoted to the rank of Admiral of the Blue. About a month later he superseded Rodney in command of the fleet in the West Indies, despite the latter's famous victory off Dominica. He married, first, Elizabeth, daughter of Peter le Neve, and secondly, Francis, daughter of the Very Rev. Sir Richard Wrottesley (7th Baronet), Dean of Worcester. I cannot discover the date of either marriage; but it is probable that the second wife is "Neighbour Pigot." Miss Harland was evidently living at the Admiralty at this time.

\* Admiral (Viscount) Keppel died unmarried on October 8rd, 1786. In what relation "Neighbour Keppel" stood to him I cannot discover. Possibly the reference may be to his niece, Laura Keppel, 2nd daughter of Frederick Keppel, Bishop of Exeter, by Laura, eldest natural daughter of Sir Edward Walpole, who on July 2nd, 1784, made a runaway match with George Ferdinand, eldest son of Lord Southampton.

\* Gustavus Katterfelto was a native of Prussia, who made his appearance this year (1783) in London, and soon achieved a widespread notoriety partly by means of advertisements, headed "Wonders! Wonders! Wonders!" which he inserted in the newspapers, partly by means of the cures which he claimed to have made during the influenza epidemic which spread over the town this year. He seems to have been a cross between conjuror and quack doctor, and to have given exhibitions at Spring Gardens which were frequently commented on by the Press. In 1784 his show was visited by the Royal Family; but this royal patronage failed to prevent his being imprisoned at Shrewsbury as a vagabond and an impostor. He died at Bedale, Yorkshire, in 1799. Strangely enough, Gillray never alludes to him, so far as I can discover; but Peter Pindar makes more than one mention of him; and Cowper, in "The Task" (Book IV.), refers to him in a passage dealing with newspapers, their news and advertisements, which deserves to be quoted, if only for its eighth line:—

"The rest appears a wilderness of strange  
But gay confusion; roses for the cheeks,  
And lilies for the brows, of faded age;  
Teeth for the toothless; ringlets for the bald;  
Heaven, earth, and ocean, plundered of their sweets;  
Nectareous essences, Olympian dews;  
Sermons, and city feasts, and favourite airs;  
Ætherial journies, submarine exploits;  
And Katterfelto, with his hair on end  
At his own 'wonders,' 'wondering' for his bread."

## 8

Sunday [December, 1782].

I went to the Opera last night on purpose to say adieu to my friends; but, as is usual when one wishes anything, I was disappointed, and spoke only to those I did not care for. Which is the reason why I take this method of telling you, my good friend, that I leave London to-morrow. The Bath waters did not agree with my father; and by the advice of his physician and his own inclination he is immediately going to

Sproughton for change of air. He does not stop at London; but we all go to-morrow en famille for the Xmas Holidays. Heaven grant this journey may do him good! But I have my fears; and [I] have not an idea that, at my father's time of life, a cold country house in the month of December can be a cure for any disorder. I shall certainly let you know our progress; and [I] hope, notwithstanding all *your anger*,<sup>1</sup> that you will write to me, and believe me your very sincere friend,

M. D. H.

Best compliments wait on your good mother. I really am sorry not to see you before my departure; for I feel in a humour that wants all the assistance of friendship to cheer it. Mais cela absolument entre nous; for I do not like all the world should know me *in the cave*.

<sup>1</sup> I can suggest no cause for this anger, save possibly Miss Harland's growing friendship with Mr. Dalrymple, which must have been marked about this time.

9

December 21st, 1782.

I was quite *in the horrors*, my dear friend, when I last writ to you: I dreaded the journey I was going to take; and [I] saw nothing before me but rheumatism, sciatica, and miseries of all sorts, from bringing a sick old man into a cold country house. But good fires and charming weather have so comforted me, that I now see things in a very different light. My good father performed his journey very well. We slept one night on the road, and arrived at Sproughton on Wednesday at three o'clock. Since that time he has not been worse; and I really *now* have hopes that this air may prove a better remedy than I thought it would. The weather is quite astonishing for the season: a warm sun and no frost is what in England one seldom sees at Christmas. Voila bien des détails; but I know you like to hear of your friends.

I see by the news papers that Mr. Panton<sup>1</sup> is dead. Which will be a lucky event for your friends in Berkeley Square; as I think you told me Mr. Kirkpatrick<sup>2</sup> has the promise of Mr. Panton's place.

The only *great event* that has happened since my arrival here is the accouchement de Mad<sup>me</sup> Cloé<sup>3</sup>: she has produced three puppies. She was so ill for two nights that, in compassion to her sufferings, I walked about so much to give her medicines, that I have a terrible cold in all my limbs, and 'must now nurse *myself*. Which is a very good sort of Xmas

occupation in the country. Pray let me hear soon from you, and believe me your very sincere friend,

M. D. HARLAND.

Where is the peace? <sup>4</sup> What do they say at Paris on that subject?

<sup>1</sup> I cannot identify this Mr. Panton. Obviously he cannot be the same person as Thomas Panton, the sportsman (or jockey, as Horace Walpole calls him) who won the Derby in 1786, with Noble, and whose sister Mary married (as his second wife) Peregrine, 3rd Duke of Ancaster, much to Horace Walpole's aristocratic disgust. But I can discover no other person of the same name.

<sup>2</sup> I cannot identify this person.

<sup>3</sup> Presumably Miss Harland's favourite bitch.

<sup>4</sup> A provisional treaty of peace between Great Britain and the United States of America was signed at Paris on November 18th, 1782; and on January 20th, 1783, a similar treaty of peace between Great Britain, on the one hand, and France and Spain, on the other, was signed.

10

[proughton, *undated*].

Your letter, my good friend, came to my hands last night just after I had received the melancholy and unexpected account of my poor friend's death. You may guess how much I am affected by this loss. Her kindness to me, her many good qualities, made me love her most sincerely. A thousand circumstances render this loss more affecting at this time. But, indeed, at what time can one bear without pain the loss of a friend? Surely there is something peculiarly shocking in the reflection that one has been writing gay letters to a friend who was no more? That has been my case. I assure you, nothing that does not immediately concern my family could have grieved me more sincerely than the loss of my respectable friend. I know no particulars, nor indeed what illness carried her off. All I know is that she lived only four days after her arrival at Chambéry. We all have faults; but I know nobody so free from essential ones as was Mad<sup>me</sup> de Cordon.<sup>1</sup> And the tears I shed on this melancholy occasion flow from my heart.

Forgive my dwelling so long on this subject. But I will now leave it to assure you that the Chevalier will meet with a very kind reception from the inhabitants of this retreat, should he continue his obliging intention of a visit to them. He has lived long enough in France not to be frightened at a female society, which ours is; for my father is not allowed to dine or sup with us. His physician has ordered him a regimen which he has observed successfully for some time; and his hours are

so different from ours that we only see him en passant. Therefore the Chevalier must excuse him doing properly the honors of his house; though he desires I will tell the Chevalier Jerningham that he will be happy to see him at Sproughton. I think by your letter you do not intend going with him to Cossey; but, should you alter your mind, you know we are always glad to see Vosignoria.

Excuse this; but I really am so terribly sorry and grieved at my loss that I cannot write or think of anything else.

M. D. H.

<sup>1</sup> I cannot identify this lady.

11

Sproughton, January 6th, 1783.

You have raised our curiosity very much, my good friend. What do you mean by saying that the Dutchess of Bedford<sup>1</sup> was in Lady W.'s<sup>2</sup> house when she made the terrible attempt?<sup>3</sup> What attempt? I never heard anything of this story. She was ill when I left London. I suppose what you mention has happened very lately. Pray in your next satisfy our curiosity on that subject; and also tell me why Lady Clarges<sup>4</sup> leaves the house in Tylney Street. Do you know how she is left? I suppose well; as Sir Thomas was very fond of her.

Was the Baccelli<sup>5</sup> liked at Paris? I suppose she will soon appear on our opera stage again, as you mention her return.

I like the French verses, considering the present *décadence* of the empire of wit: they are good.

Did I tell you that we expect my brother<sup>6</sup> home very soon. He will make us a visit here; and shall make his bow to you before he joins his regiment.

What a strange match Lord Coventry<sup>7</sup> has found out for his unfortunate son!<sup>8</sup> I hardly know which of the two will deserve most compassion, the wife<sup>9</sup> or the husband. The unrelenting persecution of that unfeeling father is almost beyond belief. Such a mind must be its own punishment! What comfortable thoughts can that man have when he lays his head on his pillow?

My father continues mending; but [he] is still too weak to bear the least fatigue of mind or body.

Adieu, my good friend. Many thanks for your kind wishes to us, which we return very sincerely for your happiness this and many more years.

M. D. H.

Does Miss Carter<sup>10</sup> approve her friend Lord Palmerston's marriage? I am glad to hear that worthy singular woman is in better spirits than when I last heard from her. When I

think she is more at liberty, I shall write to her. En attendant, if you see her, tell her our progress, and how much I love and esteem her.

How could Mrs. Hobart<sup>11</sup> contrive to fall out of her chair?

I think Miss Jeffreys's<sup>12</sup> friends would have better deserved that name, if they had paid her debts before that terrible adventure which happened at the play house. Are you certain they now have paid them?

<sup>11</sup>, <sup>12</sup> I cannot elucidate these references.

<sup>1</sup> See the notes to Lady Mount Edgcumbe's letters.

<sup>m</sup> <sup>6</sup> Giovanna Bacelli was a famous dancer and the mistress of the Duke of Dorset. Horace Walpole makes several references to her. Writing to General Conway from Strawberry Hill on June 16th, 1779, he talks of a fête at the Pantheon at which "the Bacelli and the dancers of the Opera danced." Writing to the Rev. William Mason from Berkeley Square on August 31st, 1780, he describes a visit to Knole Park, Kent, the seat of the Duke: "I revisited Knole on my return, which disappointed my memory much. But, unless you know how vast and venerable I thought I remembered it, I cannot give you the measure of my surprise; but then there was a trapes of a housekeeper, who, I suppose, was the Bacelli's dresser, and who put me out of humour." Writing to Miss Hannah More from Strawberry Hill eight years later (July 4th, 1788), he says, "You say you have no news; yet you quote Mr. Topham [Major Edward Topham, editor of *The World*, a daily paper]. Therefore, why should I tell you that the Bacelli lately danced at the Opera at Paris with a blue bandeau on her forehead, inscribed 'Honi soit qui mal y pense?' Now, who can doubt but she is as pure as the Countess of Salisbury? Was not it ingenious? And was not the Ambassador so to allow it? No doubt he took it for a compliment to his own knee." I may add that the Ambassador was the Duke, John Frederick Sackville, 3rd Duke of Dorset (1745-1799), on whose appointment to Paris in 1788 and that of the 5th Earl of Chesterfield to Madrid, Horace Walpole remarked, "Do but think of the two Ambassadors!" The Duke had an intrigue with the first wife of the 12th Earl of Derby, which resulted in the Countess's separation from her husband and retirement to a house in Cork Street, Burlington Gardens, which was subsequently taken by the Prince of Wales for the accommodation of his mistress, Mrs. Robinson. In the "Diary and Letters of Madama. D'Arblay," Fanny Burney gives an account of a visit she paid to Knole Park in 1779 in the company of Mr. and Mrs. Thrale. Speaking of the house, she says, "The Duke of Dorset was not there himself; but we were prevented seeing the library and two or three other modernised rooms, because Mdlle. Bacelli was not to be disturbed."

<sup>1</sup> This was Robert Harland, only son and heir of Admiral Harland by his second wife. At this time he was a cornet in the Royal Regiment of Dragoons, and a youth of eighteen. He married, in May, 1801, Arethusa, daughter and heiress of Henry Vernon of Great Thurlow, Suffolk, and niece of Francis, Earl of Shipbrook. He succeeded his father as 2nd Baronet on February 21st, 1784, and died without issue on August 16th, 1848, when the baronetcy became extinct. As heir to the Earl of Shipbrook, Sir Robert Harland came into possession of Orwell Park; but he eventually sold it to the Tomline family.

<sup>2</sup>, <sup>3</sup>, <sup>4</sup> George William, Viscount Deerhurst, eldest son of George William, 6th Earl of Coventry, by that famous beauty, Maria Gunning, was

born on April 23th, 1758, and married, first, on March 18th, 1777, Lady Catherine Henley, fourth daughter of Robert, Earl of Northington. But she died on January 9th, 1779, leaving no issue. The Viscount married, secondly, on January 10th, 1783, Peggy, second daughter and co-heir of Sir Abraham Pitches, Knt., of Streatham, Surrey. I can find nothing in Horace Walpole's letters to confirm this character of Lord Coventry as a tyrannical parent.

<sup>10</sup> Included in the Edward Jerningham Correspondence is a letter signed "M. Carter," a letter evidently written by a woman. This may be the Miss Carter to whom both Lady Mount Edgcombe and Miss Harland refer.

<sup>11</sup> I do not understand this allusion.

<sup>12</sup> I can identify neither Miss Jeffreys nor her "terrible adventure." In Gillray's "La Belle Assemblée" of May 11th, 1787, a Miss Jeffries is included with Lady Mount Edgcombe, Lady Archer, the Hon. Mrs. Hobart and Lady Cecilia Johnston among the representatives of the fashionable world who are making offerings at the Temple of Love. Perhaps this is the same lady.

## 12

Sproughton, March 12th [1783].

It is hardly worth while troubling you with a letter, my good friend, to tell you we escaped all the dangers of bad roads and high waters. Had it been otherwise, the news papers would have already made you acquainted with our disaster. But as I choose to imagine that you wish to hear from me, you are one of the first to whom I send a certificate of my existence.

During our absence my father had a relapse, partly owing to the badness of the weather, but more to his own imprudence. We found him much altered; but he is considerably better to-day. And we hope that a few more fine days, and the united care of all his nurses, will again restore him to better health and spirits.

I shall not talk to you of the beauties of the country at present. Quoique brune, I do not love *crocuses and daffodils*; and there is an ill-natured North East Wind, that chills all those charming romantic ideas I generally have on my first arrival in the country. But I beg you will believe that you have a great share in all the *humdrum* friendship I have to bestow, en attendant the warmer influence of the dangerous Ides of May.

M. D. H.

## 13

April 2nd, 1783.

Caro Signor Pasticcio,<sup>1</sup> what is the matter with you? Have I again unknowingly offended you?<sup>2</sup> For, as it is not an usual thing with me to write letters to gentlemen without receiving their answers, you must allow me to think it an unnatural proceeding, and to ask you the meaning of it. I have heard from all my other correspondents;<sup>3</sup> and, as they do not mention

your death, or any other dire mischance that has befallen you, I think I cannot flatter you more than by telling you I am surprised at your silence. Anger I keep pour les grandes occasions; therefore I do not mean now to scold you, but merely to ask if you have recallen your former forgiveness of my offences.

Have you read "Les Fastes de Louis XV"?<sup>1</sup> I only recollected the other day that I carried the two volumes to London, intending to lend them to you. In the disagreeable hurry I was in during my short stay there, I forgot to mention or to send them to you. The chief merit of the book seemed to me to be its prohibition; but perhaps to those who are more interested in French politics it may afford entertainment. I red it very slightly, and have left it in London; which I now am very sorry for.

My father continues amazingly well. Edouard writes me word that his intended journey to Constantinople is at an end, and that he may perhaps visit England for a fortnight. I wish he may; for we much want quelques François élégans à Londres. Do you know when Mons<sup>r</sup>. d'Adhemar<sup>2</sup> arrives?

M. D. H.

<sup>1</sup> I cannot understand this allusion. "Pasticcio" is Italian for "medley," "jumble," "olio," "rough copy."

<sup>2</sup> The ground of offence may have been Miss Harland's engagement to Mr. Dalrymple, which must have been announced about this time.

<sup>3</sup> The full title of this book, which was published in two volumes in 1782, and is the work of Bouffonidor (or Sir Jamé), is "Les Fastes de Louis XV., de ses ministres, maitresses, généraux, et autres notables personnages de son regne."

<sup>4</sup> The new French Ambassador.

14

Sproughton, The 18th June, 1788.

DEAR SIR,

My writing again to you may appear a surprising instance of humility; as you do not seem to intend favoring me with an answer to what I have already written. But, as I detest even the appearance of a quarrel, I cannot think it either mean, or unbecoming the uniform steadyness of my conduct towards those I have a friendship for, to write again, rather than to let the present unaccountable coolness fall into such a very foolish thing as a quarrel between people of good sense. I have been so used ever since my earliest days to regard you as the friend of our house, that I really should be sorry not to think you continue the same. You certainly have been unpolite in not answering my two last letters; and I am rather shocked for the honor of your good breeding. Les honnetes gens ne se querellent point. I am sure I give you a



proof that I have no malice in my heart; and any offence I may have given you is, to me, as *unknown* as, I assure you, it was unintentional.—If, after what I now say, you choose still to be angry with me, I shall certainly write no more on the subject. But you must allow me to think such (forgive my calling it) a caprice very inconsistent with your good sense and the friendship you have always expressed for me. But [I] shall remain just as formerly your very sincere friend and well-wisher.

M. D. H.

My father and mother perpetually ask me after their friend Mr. Jerningham, and are surprized when I tell them I know nothing about him. “Why does he not write?” they say. That is a question that I declare I cannot answer.

15

As you did not tell me in your last letter the exact time that the Chevalier intended us the favor of a visit, I hope this will find him in London, where I also hope he will remain a week longer, and we shall have the pleasure of seeing him there. My father, fearing a return of his complaint, has determined to follow his physician's advice and to try Tunbridge waters as soon as possible. Therefore we shall only wait till the first shower of rain, which will render the roads less dusty; and, as the clouds look very black this evening, we hope the long wished for shower will arrive.

I write in haste: excuse my saying adieu.

M. D. H.

Saturday, July 5th [1783].

16

Hertford Street, September 28th, 1783.

I began to think that the dumb devil had once more taken possession of your little person; but your short letter has convinced me that *pasticcio* is still *l'amico meo*.

I have been travelling half over England within this week.<sup>1</sup> The weather was not very favorable. On Wednesday we go into Suffolk. I think you cannot do better than come to Bury Fair, which is expected to be very brilliant.

I intend being presented the last week in October,<sup>2</sup> and shall then remain in town for some time. Where I shall be happy

to see you, when you choose to make use of the covert which you may always command at the house of

M. D. DALRYMPLE.

We are going to reside in Portman Square; as my father and mother do not think of coming to town.

<sup>1</sup> Presumably Miss Harland had just been married to Mr. Dalrymple, and was travelling on her honeymoon.

<sup>2</sup> By whom she was presented at Court I cannot discover.

VII

GENERAL CONWAY, THE COUNTESS  
OF AILESURY AND MRS. DAMER

## LETTERS FROM GENERAL CONWAY

1

Park Place, August 12th, 1787.

DEAR SIR,

Two things have prevented my thanking you immediately for the life of our Modern Hero.<sup>1</sup> I had a mind to read and know its merit; and I wished to tell you if possible something determinate about our great design for the North, which seemed in some measure a kind of key to our summer's plan. As to the first, it is not a deep thing, nor of great detail; but I think rather well done and very amusing. About the latter I am sorry I can say nothing determinate. But, whether it happens or not, or whenever it does, I hope it will not deprive us of the pleasure of seeing you, whenever you find yourself at leisure, and that we interrupt no more agreeable party. Only, if you can, let us know, that we may not be away, or awkwardly engaged. We had thought of going our Westward tour early, and may still possibly before the end of the month; but I am so awkwardly circumstanced about some particular business that I can not determine. In the meantime I have thought of a trip to London, to pay my respects to the Duke of York,<sup>2</sup> as all the world does, as soon as I have intelligence about the proper mode and time, which I expect daily. Perhaps I may catch you in town, and possibly settle a day for seeing you here.

Adieu, dear Sir; accept Lady Ailesbury's and our nieces' best compliments and believe me Your most Faithful Humble Servant

H. S. CONWAY.

<sup>1</sup> I cannot imagine who "our modern hero" was.

<sup>2</sup> In 1767 the Duke of York returned to England from Hanover, where since 1781 he had been studying French, German, and the art of war.

2

Park Place, Sunday.

[Postmark seemingly April 6th, 1795.]

DEAR SIR,

I heartily rejoice at the gleam of hope you have from Miss F.,<sup>1</sup> and wish I may give the smallest mite towards realising it, which in every light would flatter me exceedingly; but unfortunately the event so auspicious to you and so

flattering to me, throws me almost out of my saddle. I had conceived a little idea for Mrs. F.'s part; but know so little of Miss F. as makes me almost hopeless. I think I must at my return beg you to get me somehow a sight<sup>1</sup> of it; for, without some hints of the character, general topics are so trite! Yet I will at all events try, being so tempted. But you must remember our agreement not to depend on me alone; and, having two much better strings to your bow, I make no doubt your aim will succeed.

We return on Tuesday; and I now prepare you, in hopes of your getting me a sight of the part. In the mean time, not a word of the scheme for *M<sup>rs</sup>. Fashion*; <sup>2</sup> however innocent, it might not relish.

Adieu, and with Lady A.'s best wishes.

Yours most sincerely,

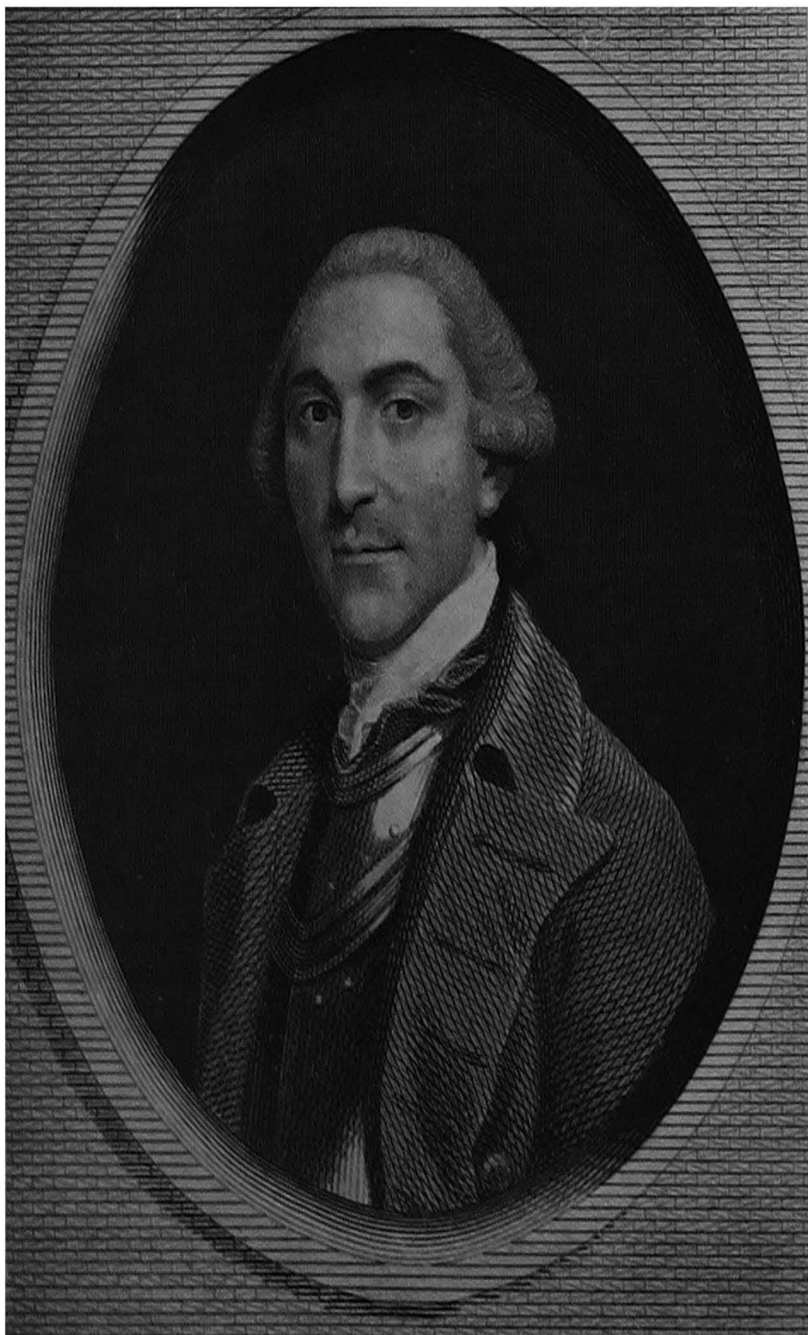
H. S. C.

<sup>1</sup> Apparently Marshal Conway is alluding to some scheme of private theatricals in which a part was to be taken by Miss Farren, who had acted in his adaptation "False Appearances" at Drury Lane.

<sup>2</sup> I cannot elucidate this reference.

## SOME PARTICULARS OF THE LIFE OF ANNE 'SEYMOUR DAMER

Anne Seymour Damer (1748-1828), woman sculptor, was the only child of Field-Marshal Henry Seymour Conway by his wife, Lady Caroline Campbell, daughter of John, 4th Duke of Argyll, and of the famous beauty and maid-of-honour Mary Bellenden, and widow of the 3rd Earl of Ailesbury. Born at Combe Bank, the property of her maternal grandfather, Colonel the Hon. John Campbell, afterwards 4th Duke of Argyll, Anne was from her earliest years a pet of her father's friend and cousin, Horace Walpole, who took charge of her in 1752, when Conway joined his regiment at Sligo, Ireland. She gave early promise of literary and artistic talent, showing her decided bent towards sculpture when quite a child by modelling first a head in wax and then one in stone, in consequence of a challenge made her by David Hume, who, destined later in life to be secretary to her father when the latter was Secretary of State in 1766, had reproved her for laughing at the work of a perambulating Italian sculptor. Subsequently she took lessons from Ceracchi, the Italian master who produced the statue of her that now stands in the central hall of the British Museum, worked for some time in the studio of John Bacon, R.A., whose chief monuments are the *Pitt* in Westminster Abbey and the *Dr. Johnson* in St. Paul's, and went through a course of anatomy under William Cumberland Cruickshank, the surgeon



**GENERAL CONWAY**

who attended Dr. Johnson in his last illness, and received from him the compliment of being called "a sweet-blooded man." On June 14th, 1767, having previously attracted attentions from the Duke of Buccleuch, which were apparently not seriously meant, she married John Damer, eldest son of Joseph Damer, Lord Milton, and afterwards Earl of Dorchester. But though the couple were quite young and the bridegroom was heir to a fortune of £30,000 a year, the marriage turned out unhappy and childless. It was a *mariage de convenance*, there being no affection on either side; while Damer himself was an extravagant man of fashion, who had not the slightest sympathy with his wife's tastes. In 1775 Mrs. Damer was separated from her husband. By 1776 he and his two brothers had contracted debts to the tune of £70,000, which their father refused to pay, the consequence being that at three o'clock in the morning of August 15th Damer shot himself at the Bedford Arms, Covent Garden, having first supped there with a blind fiddler and three women of the town. His wardrobe was subsequently sold for no less a sum than £15,000. Left thus a widow with a jointure of £2500 a year, and repudiated by her father-in-law, who paid her jointure very irregularly and allowed her to sell her jewels to liquidate his son's debts, Mrs. Damer thenceforth devoted herself to sculpture. To decide what her real achievement was in this branch of art is beyond the scope of the present narrative. Her enemies alleged that she was largely helped by "ghosts." But Horace Walpole, who ranked "royal and noble authors" far above mere professional writers, and thought the 2nd Earl Harcourt as great an etcher as Rembrandt, had no doubt about the all-round genius of his cousin's daughter. Introducing her to his friend and correspondent, Sir Horace Mann, at Florence, he said of her, "She writes Latin like Pliny, and is learning Greek. She models like Bernini, has excelled moderns in the similitudes of her busts, and has lately began one in marble." He also claimed for her that she had "one of the most solid understandings" he ever knew. Her chief performances are the two heads of the rivers Thame and Isis, which she executed in 1785 for the decoration of the bridge at Henley, which her father had largely designed, a bridge near the family seat, Park Place, a statue of King George III. for the Edinburgh Register Office, busts of Lady Melbourne and of Lady Betty Foster, afterwards Duchess of Devonshire, works which Erasmus Darwin praises in his poem, "The Economy of Vegetation," and busts of Nelson and of Fox, which will be mentioned later on.

When she was in England, Mrs. Damer always spent several months with her father and mother at Park Place, a property which General Conway had bought from the Dowager Princess of

Wales in 1752, and which Horace Walpole called "one of the coldest houses in England." But she had a house of her own in town, first in Sackville Street, and from September, 1794, to her death at 9, Upper Brook Street. Inclination and ill-health, however, combined to make her a good deal of a traveller. In 1772 and again in 1774 she visited Paris, where her paternal uncle, the Earl of Hertford, was English Ambassador. In 1777 she was the guest, with her father and mother, of Lord and Lady Mount Edgcumbe at their place in Devonshire. In 1779 she was in a packet which was captured by a French privateer; but she showed herself so conspicuously the true daughter of her intrepid father that she was allowed to proceed to Jersey, of which island General Conway was Governor. In 1781 she went to Italy, and became intimate at Naples with her father's friend, Sir William Hamilton, who had stopped at Park Place. In 1788 she seems again to have visited Paris. In November, 1790, she went to Lisbon, where the English Minister was the Hon. Robert Walpole, a younger son of the 1st Baron Walpole of Wolterton, and a cousin of Horace Walpole's. In 1798 she paid a second visit to Sir William (and Lady) Hamilton at Naples, and it was on this occasion, just after his famous victory of the Nile, that she executed her bust of Nelson. In March, 1802, taking advantage of the signing of the Treaty of Amiens, she visited France again, this time in the company of Mary Berry, meeting, at Amiens, Captain Merry, famous as Della Crusca, the poet, and as amateur actor, coming across Mrs. Cosway, wife of the miniature painter, at the Louvre, renewing acquaintance with Josephine de Beauharnais, now the wife of the first Consul, and being presented to Napoleon himself.

Daughter of General Conway and second cousin of Horace Walpole, Mrs. Damer was, of course, a staunch Whig; and along with those famous buff and blue beauties, Mrs. Crewe and Georgiana, Duchess of Devonshire, she canvassed for Charles James Fox in the Westminster Election of 1780. She was then a handsome young widow of thirty-two. But as an old lady of sixty-seven she still preserved her enthusiasm for "The Man of the People," and combined with it a truly Whiggish admiration for Napoleon, which she shared with Hazlitt and Byron, who, detesting one another in most respects, were united in a common admiration of "Boney," whom they chose to regard less as our national enemy than as the overthrower of legitimist monarchs. This English cult of Napoleon as the hammerer of kings, is worth a brief consideration. Hazlitt's hostility to kings was of course more a matter of feeling than of opinion, a feeling founded on idiosyncrasy and on hereditary prejudice rather than on any real attachment to democratic principles: the great essayist hated



kings as he hated all examples of what he regarded as arbitrary superiority. The Hon. Mrs. Damer's was, like the Hon. Horace Walpole's, purely aristocratic, if sincere at all: kings came between her and her nobility. Byron's was partly aristocratic and partly democratic; or perhaps I had better say a sentiment compounded of the old Greek and the modern Whig prejudice against kingship. But even in the days of Waterloo there was a difference recognised between admiring and abetting the enemy. This difference Mrs. Damer chose to overlook. Apparently, however, the D.O.R.A. of 1815 was more lenient than her sister of 1918 would have been; for, though the distinguished sculptress made her way to Paris during "The Hundred Days," and carried out her cherished intention of presenting the Emperor with her bust of Charles James Fox, receiving from him in return a snuff-box studded with diamonds and adorned with his portrait, which she bequeathed to the British Museum, she seems to have got into no trouble with the English authorities through her extraordinary escapade, and this despite the fact that she herself was a friend and partisan of the Prince Regent's ill-used wife, Princess Caroline, while her cousin, Lady Caroline Campbell, was one of the Princess's ladies-in-waiting. Ministers probably laughed at the incident, reckoning it too absurd to be taken seriously; and ludicrous it undoubtedly was. For sheer humourless fanaticism, indeed, this pilgrimage of Mrs. Damer's is hard to beat; I can think of no parallel to it save William Cobbett's solemn importation into England a few years later of the bones of his old enemy, Tom Paine.

In 1789, through the agency of Horace Walpole, Mrs. Damer made the acquaintance of his "two wives," Mary and Agnes Berry, who remained until her death her closest friends and correspondents. In March, 1799, Mary Berry went with her to the Lyceum to examine the Orleans pictures exhibited there, several of which were bought by the Earl of Carlisle. In 1800 she took part with her in the private performances presented at the theatre at Strawberry Hill. In 1802, as I have related, she accompanied her in her trip to Paris. And in 1807 she joined her in the visits she paid to Mr. and Mrs. Greathead at Guy's Cliff, Warwickshire, and to Josiah Wedgwood. Like his friend and brother officer, General Burgoyne, who made a hit with his comedy, "The Heiress," General Conway was a dramatic author, and wrote a comedy called "False Appearances," which was acted in 1789 at Drury Lane, Miss Farren,\* the future

\* In "The Whig Club: or a Sketch of Modern Patriotism," 1794, an ugly innuendo is made against Mrs. Damer in the "character" given there of Lord Derby. The anonymous libeller remarks;—

"In the meantime his Lordship [having separated from his Countess] impatiently waits the moment of her decease, that he may at last reap the

Countess of Derby, being one of the principal performers. He was also a great promoter of private theatricals. Mrs. Damer inherited her father's love for the amateur stage. On April 20th, 1787, she appeared in a performance at Richmond House, the residence of her brother-in-law, the Duke of Richmond, playing Violante in "The Wonder," and Mrs. Lovemore in Arthur Murphy's play "The Way to keep Him," and supported by the Earl of Derby and by the Hon. Richard Edgcumbe, subsequently Viscount Valletort and second Earl of Mount Edgcumbe. In May, 1788, she appeared at Richmond House in her father's comedy, "False Appearances," in company with the Earl of Derby and Captain Merry, the latter of whom, by the way, was one of Edward Jerningham's correspondents. In November, 1800, she fitted up a theatre at Strawberry Hill, and presented a couple of pieces, "The Old Maid," a comedy in two acts, in which Mr. Berry, the Earl of Mount Edgcumbe, and the Misses Berry took part, and "The Intriguing Chambermaid," in which she herself appeared along with Mr. Berry, the Earl of Mount Edgcumbe, and Miss Agnes Berry. In November, 1801, she brought out at her private theatre "The Fashionable Friends," a comedy generally attributed to Mary Berry, but described as "found amongst Lord Orford's papers." On this occasion she recited the epilogue, which, like the prologue, was written by her friend Joanna Baillie, poet and dramatist. "The Fashionable Friends" was produced at Drury Lane on April 22nd, 1802; but it ran a couple of nights only.

In middle life and subsequently, Mrs. Damer bore her full share of bereavement, losing many relatives and friends. On July 9th, 1795, her father, Marshal Conway, died, aged seventy-five. Park Place was thereupon sold to the first Earl of Malmesbury, and the Countess of Ailesbury took up her residence with her daughter at 9, Upper Brook Street. In November, 1796, Mrs. Damer's half-sister, the Duchess of Richmond, died; she was the daughter of Lady Ailesbury by her first husband. On March 2nd, 1797, Horace Walpole, Earl

harvest he has long promised himself from a marriage with a well-known fashionable actress. . . . But though the vanity of the comedian must be interested in the event, her amorous passions are far from being awakened by the idea. Superior to the influence of men, she is supposed to feel more exquisite delight from the touch of the cheek of Mrs. D—— than from the fancy of any *novelties* which the wedding-night can promise with such a partner as his Lordship."

The charge here made is probably utterly baseless; but it is a fair example of the recklessly indecent fashion in which the compiler of "The Whig Club" flings filth at every prominent member of the Opposition. He tells an anecdote of Charles James Fox, which, extremely humorous as I must admit it to be, is coprobalic enough for Swift or for Zola, a story, too, which is *prima facie* a mere malignant invention.

of Orford, died. Under his will Mrs. Damer was his executrix and residuary legatee, and inherited Strawberry Hill for her life with £2000 a year to keep the place in repair. She lived there for the summer months from 1798 to 1811, giving popular garden parties there, and spending the winter months at her town residence in Upper Brook Street. Her mother, the Countess, kept her company at Strawberry Hill, dying on January 17th, 1803, at the age of eighty-two. In 1818 Mrs. Damer bought York House, Twickenham, originally the property of Lord Chancellor Clarendon, and subsequently the residence of the Comte de Paris, from her friend Count Staremburg, the former Austrian Ambassador. At York House, where Caroline, Princess of Wales, was a constant visitor, Mrs. Damer brought together a large collection of her own busts and terra cottas, and of her mother's pictures in worsted work, a collection which she bequeathed to Lady Johnston, wife of Sir Alexander Johnston, and daughter of her maternal uncle Lord William Campbell. In August, 1820, in conjunction with the Marquis of Cholmondeley, she sued Lord Clinton for estates in Devonshire and Cornwall which had come to him through the marriage of Robert, second Earl of Orford, to Margaret, heiress of Samuel Rolle, and failed to establish her case. She died on May 28th, 1828, at her residence, 9, Upper Brook Street, in her eightieth year, and was buried near her mother at Sundridge Church, Kent, a church in the near neighbourhood of Combe Bank, the place where she was born. By the directions of her will all her papers, including many letters from Horace Walpole, were burnt, while her working tools and apron, together with the ashes of her favourite dog, were placed in her coffin. The rest of the acts of Marshal Conway's daughter, her friendships with Mrs. Garrick, Joanna Baillie, and Mrs. Siddons, to the last mentioned of whom she taught modelling, the presents she gave to and received from the Empress Josephine, and the two occasions on which she enjoyed the honour of helping to entertain Queen Charlotte, are they not described in those chronicles of Anne Seymour Damer's life which Mr. Percy Noble, the present proprietor of Park Place, published eleven years ago?

Of Mrs. Damer's father, General Henry Seymour Conway (who was Field-Marshal for the last two years only of his life), little need be said; of her mother, the Countess of Ailesbury (who always retained the title given her by her first marriage), little is known. Conway's career is traced very impartially yet sympathetically in "The Dictionary of National Biography"; and all that need be said of him here is that his failure in the Rochefort Expedition of 1757 gives the measure of his calibre as a soldier, revealing his fatal incapacity for

accepting responsibility or for taking decisive action, and that, though a statesman of second-rate talents, he merits the high praise of having been incorruptible, and of having attained to the position of a leading member of the Marquis of Rockingham's party. He was present at the battle of Dettingen, and took part in the battle of Culloden, was gifted with a handsome presence and charming manners, and was keenly interested in the professional and the amateur stage. Of his wife, Lady Ailesbury, little is on record save that she married the Earl of Ailesbury when she was eighteen and he fifty-eight, that she married Conway, her "young colonel" for love, that she was popular in Paris and in London, and that she was fond of playing cards, of embroidering pictures in worsted, and of attending the opera. Judged by what her daughter says of her in her letters to Edward Jerningham, she appears to have suffered from low spirits; but she survived her husband eight years, and died at the advanced age of eighty-two.\* The private life of General Conway and of Lady Ailesbury seems to have been quite admirable; for though the General figures in two political caricatures of Gillray's, "The Jubilee" of August 2nd, 1782, and "Jove in his Car" of September 11th, 1782, he is attacked there mainly as one of Lord Shelburne's henchmen, his personal honour, like his physical courage, being accepted as beyond reproach.

Horace Walpole thought that the handwriting of General Conway and of Lady Ailesbury was similar. Writing to Sir Horace Mann from Arlington Street on February 23rd, 1756, he says: "The similitude of hands is very great; but you know how little that can weigh. I know that Mr. Conway and my Lady Ailesbury write so alike that I never receive a letter from either of them that I am not forced to look at the name to see from which [of the two] it comes; the only difference is that she writes legibly, and he does not." This supposed resemblance in character and difference in legibility is interesting; but neither contention is borne out by an examination of the two letters from General Conway and of the six from Lady Ailesbury which figure in the Edward Jerningham Correspondence.

\* In the matrimonial disagreements of the 12th Earl of Derby and of his first Countess, it is strange to find General Conway, Mrs. Damer, and the Countess of Ailesbury taking the part of the Earl and posing as Farrenites; for Lady Ailesbury was the sister of John, 5th Duke of Argyll, whose Duchess was, by her former marriage to the 6th Duke of Hamilton, the mother of the Countess of Derby. According to "The Whig Club," the Countess of Carlisle was a champion of the Countess of Derby. "Pure in herself," says the author of this book of "characters", "Lady Carlisle has not forsaken Lady Derby in the hour of her distress. Whenever Lady Derby is in town, she is invariably invited to the entertainments given by Lady Carlisle; though, with a propriety peculiar to herself, in her cards of invitation to her other acquaintances she mentions that it is 'to meet Lady Derby.'"



**The Hon. Mrs. DAMER**

LETTERS FROM THE HON. ANNE SEYMOUR  
DAMER

## 1

We have decided not to go to Versailles to-morrow. I will therefore beg of you to come and call us here to-morrow to go to the Church of St. Louis, as we had settled before.—I have a box at the Opera to-night; if you like going I will call you.

Your obedient servant,  
A. S. DAMER.

Sunday morning.

As this letter bears neither date nor postmark, it is impossible to say at what time it was written. Mrs. Damer seems to have paid her first visit to Paris in 1772, and she was there again in 1774.

## 2

Tho' I am not sure of a box for to-night, I live in hopes. And at all events I shall be glad if you will dine here at half-past four to-day with my mother and me. Adieu.

Tuesday.

As this letter bears neither date nor postmark, it is impossible to say at what time it was written. It is placed in its present sequence merely for convenience, and might conceivably belong to the early period of Lady Alibury's widowhood.

## 3

Tho' in the height of my anxiety I carried Mr. Walpole home last night, I kepted your secret. This claims some merit; and in return, for heaven's sake! do every thing in your power to prevent what you mentioned to me, if it is intended. The more I think of it, the more I am hurt at the idea; as I know that it would seriously affect them.—I believe that you know the brother; if so, I am quite certain that would be the best way to prevent this blow. Make whatever use you please of my name, if any use there is in such a name.—I really shall feel more obliged to you than I can express, if you move heaven and earth upon this occasion; and that is the only way to carry a point.—Adieu.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> As this letter bears neither date nor postmark, it is impossible to say at what time it was written. Nor can I throw any light on the circumstance or circumstances that gave rise to Mrs. Damer's anxiety.

## 4

Park Place, September 26th, 1788.

Indeed I shall thank you for your kind letter, and take my chance about the direction: the subject is most interesting to

me, and your recollection and attention flattering.—I think the permission given to the populace absurd.<sup>1</sup> There are many things in this world that ought to be winked at, but not authorized; and I think rejoicings of this sort of the number. I most perfectly agree with Mad<sup>me</sup> de Vence<sup>2</sup> (whom we have never heard on the subject), and am really furious with Mad<sup>me</sup> de Cambis.<sup>3</sup> She had better whip her child from morning till night than advance such doctrine; but don't tell her this in these words.—I will beg of you to excuse me to the Embassadrice<sup>4</sup> for the abrupt manner in which I sent her Mons. Le Calonne's answer to her father's last book. I saw it on the table of a friend of mine, just sent from him, and really took it, partly by force, and without having time to read it all over myself; for the courier whom the Duke of Richmond let me send it by I thought going. So that I had only time to say three words; but I thought it would be interesting to her to see what *such a man*, I will say such a villain, would have the insolence to say, in the security of not being punished as he deserves. I have not yet been able to get this book at the booksellers; that is, I could not before I left London.

I have not yet made my appearance below to-day; but I shall be very entertaining when I do, thanks to your letter. Pray let me know when the time of your coming to England is fixed; and if it should be deferred at all, let me have some more news. I hope to be in town to stay early in November; for I am very impatient to be settled to my work.—I hope Mad<sup>me</sup> de Cambis received a letter I sent her by the courier last Friday; if I had seen you before I went I should have made a fine complaint of her hurrying me away from Mad<sup>me</sup> de Staël's the night I supped there.<sup>5</sup> She took one of her fidgets, and then said that I wanted to go, because I was to set out the next day, and made me set her home.—Your verses from Lady J. Grey<sup>6</sup> are admired of all things; as indeed well they may [be]. You will not, I know, forget me to the subject of them, and a most uncommon one it is; for such brilliancy of genius, with a countenance so expressive of good nature, I never saw united.—Adieu.

<sup>1</sup> I can throw no light on this allusion.

<sup>2</sup> Madame de Vence seems to have been a well-known Parisian lady of fashion. Writing from Paris in 1792 to his niece Charlotte, the future Lady Bedingfield, Edward Jerningham says, "As for M<sup>de</sup>. de Vence, she wants no additional accomplishments: she is a being of another order."—("The Jerningham Letters," edited by Egerton Castle, 1896.)

Possibly Madame de Vence was the wife of that M. de Vence, grandson of Madame de Sévigné's granddaughter, Julie de Simiane, whose acquaintance Lady Mary Coke made at Aix in the winter of 1769-70.

<sup>3</sup> Gabrielle Charlotte Françoise de Chimai, daughter of Alexandre Gabriel

d'Alsace Hennin Liétard, Prince of Chimai, was educated at the Convent of St. Cyr, and married Jacques François, Viscomte de Cambis. She was a very beautiful woman, who frequently stopped in England, and is often mentioned in Horace Walpole's letters.

<sup>1</sup> The "Embassadrice," is Madame de Staël. Anne Louise Germain Necker, daughter of the famous financier, Jacques Necker, was born in 1766 and died in 1807. She married on January 14th, 1786, Eric Magnus, Baron de Staël-Holstein, an attaché of the Swedish Legation, who was subsequently made Swedish Ambassador to the French Court. Necker, her father, was Director-General of the French finances from 1776 to 1781, and again from 1788 to 1790. Charles Alexandre Calonne, his rival, held this position from 1788 to 1787. At the time at which this letter was written Edward Jerningham was in Paris; and Mrs. Damer addresses the cover as "à Monsieur, Monsr. Edouard Jerningham, rue St. Dominique, Faubourg St. Germain, au soin de Monsr. Parregaux, Banquier à Paris."

<sup>2</sup> This reference seems to point to the fact that Mrs. Damer had only recently returned home from a visit to Paris.

<sup>3</sup> I cannot elucidate this reference.

## 5

Many thanks for your letter and your intelligence. I know that you are good enough not to require regular answers; but I meant to have written to-day, had I not received your letter this morning.—I go to town on Monday for Lady Melbourne's christening,<sup>1</sup> so that I cannot put off my going; but they will be extremely glad, if you like coming here, to see you, provided it does not prevent your coming again. That is the message that I am ordered to give you; and if you can come, I shall be glad. You will, I believe, find Lord Cholmondeley<sup>2</sup> and possibly Mr. Grenville<sup>3</sup>; but that is uncertain. My reason for wishing you to come you will easily guess. Indeed I see so much difference in my mother's spirits, when she has company, that I am most extremely anxious that she should not be alone.—I shall stay a very few days in town; and then mean to go to Goodwood,<sup>4</sup> where they are to come. I shall let you know when I return here; as I hope then that you will come. Indeed there is an absolute engagement; and Mr. Walpole, I hope, will be of the party for some of the time. But his visits are as short as one could wish them long. That is great nonsense; but I am lately remarkably stupid.—It is right to inform you that my father and mother think of going from hence the end of next week; and they, for that reason, hope that you will come the beginning of it to them. You must not think yourself obliged to come, if their going so soon should alter your plan; but if otherwise come, if it should happen to be convenient to you. You will find me at any time on Tuesday morning.

I shall be glad to see the good company you announce for the winter; but [I] should have been more so still to see Mad<sup>me</sup> de Vence. That is the truth! And why not?



Nothing so common as sudden dislikes! There should be a contrary; since Socrates tells us 'tis in every thing to be found.—Adieu. Let me have a line to say whether you come or not.

Many compliments, or rather good wishes, attend you from hence.

Park Place, Thursday [1789].

<sup>1</sup> Lady Melbourne was the only daughter of Sir Ralph Milbanke, Bart., and the mother of the famous 2nd Viscount Melbourne. Since all her four sons were born before 1789, the date of this letter, the christening referred to must have been that of one of her two daughters, Emily Mary and Harriet Anne, the former of whom married the 3rd and famous Viscount Palmerston.

<sup>2</sup> George James, 4th Earl and 1st Marquis of Cholmondeley, was born on May 11th, 1749, the son of Viscount Malpas and the grandson of the 3rd Earl of Cholmondeley, and died on April 10th, 1827. Having lost his father in 1764 he succeeded, on June 10th, 1770, to the Earldom, and to a slender income of £2,500 a year. Eighteen months later his granduncle, Horace Walpole, proposed to his other granduncle, General James Cholmondeley, that the young Earl should marry a lady whom Walpole "had in his eye," a lady of rank and beauty; but the proposal, having been coldly received, came to nothing. For the next twenty years the Earl of Cholmondeley lived the usual life of a noble bachelor of the period. At one time he was *affaires* with Lady Betty Compton, who subsequently married Lord George Cavendish, the future Earl of Burlington. At another he was entangled with Lady Worsley, a young married woman who eventually eloped with Major Blesset. And from 1774 to 1790 he was keeping that notorious adventuress, Grace Dalrymple Elliott, a lady who was also bestowing her favours on the Prince of Wales and on the Duc d'Orleans. So close was this connection between the Earl of Cholmondeley and Madame de St. Alban (to give Mrs. Elliott her *alias*) that Horace Walpole calls her "my pinchbeck niece"; while the offspring of the union, a daughter, was brought up in the Earl's family, and was married from his house, in 1806, to Lord Charles Bentinck. On April 25th, 1791, at the mature age of forty-two, the Earl "settled down." He married a girl twenty years his junior, Lady Georgiana Charlotte Bertie, second daughter of Peregrine, 3rd Duke of Ancaster, by those second nuptials which, uniting him to Mary Panton, the sister of a "jockey," disgraced his Grace in the eyes of his son-in-law's more distinguished grand-uncle. As a libertine and a gamester Cholmondeley bears an unsavoury reputation in the annals of his time; though it is only fair to say that to convict any man on such tainted evidence as the libels and scandals of "The Whig Club," and of "The Royal Register," and the hyphenated and spurious gossip of "The Town and Country Magazine," would be to do him a grave injustice. But even Horace Walpole, who bears testimony to the virtues of Cholmondeley as son, brother, and uncle, not only confesses his grand-nephew's sexual frailties with great candour, but cannot exclude a certain note of satisfaction from that account he gives General Conway of the famous night at Brooks's, in 1781, in which Charles James Fox and Fitzpatrick triumphantly demolished the Earl's hitherto impregnable *farò*-bank. Cholmondeley, however, for all his victories in love and at *farò*, was a great "blood." He was made a Knight of the Garter and a Privy Councillor; at different times he was Ambassador to Berlin, Chamberlain to the Prince of Wales, and Lord Steward of the King's Household; and on November 22nd, 1815, he was advanced to the Earldom of Rocksavage and to the Marquiate of

Cholmondeley. He was also a huge man; and, being thus great in rank and in bulk, he figures naturally enough in several of Gillray's cartoons, such as "The Union Club" (January 21st, 1801), "Blowing up the Pic-Nics" (April 2nd, 1802), "The Pic-Nic Orchestra" (April 23rd, 1802), and "Dilettanti Theatricals." He was a member of the celebrated Pic-Nic Society, and in one of its performances at the Argyll Rooms actually exhibited his enormous figure in the rôle of Cupid! In an undated cartoon of Gillray's styled "Regardez Moi," he is represented as a huge goose receiving a lesson in dancing from old Vestris, a picture of persons gambling and various books of dubious morality indicating his tastes. I should add that he was a friend and correspondent of Edward Jerningham's; that, through his kinship with Horace Walpole, he was a distant cousin to Mrs. Damer, with whom, a few years before his death, he was associated in an unsuccessful suit against Lord Clinton; and that, on the death of the first-named personage (as Earl of Orford) in 1797, he inherited the Walpole estates attached to Houghton Hall, which since that time has been the Norfolk seat of the Cholmondeley family. Until the Regency was established the Earl was a Whig; but in 1811 he became a Tory, following the example of his master, the Prince, who made him a Marquis four years later.

<sup>2</sup> I cannot determine whether this Mr. Grenville was Thomas, the famous book collector and founder of the Grenville Library in the British Museum, or William (afterwards Baron) Grenville, the statesman who was associated with Charles James Fox in 1806 in "The Ministry of All the Talents."

<sup>4</sup> Goodwood was the seat of the Duke of Richmond, who had married Mrs. Damer's half-sister.

## 6

Park Place, Wednesday [1789].

You wrong yourself and your letters much by supposing that they do not deserve answers; and it would be giving myself great airs indeed were I, here rustivating, to disdain a letter filled with all the news of London and Paris. But, to be serious, we are very, very melancholy here. My mother's spirits are miserably low. My father is not sensible of it; but it is too certain, and her health worse than indifferent. She is better when there is any company that she is at her ease with; yet will take no pains to invite any one. The sooner you can come, and the longer you can stay, the better. Therefore make your arrangements accordingly. 'Tis possible that my mother may go for a few days to visit Lady Cecilia<sup>1</sup> in the course of the summer; but I see no immediate chance of her leaving this place. Nor do I think of it; unless it may be for a day or two, that not at present. Therefore come as soon as you possibly can next week. I do assure you that it will be an act of good nature and friendship, which *you* are unfashionable enough to think reasons of some weight.—Adieu.

P.S.—Pray do not forget to bring *a certain bundle*.<sup>2</sup> We must try and be a little merry; and I do assure you that *this*

appears the only chance of seeing us laugh here de bon cœur at present.

<sup>1</sup> Lady Cecilia Johnston probably, a lady whom Gillray was very fond of attacking.

<sup>2</sup> Probably a bundle of "properties" to be used in amateur theatricals.

## 7

Park Place, Sunday, July 25th, 1790.

I am much obliged to you for thinking of me, and sorry to hear that you have not been well. I have, for myself, been very tolerably so; and, as my expectations on that subject are not chimerical, I am pretty easily satisfied—I do not just at present think of leaving this place; and you will very probably find me here. Do not mind the house being crowded; but, if you send me a line a few days before your arrival, I can let you know, unless you prefer taking your chance.—Thank you for the relick.<sup>1</sup> It would be fortunate for you at this moment, if it could communicate, even in the faintest and most evanescent degree, any of its first possessor's divine imagination; but natural imperfections, the present influence of a cloudy atmosphere, and Miss Hervey's untunable voice<sup>2</sup> are far too powerful.—The sentiment of your epitaph must be admired; but the writer's ears would suit Miss Hervey's *mouth*.

The Grand Fédération in France has passed, as I thought it would, quietly.—Mad<sup>me</sup> le Biron is not yet gone; and I believe, Mad<sup>me</sup> de Cambis does not propose going. By what I hear from my sister, they are still in town; and as yet the fate<sup>3</sup> is undetermined or unknown to us.

I have continued to read Bruce<sup>4</sup> aloud every evening almost. My mother has taken such a fancy to this book that, to my no small satisfaction, it has hitherto got the better of cribbage. Miss Hervey arrived only yesterday, and we had other company to dinner. So that how this will be to-night I am not certain; but [I] *hope*, as the book draws towards an end, that it will be determined to finish it.—You do not tell me where to direct; but I send this to your house in town, concluding that it will find you.—Adieu.

Think of Miss Gunning<sup>5</sup> (one who was always at Argyle House) being to be married to the Marquis of Blandford. They say that the Duchess of Bedford has made this match. I think at this rate, if she takes to this trade, that we shall see her surrounded next winter by a more numerous and brilliant female train than *a certain lady* we have remarked in the pit at the Opera.—Once more, Adieu.

<sup>1</sup> I cannot elucidate the reference. Possibly the relic was a relic of Rousseau.

<sup>2</sup> Probably this Miss Hervey was the Miss Elizabeth Harvey who gave assemblies which Johnson attended, and who died unmarried after 1800. *Vide* Note 3 to Horace Walpole's eighth letter.

<sup>3</sup> Three words illegible.

<sup>4</sup> The reference is to "Travels to discover the sources of the Nile in the years 1768-1773," a work in five octavo volumes which James Bruce, the celebrated African traveller, published this year, 1790. Bruce returned to England from his travels in Algiers, Barbary, Egypt and Abyssinia in 1774; but it was not till twelve years later that he set to work on an account of his wanderings, and then he dictated it to an amanuensis and never consulted his original journals. His substantial accuracy, doubted in his own time, has since been amply vindicated. But the very qualities which gained him a predominating influence among semi-barbarous races, his great height (he stood six feet four), his haughty courage, his vast self-confidence and self-assertion, and his prowess as an athlete and a horseman, were apt, as Fanny Burney, who met him, hints, to repel more civilised people. And, like so many travellers, he was inclined to depreciate the labours and achievements of his predecessors. Born in 1730, he died in 1794.

<sup>5</sup> Mrs. Damer is alluding to a famous case which Gillray, always peculiarly alive to society scandal, set himself to satirise in three cartoons in the March of 1791, a case, as will be seen, of Gunning *versus* Gunning. The handsome Miss Elizabeth Gunning, daughter of General Gunning, brother to the two famous toasts, "The lovely Miss Gunnings," of an earlier period, had two special admirers, the Marquis of Lorne, eldest son of the Duke of Argyll, and the Marquis of Blandford, eldest son of the Duke of Marlborough. She was generally supposed, however, to favour the pretensions of the former gentleman; for John, 5th Duke of Argyll, having married on March 3rd, 1769, Elizabeth, relict of James, 6th Duke of Hamilton, and second daughter of John Gunning of Castle Coote, Co. Roscommon, by his wife the Hon. Bridget Bourke, daughter of Theobald, 8th Viscount Bourke of Mayo, the eldest surviving son of the marriage, George William, Marquis of Lorne, was, of course, the young lady's first cousin. Eventually, however, the Marquis of Blandford became the accepted suitor. Thereupon the Duke of Argyll, resenting what he thought Miss Gunning's duplicity, inquired of the General whether his Grace of Marlborough was aware of his son's matrimonial intentions and approved of the match. The General admitted that he did not know, stated his intention of addressing the English Duke on the subject, and promised, if he found that the alliance was displeasing to his Grace, to put a prompt end to it. Thereupon General Gunning's groom carried a letter of inquiry to the Duke of Marlborough, and returned with an answer in which his Grace said that his son had changed his mind. Shown the letter the Duke of Argyll gave utterance to his suspicions of its authenticity. General Gunning then questioned his wife and daughter, who declared that the letter was genuine or that they had been imposed upon. Eventually it turned out that this document was the clumsiest of forgeries, the groom confessing that it had been handed to him by Miss Gunning; while letters written by Miss Gunning, in which she confessed her love for Lord Lorne, were received by the General from a Mrs. Bowen, whom Mrs. Gunning accused of having fabricated them. Enraged and humiliated, General Gunning now turned his daughter out of the house and soon afterwards separated from his wife, both ladies being subsequently sheltered by the Duchess of Bedford. These heroic measures of the General's were, however, somewhat discounted in the following year by his being cast in £5000 damages for adultery at the

suit of a Mr. James Duberley, Erskine pleading eloquently for the plaintiff, and Lord Kenyon, who tried the case, stigmatising Gunning's conduct, in true forensic style, as "hoary, shameful and detestable." Gifted with such a natural talent for fiction, Mrs. and Miss Gunning turned it to professional account, and both published many novels. The Duchess of Argyll, "one of the greatest beauties of the Court of King George III.," as *Burke* describes her, died on December 20th, 1790, when the scandal was in full blast. Lady Elizabeth, a daughter of hers by the 6th Duke of Hamilton, was the first wife of Edward, 13th Earl of Derby, who subsequently married Miss Farren, the actress. Her eldest son by the Duke of Argyll, the Marquis of Lorna, eventually married a daughter of the notorious Countess of Jersey. Mrs. Damer took a natural and peculiar interest in this extraordinary case from the fact that her mother, the Countess of Allesbury, was the sister of the Duke of Argyll and the aunt of the Marquis of Lorna. Miss Elizabeth Gunning, the heroine of this *cause célèbre*, married in 1808 Major James Plunkett of Kinnaird, Co. Roscommon, and died in 1823.

## 8

Falmouth, Saturday, November 6th, 1790.

That you may not think me roling on the Atlantic, or pitching in the Bay of Biscay, I must write you a few lines to tell you that here I am composedly in a tolerable hotel, the wind quite contrary, violent, and, they say, not likely to change for some days.—All this next week, if you write to me, direct to *The Post Office, Falmouth*. Should I sail, I shall get my letters as soon. Should I not, you may guess that I shall have *some* satisfaction in hearing of my friends.—I have seen my ship, a fine large ship-of-war, with an airy cabbın and a good-natured master, with an honest countenance, whom I shall, if I am not too bad on board, have much conversation with, I doubt not.—With all this I do not find great impatience for the voyage, nor aversion neither, a most convenient state of something like tranquility about the whole business.—I have met with every sort of civility and attention here, and find a very great difference in point of climate, much milder, though almost constant rain, and this, they say, is very usual. I found the roads very bad after Exeter, and was frozen and fatigued almost to death; this made the resting a few days here, or any where, not bear the appearance of a distress.—Adieu. I shall let you know when I land, and that I should land in Portugal, you must burn many pairs of shoes over the grate; for nothing but cold East and North East winds will serve for me, and these winds, in *your* climate, will be felt in what manner I too well know.—Once more adieu.

P.S.—Pray have the goodness to write a line, for me, to Mr. Walpole, and desire him to direct to me *Post Office, Falmouth*, all next week. I have been writing so many letters that I am quite tired.

Seville, Wednesday Morning, March 9th [1791].

The packet came, most fortunately, on the day I meant to leave Lisbon, and I had the comfort, though alas! a disturbed letter, of hearing from Mr. Walpole.—I am glad that you like my coming to Spain. I rejoice that I did not give up my idea, and that I set out when I did, a little in spite of advice, as to time; but the weather has been hitherto all I could wish. Were it hotter, it would be too much, if not for me, for mules and men.—The climate is so soft here, such remains of antiquity, something so dignified in every thing I see, and the people so very different from the rest of Europe, and so queer and national, so like another world, that I feel much more indeed to *take root* at Seville than I did at Lisbon. I think being a fine orange tree in a Moorish garden, with cooling fountains continually playing round one, must be a pleasant existence.—But *fata vocant*; and to-morrow early I mean to set out for Granada. I came here on Sunday, meaning to stay only two whole days, but partly wishing to recover some fatigue I had in *walking* most part of the way over the Sierra Morena, where the roads were jumbling and very bad. And still more charmed into another day with this place, I could not resist a second visit to the Alcazar, and a third to the Cathedral, which is noble, simple, and awfull in the inside, perhaps beyond any thing of the sort.—Yesterday and the day before I was so lucky as to have the great altar lighted with thousands of tapers, to hear fine music, and to see the most curious church ceremony that I ever saw, where young boys, in fine dresses, dance and sing at the same time before the altar, with hats on their heads and castanets. It is really pretty, and so antique, that it, by no means, struck me in a ridiculous light. On the contrary such churches and such magnificence is calculated to inspire devotion—of what sort I know not.—I am vexed that I have not received your books, and cannot guess the reason.—Tell Cosway to save me a few good impressions of the print of his drawing of me; as I wish to give one or two away in Portugal.—Your story of the Duke of Gordon is excellent.—There is a softness in the air, since I left Lisbon and come more to the South, that gives me quite another feel.—Pray tell Mr. Walpole that I am so far on my journey, that I was a good deal fatigued from the badness of the road, particularly for two days in crossing the Sierra Morena, but that I have nearly recovered, and that I am assured all the very bad part of my road and journey is over.—Of the inns there is little to say. One finds an empty room, and one comes prepared, sometimes a tolerable room, and sometimes worse; but one leaves it

the next morning.—Adieu. If any of my friends say I do not write, put them in mind that one has little time for writing: one is either fatigued to death, or endeavouring to profit of every moment *to see*, and to remember what one *has seen*.—Once more, adieu. If you think of my route, or overlook a map for the <sup>1</sup> you will see a town called Zafra and a river called Cala. I now go by the plains of Andalusia to the Kingdom of Granada.

<sup>1</sup> A word illegible.

## 10

Park Place, Wednesday, 13th [of July], 1791.

What are you doing that I do not hear a word from you? When do you begin your "string of visits," and at which end is Park Place? My sister and the D[uke]<sup>1</sup> are here at present. Mad<sup>ms</sup> D'Albany<sup>2</sup> and co. come on Friday or Saturday for a couple of nights. Then, I fancy, the Farrens<sup>3</sup>; and possibly Mrs. Hervey<sup>4</sup> may stay, who comes to-morrow. You will serve for *sauce* to these different *dishes*; and a little country air would do you good.—Let me hear from you, and tell me if you have seen [name cut out] and what he says. I am writing in a great hurry; for it is near *going out* time.—Adieu.

<sup>1</sup> The Duke of Richmond.

<sup>2</sup> This was Louisa, titular Countess of Albany, daughter of Gustavus Adolphus, Prince of Stolberg-Gedern, who married Prince Charles Edward the Young Pretender, in 1772, when she was nineteen and he was fifty-two. In 1780 she left him because of his drunken habits and his ill-treatment of her, and lived with Alfieri, the Italian poet-dramatist, until his death in 1803. Despite her doubly equivocal position as wife of the Pretender to the English crown and mistress of Alfieri, she was received at Court both in France and in England. Horace Walpole calls her "the pinchbeck Queen." She was a distant kinswoman of the Countess of Ailesbury's; but the exact connection I cannot trace. It requires a Scot to settle so abstruse a point of genealogy.

<sup>3</sup> Probably this means Elizabeth Fawren, the celebrated actress of comedy, and her sister Margaret, afterwards Mrs. Knight, who was also on the stage.

<sup>4</sup> Vide Note 3 on the eighth letter from Horace Walpole.

## 11

Park Place, Friday. Henley, July 15th, 1791.

I thank you much for your "postscript"; but have no time to say more, as my mother says that the servant is going with the letters. I really am extremely obliged to you for what you have done about the *Emperor*.<sup>1</sup> I hope you gave your message in the same words to him; no *power* could resist, unless that of a *devil*. My mother is in one of her grand distresses about Mad<sup>ms</sup> D'Albany; and, if you can assist, it will be most acceptable and gratefully received by her. Mad<sup>ms</sup> D'Albany

was to have come to-day, and to have stayed two nights. Miss Farren has been appointed, and has fixed on next Wednesday, and co. To-day Mad. D'Albany writes me word that one of her horses is lame, and that she can not come to-day, but will the first day her horse is well, or take post. Now she may not quite like Miss Farren, who, you know, does not speak French well; and it would not be the thing, and de plus the house would be very full. That however might be arranged. What I wish you to do is, if you can, to hasten her coming, that she may go on Wednesday; or, if that can not be, to convey to her *Royal* comprehension whom she will find here, so that she may not be surprised. But all this must come *purely* from yourself; as the least hint from *us* would be like wishing her not to come, and have an appearance of the *comédienne's* not giving way to the *Queen*—which is not the true state of the case.—Do the best you can, and let me know.—Adieu.

<sup>1</sup> I cannot elucidate this reference.

## 12

Goodwood, Wednesday. Midhurst, Sept. 21st, 1791.

I am extremely sorry to hear of your illness. My mother had also a letter from you here yesterday. She said the day before that something of your being ill, and I meant to write; tho' I shall now be in town so soon you can not answer my inquiries—I propose setting out to-morrow, carrying Mad<sup>me</sup> de Cambis to Richmond, and staying myself at Strawberry, where I trust I shall find Mr. Walpole, to whom I wrote by yesterday's post only. Should I not, I shall perhaps come on that night to London; at all events [I shall] be there on Friday, or at latest Saturday.—I shall go to Park Place the 1st of October, [and] stay there about a week or ten days. Make your arrangements accordingly. Mr. Walpole will come [on] the 2nd; and I am to carry Mad. de Cambis thither, whom my mother has invited.—I imagine that I shall see you in town; you will not indeed, I fear, be enough recovered to quit it so soon.—I had not heard a word of Mrs. Osway's "pious vows."<sup>1</sup> I thought I perceived somewhat of the temper of mind you describe in the other lady by a letter I received a few days passed.—Adieu.

<sup>1</sup> Maria Cecilia Louise Hadfield, the daughter of an Irishman called Hadfield, who kept a prosperous hotel at Leghorn, married Richard Osway, the well-known painter, in water-colour, oils, and miniature, in 1781. She herself was a successful miniature painter. The "pious vows" alluded to were made by her on a tour on the continent which she took in the company of Signor Luigi Marchesi, an Italian tenor, whose portrait her husband had painted. During her stay in Lyons she went into a convent, and also made a pilgrimage to the shrine of Our Lady at Loreto, in fulfilment of a vow to do so



if blessed with a living child. This child, Louisa Paolina Angelica, a beautiful girl, endowed with a natural taste for drawing and music, died young, during her mother's absence from England in Italy.

## 13

London, Tuesday, October, 1791.

They tell me at your house that you are still unwell, and [that they] know not when you are to be expected in town; pray let me hear some more certain intelligence from yourself.—I do not think that you thoroughly understand scolding, and I should have written again to you to say that I had the most perfect faith in what you said about your business here in town; but I really had not time.—My mother was not quite pleased at your not coming to Park Place, and at the same time talking of Richmond;<sup>1</sup> but mind, I only tell you what she thought, not what I thought. For I can see a great difference, for many reasons.—London is *al solito*, many persons one does not want, and few one does want.—I am settled to my work; and there is a new seat by the stove. Which stove, now, often goes out in a melancholy way between one and two o'clock, for want of somebody to stir the fire.—Adieu.

<sup>1</sup> Edward Jerningham was stopping with the Earl and Countess of Mount Edgumbe at Richmond. Mrs. Damer's letter is addressed to him "at the Earl of Mount Edgumbe's, Richmond."

## 14

Park Place, Thursday evening.

You are reckoned, at this moment, most extremely *disagreeable* at Park Place; and I can not offer much in your defence. You put off, and put off in such a way that the very shadow of the first state of the case is no more.—I leave this place on Wednesday, and carry with me Mad. de Cambis. My father has business in town, about which he is uncertain; and can not answer for himself after Tuesday next. Monday and Tuesday therefore you will find us; and after that, if my father and mother do not go to town, you certainly may stay with them as long as *bon vous senble*. But they are really quite angry with you for not coming this week, as you had promised; and the party would have suited. Had you come then, and gone about Monday to sign your brother's papers,<sup>1</sup> it would have been a much better scheme. That is most certain.—The country air seems to have done wonders. I have not seen so much *honey* in the composition for this great while.—You are not in great favour, because you never go to see them; which is at least a flattering way of being out of favour. I should perfectly excuse you, and believe it were a *necessity absolute*, were this the first, second, or third time of your fixing

a time for any thing, and then finding out difficulties; but I think it is a vile habit of following momentary fancies that you have contracted, which I take to be most dangerous and pernicious to such as are free according to law. I am quite serious; this is no poetical flight, but downright reason.—I like your idea of [Lord] M<sup>c</sup>; and think I see his driving furiously along, and you, not attempting to stop him, but carefully removing every thing that might hurt, or be hurt, every innocent animal, and every stone or pebble.—I hope Lady Hume<sup>2</sup> fainted at a sentimental part of the play,<sup>3</sup> and that *our friend*<sup>4</sup> had all the credit.—I do not like to think of Sir Joshua:<sup>5</sup> souls are surely lazy, or know not their way out sometimes.—Adieu. I absolutely offered my mother to go to Newhaven; but it could not be arranged, chiefly on account of M<sup>c</sup> de Cambis, who had scruples, as the Harcourts had invited her, but were, she says, to let her know when it suited them, and since that she has not heard. I fear that they are out of spirits on Mrs. Siddons' account.<sup>6</sup>—Once more adieu. I can not go thither now; as I must be in town.

<sup>1</sup> I cannot elucidate this reference.

<sup>2</sup> Apparently Lady Hume was Amabel, eldest daughter of Lady Jemima Campbell, Marchioness Grey, by her husband Philip, 2nd Earl of Hardwicke. She married Alexander Viscount Polworth, son of the 3rd Earl of Marchmont (the friend of Pope) in 1772. Viscount Polworth was created a peer of England in 1776 as Baron Hume of Berwick. He died without issue in 1781.

<sup>3</sup> <sup>4</sup> I can elucidate the reference neither to the play nor to "our friend."

<sup>5</sup> Between July and September of 1789 Sir Joshua entirely lost the sight of one eye, and he never painted a picture after November, 1790. About September, 1791, his usual spirits and appetite began to fail under the fear of total blindness. He died February 23rd, 1792. He was born in 1723.

<sup>6</sup> In the season of 1789-1790 Mrs. Siddons practically retired from the stage, owing partly to ill-health, partly to the difficulty of getting her salary at Drury Lane paid by Sheridan.

## 15

Prospect House,<sup>1</sup> near Broadstairs, Kent.  
Wednesday, August 13th, 1794.

What is become of you? Poets do not *die*; but, as I am more accustomed to the society of men than swans, I should be glad to know you still in that vulgar form. I only passed thro' town in my way from Park Place; and the two days that I was there my head was so bad that I could scarcely go through the giving the necessary orders about my house. I therefore did not send to inquire if you was in town: Since I came here I have been, in health, much better; and the sea air has its good effect, as I hoped it would.—I write to you now, besides wishing to inquire after you, to ask your service. I

understand that I have again been somewhere abused<sup>2</sup>; and wish, if you have seen any thing of any sort, or know any thing that relates to me, that you would tell me; and also that you would attend to the news-papers, and, what would be less trouble to you, get somebody just now for some time to look them over with that view regularly, I mean the vile news-papers. I should be happy to pay anyone you could find to employ in this way; or, if that can not be, I am content, as indeed at any rate I shall [be], to remain your debtor for the whole.—The day is so fine that I must go out, and may not have time to say more before post-time. Therefore, for the present adieu. Let me hear from you immediately; I will write a longer letter in answer.

Adieu once more.

<sup>1</sup> In a letter to Mary Berry, Horace Walpole quotes Lord Cholmondeley, who calls Prospect House a veritable "temple of the winds."

<sup>2</sup> What newspapers abused Mrs. Damer, and on what account, I cannot discover.

## 16

Prospect House, Thursday morning [August 22nd, 1794].

I thank you much for your letter: it is kind and friendly. At present I do not wish any particular editor to be spoken with; but merely that your guidance should keep a sharpe look out for me. And on that, as you promise, I shall depend. I mean to be in town some time next week, and will send to you and tell you when I can see you. I shall be on my way to Park Place, I fancy, where I propose staying some time; and during that time I hope you will pay us a visit there. My mother, I believe, is too much affronted with your neglects to invite you; but that will not make her the less glad to see you, if you come. You know that I rather differ on the subject of one part of your letter. "Patet janua . . ." <sup>1</sup> here; for the Lady is always driving about in a Phæton. How all that will end, Dieu sait! and I do not care.

The weather has been for some time delightful; and the sea view from hence is beyond any thing of the sort, always except Mount Edgcumbe and other places. Seriously it is magnificent. However three weeks alone, if one wishes to prolong, one ought not to indulge the wish, for fear of losing the clou of common society. However, no one need be alone here; for Margate, only three miles off, is the centre and compendium of gentility and ton, and the road by my windows the public resort of the same. Adieu for the present.

<sup>1</sup> The quotation is, of course, from the "Æneid," vi. 127; but the undecipherable word that follows "janua" is not "Ditis."

## 17

Park Place, Thursday. [Sept. 19th, 1794.]

I am sure your letter diverted me too much not to deserve an answer on that score; tho' I can not hope to return that diversion *in kind*, being quite stupid at this moment, with the sound of hurricane in my ears. Such a wind as I never heard; and my room *poetically* situated on the top, not alas! of Parnassus, but Park Place.—The more of your own writing I pay for, the better; but don't think me grown *miserly*, if I desire you, when you send pamphlets and packets, to send them to my house, and Mary will have them conveyed by the coach. I tell you this because I felt ashamed my servant should see the size and magnitude of your letters; as I am not *yet* Secretary of State, according to your new arrangement.

I do not chuse to "renovate" you on the mind of my mother; on the contrary a small dose of Lethe<sup>1</sup> would be better suited to the subject. I assure you, your abandoning her she does not take at all well. Really, when the weather is clear, we have as fine "blue celestial clouds" here as elsewhere: and I can't see why you should repose a little

<sup>2</sup> at least among your friends. But I at present do not desire you should make your visit here, to be serious, if such a visit is even in your mind, which indeed you told me it was not; for I mean to be in town the beginning of next week. It is the latest I can come about my house, which I *hope* no longer to call mine after the 29th. You will guess I mean the Sackville Street house.

So the Prince is actually going to marry! I am glad of it as a right thing, and for once *anxious* to know something of the Household.

Lady Cecilia is expected here this evening.—We have a lively Miss Lydia [or Lloyd] Jennings and Mrs. Hervey.—Farewell.

<sup>1</sup> I hazard this as the correct reading of an almost illegible word.

<sup>2</sup> Several words illegible.

## 18

[August 4th, 1795.]

I thank you for your bit of house-intelligence. Cumberland Place we think too far off; therefore that is out of the quest. But inquire if the D[uchess]<sup>1</sup> of Bolton has entirely fixed on the one you mention in Grosvenor Square; as it often happens that these things go off, and that one may profit by the disagreement.—The poor Emigrés is a subject I hate to think upon; and for that reason it continually occurs to my mind. Write me word if you hear any particulars.—We go on in our melancholy sort of composure here.<sup>2</sup> My mother,

tho' rather unwell to-day, is, I trust, upon the whole, better than I could have hoped.—As you promised to write again soon, I rather flatter myself that I shall hear from you to-morrow. At all events don't relax in your researches after a house; but the "ne plus ultra" is Grosvenor Square, the streets adjoining <sup>3</sup> Lane, Berkeley Square, and so forth. Adieu.

Park Place, Monday.

<sup>1</sup> "D" must stand for "Duchess." Harry Paullet (or Powllett), 6th Duke of Bolton, died on December 25th, 1794. He was the original of Captain Whiffle in Smollett's novel, "Roderick Random," having taken part as Captain (R.N.) in the siege of Carthagea, in which naval operation Smollett served as ship's surgeon. The Duchess of Bolton mentioned in the letter was daughter of Robert Lowther and sister to James, Earl of Lonsdale. She was the Duke's second wife, having married him on April 8th, 1765. She died at the family residence in Grosvenor Square on March 21st, 1809, aged seventy-three.

<sup>2</sup> Mrs. Damer and her mother, Lady Ailesbury, were in mourning for Field Marshal Conway, who had died on July 9th, 1795. They were anxious to leave Park Place, which was sold by the end of the year to the 1st Earl of Malmesbury.

<sup>3</sup> A word illegible.

## LETTERS FROM THE COUNTESS OF AILESBUURY

### 1

Park Place, Sunday.

DEAR SIR AND OPERA COMPANION,

I trouble you with this for fear, as the Manager has been so strict and so troublesome as to require one of the ladies of the box to answer for all the subscribers, you should not be permitted to take out your ticket without an order from Lady M. Coke<sup>1</sup> or myself. I therefore send one, together with a draught for General Conway's subscription and my own; and, when you take out your ticket, shall beg the favour of you also to take out ours, and send them to our porter in Warwick Street.

I am, Sir,

Your most obedient servant,

C. AILESBUURY.

As the General was not quite sure of your Christian name, he has drawn the note upon our porter, where you may receive the money.

<sup>1</sup> Lady Mary Coke was a sort of cousin of the Countess of Ailesbury's. She was Lady Mary Campbell, daughter of the 2nd Duke of Argyll, and had married on April 1st, 1747, Edward Viscount Coke, heir-apparent of Thomas, Earl of Leicester. He died without issue in 1753. She died on Sept. 30th, 1811.

Violent-tempered, wrong-headed, asexual, and eccentric, Lady Mary numbered among her friends Horace Walpole, of whose letters to her more than twenty are extant, and the Empress Maria Theresa, whose Court she visited

three times. In her widowhood she received attentions from the Earl of March (afterwards the notorious "old Q"), the Earl of Bessborough, and H.R.H. Edward, Duke of York; but none of these [overtures came to anything. Perhaps the most interesting thing known about her is that, on account of her refusal to cohabit with his son, her father-in-law, the Earl of Leicester, used to allude to her as "*Our Virgin Mary*." Between 1889 and 1896 four volumes of her "*Letters and Journal*" were published, bringing the record of her career down to 1776.

2

Park Place, Sunday.

DEAR MR. JERNINGHAM,

I must begin by thanking you for your flattering verses, and assuring you that such flattery as yours is always pleasing to me. My chief object of writing at present is to ask you when you will come here. Mrs. Damer and I want you very much, and we hope you will bring a large bundle with you, and in it some rags and tags proper for a dramattick performance, as I have a few neighbours worthy of it.

So the Edgoumbes have got the Royal Fever,<sup>1</sup> which I hope will not end in an ague fit, and they and their friends suffer without any advantage!

Sincerely yours, C. A.

<sup>1</sup> I cannot elucidate the allusion.

3

DEAR MR. JERNINGHAM,

Will you come and dine here to-morrow at four o'clock, and go to the Play with us?

Yours, &amp;c., C. AILESBURY.

4

Park Place, Thursday.

You will see before this time that I had not forgot you, and your kind promises, by the letter I sent to Middleton,<sup>1</sup> which I conclude you have received. You may depend upon having one of the warmest rooms in the house, and one of the fattest of my housemaids to air your bed; but I cannot promise this at the beginning of next week, that's to say, [not] till either Mr. Walpole is gone, or that I have no chance of Mrs. Hervey's returning, who is gone to London to-day upon business; but of this last event you shall have notice, and indeed I shall be very sorry not to be able to make room just at the time your friends are here, who you like to meet. However certain it is we shall be happy to receive you at the middle of the week, or perhaps sooner. Depend upon hearing speedily again from yours,

C. A.

My General sends his compliments.

<sup>1</sup> Middletoh Park, the seat of the Earl of Jersey.

## 5

Democritus and other bards of the time used, as Homer writes, to attend upon Kings and Princes at their banquets, to sing their praises and recite those of their ancestors; where they took freely of the flowing bowl, and had a double portion of the choicest viands allotted them. Now, as you are both a poet and musician (which, as I understand, the bards were not, and sang other people's old ballads, making none themselves), being so qualified, you have certainly a right to drink more wine, and eat more vension, than they did chine; and, if you make use of your privilege, I shall expect to see you come very fat to Park Place, if you condescend to take up with our company, after the sublime one you leave.<sup>1</sup>

I have been chiefly alone, the Marshall being called upon by military duties, and Louisa left to partake of a ball at Bromſe H; but I expect them both here to-night. The weather is so unfavourable that we are forced to warm ourselves by the fire instead of the sun.

Faithfully yours, C. A.

Park Place, Friday.

<sup>1</sup> Possibly Edward Jerningham had been stopping with the Prince of Wales at the Pavilion, Brighton.

## 6

Park Place, Xmas Day, 1798.

DEAR MR. JERNINGHAM,

Orpheus had his limbs scattered about by the Thracian women; but yours were carefully gathered up by the Park Place ones. I return you many thanks for my evening's entertainment, and tried to do all the justice in my power to your tragedy<sup>1</sup> by reading it in an audible voice to my companions, whose opinion given of it I wish you had been present at.

I fear we shall have no box at the Opera this year; for Mr. Jewel has not performed his promise of offering some of them to my choice. Perhaps you do not much care about it, or did not expect to be called upon this year; you shall however have your option, if any thing falls, which I don't think likely. I am,

Your faithful and obedient,

C. A.

The Marshall and Louisa desire to be remembered.

<sup>1</sup> Edward Jerningham's tragedy, "The Siege of Berwick," was produced at Covent Garden on November 13th, 1798, and played on that and the four subsequent evenings.

VIII  
THE COUNTESS OF MOUNT  
EDGCUMBE



## SOME PARTICULARS OF THE EDGCUMBE FAMILY AND OF THE COUNTESS OF MOUNT EDGCUMBE

AN account of the Edgcumbe family, so far as it forms part of the history of the country, is contained in the lives of the first two Barons and of the first two Earls which are contributed to "The Dictionary of National Biography." Here I shall give a few leading particulars only.

*Richard Edgcumbe, 1st Baron Edgcumbe* (1680–1758), was the only surviving son of Sir Richard Edgcumbe, of Mount Edgcumbe, one of the knights of the county of Cornwall in the reign of King Charles II. He was educated at Trinity College, Cambridge, and from 1702 to 1742, in which year he was elevated to the peerage, sat in Parliament as member for the borough of Plympton. He held several offices in Ireland, and managed the Cornish boroughs in the interests of Sir Robert Walpole, whose greatest friend he was, according to Horace Walpole. In December, 1743, he was made Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster. In January, 1744, he became Lord Lieutenant of the county of Cornwall, a position he held till January 24th, 1758. In 1744 he was sworn of the Privy Council. He married Matilda, daughter of Sir Harry Furness, and died on November 22nd, 1758. Horace Walpole calls him "one of the honestest and steadiest men in the world."

*Richard Edgcumbe, 2nd Baron Edgcumbe* (1716–1761), was the second son of Richard, the 1st Baron, and entered the army, rising to the rank of Major-General; but he does not appear to have seen much service. From 1747 to 1754 he was member for Lostwithiel and then for Penryn. From December, 1755, to November, 1756, he was a Lord of the Admiralty, and subsequently became Comptroller of the King's Household and a Privy Councillor. In 1758 he succeeded his father as 2nd Baron, and in 1759 was appointed Lord Lieutenant of the county of Cornwall. He died unmarried on May 10th, 1761, leaving by his mistress, Mrs. Ann Franks, *alias* Day, four illegitimate children, and making Horace Walpole Mrs. Franks' trustee. Mrs. Franks, whom Sir Joshua Reynolds painted in 1760, subsequently became Lady Fenhoulet, wife of Sir Peter Fenhoulet, Exon of the Guard. Dick Edgcumbe, as he was

generally called, was one of the wits and bloods of his time, his closest friends being Horace Walpole, Gilly Williams and George Selwyn. An accomplished draughtsman, he painted a portrait of the convict Mary Squires; and he was one of the first to recognise the genius of the great Devonshire painter Sir Joshua Reynolds, who produced for Horace Walpole a portrait group of Dick Edgcumbe, George Selwyn and Gilly Williams. Dick Edgcumbe wrote verses, too, and a couple of his poems, "An Ode to Health," and "The Fable of the Ass, the Nightingale and the Kid," are included in "The New Foundling Hospital for Wit." Like so many men of his time, he spent hours at the gambling table. Writing to Sir Horace Mann from Strawberry Hill on May 14th, 1761, Horace Walpole says of him: "I have lost one of the oldest friends I had in the world, Lord Edgcumbe; a martyr to gaming. With every quality to make himself agreeable, he did nothing but make himself miserable. I feel the loss much, though long expected; and it is the more sensible here where I saw most of him."

*George Edgcumbe, 3rd Baron Edgcumbe and 1st Earl of Mount Edgcumbe* (1721-1795), brother of the 2nd Baron, was born on March 3rd, 1721, and entered the Navy early in life. In 1759 he took part in the blockade of Brest and in the victory of Quiberon Bay. On May 10th, 1761, he succeeded his brother as 3rd Baron, on June 18th he was made Lord Lieutenant of the county of Cornwall, and on August 6th he married, at her father's house at Twickenham, three days before her father's death, Emma, daughter of John Gilbert, D.D., Archbishop of York. On October 21st, 1762, he was made Rear-Admiral; and from 1766 to 1770 he was Commander-in-Chief at Plymouth. On October 24th, 1770, he was appointed Vice-Admiral; and in 1773 he again held the chief command at Plymouth. On January 29th, 1778, he was advanced to the rank of Admiral. Like his father before him, he was one of the Vice-Treasurers of Ireland. On February 17th, 1781, he was made Viscount Mount Edgcumbe and Valletort; and on August 31st, 1789, he was created Earl of Mount Edgcumbe. He died on February 4th, 1795.

*Richard Edgcumbe, 4th Baron Edgcumbe and 2nd Earl of Mount Edgcumbe* (1764-1839), was the only child of the 1st Earl and was born on September 13th, 1764, and was educated at Christ Church, Oxford. As Viscount Valletort he represented the borough of Fowey in the Commons from 1786, to 1795, not as a Whig but as a Tory, the Edgcumbe family having presumably changed their politics on the occasion of the barony being made a viscounty. On the death of his father he succeeded him both as Earl of Mount Edgcumbe and

as Lord Lieutenant of the county of Cornwall. In March 1803 he was made a member of the Privy Council. He married on February 21st, 1789, Lady Sophia Hobart, third daughter of John, 2nd Earl of Buckinghamshire, by his first wife, Mary Anne, daughter of Sir Thomas Drury, Bart. The Countess died on August 17th, 1806. The Earl died on September 26th, 1839. He seems to have been a good deal of a fribble.\* He entered neither the Army nor the Navy, and took no part either in political or official life, contented to be known as an amateur actor and as an opera loungeur. He assisted Mrs. Damer in the private theatricals which she gave at Strawberry Hill, he was a member of the well-known Pic Nic Society, and brought out a volume of very dull operatic recollections called "Musical Reminiscences of an Old Amateur." Writing to Edward Jerningham on October 3rd, 1785, the Rev. W. J. Temple, the friend of Gray and of Boswell, makes an amusing and rather malicious mention of him: "I suppose you have heard of the Grande Fête that was given at M. Edcombe, on the *Sola Spes* coming of age. The delicate youth was so agitated as to be obliged to retire to bed for a couple of hours: but appeared again blooming as Hebe. All the Western World were there." Fanny Burney was no more favourably impressed by the virile qualities of Lord Valletort. She describes him in 1789 as "a most neat little beau, and his face has the roses and lilies as finely blended as that of his pretty young wife." A sort of musical comedy hero, in fact! Sir Joshua Reynolds painted him as a boy, in 1774.

*Emma, Countess of Mount Edgcombe*, was the daughter of John Gilbert, D.D., Archbishop of York from 1759 to 1761, by Margaret Sherrard, sister of Philip, 2nd Earl of Harborough, and,

\* "Peter Pindar" makes a wicked allusion to Viscount Valletort in his poem, "A Complimentary Epistle to James Bruce, Esq:." [the famous African traveller]. Referring to the love of ministering to the popular passion for the marvellous, he asks:—

"What [made] Master Edgcombe deal in rhyming ware?  
 What but to put all Cawwand in a stare?  
 Sweet child of verse, who, with importance big,  
 Pleased its own self, and eternised a pig!"

And he adds in a note the following amusing, but probably apocryphal, story:—

"This pig, Cupid, who many years ago fell in love with the Earl, has a monument erected to his memory, with an inscription on it by Lord Valletort, the Earl's son. It is said that his Majesty, when at Mount Edgcombe, happening to be gravely pondering near his grave, the Queen, who was at some distance, asked him what he was looking at so seriously. His Majesty, with a great deal of humour, immediately replied, 'The family vault, Charly, family vault, family vault.'"

as has already been stated, married the 3rd Baron Edgcumbe on August 6th, 1761. The date of her birth I cannot discover. She survived her husband nearly thirteen years, dying on December 26th, 1807. Horace Walpole, who had no love for the clergy, says in his "Last Ten Years of George II." that her father was "composed of that common [clerical] mixture of ignorance, meanness, and arrogance." But in his "Letters," though he often chronicles his dining and playing cards with the Mount Edgcumbes, he adds little to our knowledge of them. He mentions a bon mot of the Earl's, to the effect that "The Chevalier d'Eon was her own widow," he relates how Lady Edgcumbe turned her back on a woman singer at the Opera, and he duly congratulates her Ladyship on the birth of her grandchildren. But that is practically all the reader gathers from him about the family, save one amusing and possibly apocryphal anecdote of the King and Queen's visit to Mount Edgcumbe in the summer of 1789. Writing to Mary Berry from Strawberry Hill on July 10th, 1789, he says: "The House of Edgcumbe set out in perilous haste to prepare the Mount for the reception of their Majesties, if they are so inclined; but [they] were stopped at Pool for want of post-horses, all being retained for the service of the Court. The royal personages arrived; and Lady Mount was in the midst of the reiteration of her curtseys, when the mob, gathering and pressing on her, she was seized with a panic, clung to her Lord, and screamed piteously, till a country fellow said to her, 'What dost thee make such a hell of a noise for? Why, nobody will touch thee.'" That Lady Mount Edgcumbe had a sharp and even a bitter tongue will be manifest from many of the remarks which she makes in her letters to Edward Jerningham: take for instance her sneering allusion to Lady Jersey as "Lucretia." But this sharpness or malignity of tongue is no evidence of malignity of heart or of action. Lady Jersey however, seems to have returned her dislike; for, writing to Edward Jerningham on August 5th, 1791, just after the birth of Lady Valletort's eldest daughter, the future Countess Brownlow, she inquires: "With which of her gentle and amiable qualities has the 'Sea Cowcomber' endowed Miss Edgcumbe?" while in another letter, written from Brighton, she says, "As to this place, it seems as good a hot-bed of lies as St. James's Street or Lady Mount's heart." Inasmuch, however, as Lady Jersey suspected her old friends the Harcourts of having turned against her about the time of the Prince of Wales's marriage, the testimony she offers to the hostility of her friends and acquaintances can hardly be accepted as convincing. Nor must the evidence which Gillray gives against Lady Mount Edgcumbe be taken with implicit confidence. In "La Belle Assemblée" (May 12th,

1787), the figures with her friends, Lady Cecilia Johnston, the Hon. Mrs. Hobart and Lady Archer as making offerings to "The Temple of Love," and bears the features of a witch. In "The Installation Supper" (May 26th, 1788), she is represented in animated conversation with the Earl of Derby; while the Prince of Wales is shown sitting between Lady Archer and Lady Cecilia Johnston and engaged in the pleasant task of picking his teeth with his fork. In "A Witch upon Mount Edge. *Vide Fuseli*" (October 17th, 1791), she is actually drawn as a witch, seated on a bundle of brooms. Since Lady Mount Edgcumbe can have been little more than fifty at the time, it is scarcely fair to see her through the caricaturist's prejudiced eyes and to regard her as "an antiquated member of the bon ton" (the phrase is Joseph Grego's). But the charge made against her of keeping faro tables at her house seems to be rather more firmly grounded. Lady Mount Edgcumbe and her friends, Lady Archer and the Hon. Mrs. Hobart (afterwards Countess of Buckinghamshire), were popularly known as "Faro's Daughters." And when the austere Lord Kenyon, who was dead set against immorality in high places, especially against gambling and "crim. con.," threatened in 1796 that "parties justly convicted [of gambling], whatever be their rank or station, though they should be the first ladies in the land, shall certainly exhibit themselves in the pillory," a fulmination made purely forensically and in the air, it need hardly be said, Gillray published (May 12th) a caricature entitled "The Exaltation of Faro's Daughters," in which he actually depicted Lady Archer and Lady Buckinghamshire standing side by side in the pillory and exposed to a shower of mud and rotten eggs from the mob. In the following year Lady Buckinghamshire got into trouble with the authorities at last through her faro tables. Joseph Grego in his book, "James Gillray, the Caricaturist," gives the following account of the proceedings: "At the beginning of March, 1797, an information was laid against Lady Buckinghamshire, Lady E. Lutterell, and some other ladies and gentlemen of rank, for keeping faro tables in their houses; and on the 11th of that month they were convicted of that offence, but Lord Kenyon seems to have forgotten his former threat, and he only subjected them to rather severe fines." This account is inaccurate and misleading, the result probably of Grego's not having taken the trouble to consult his authorities. The case was *not* tried before Lord Kenyon, and therefore Lord Kenyon did *not* fine the guilty parties; it was tried before the well-known police magistrate, Mr. N. Conant, whom I call "well-known," not out of *malice prepense*, but because, in a newspaper cutting for June, 1820, I find him figuring in a licensing appeal and then raised to the dignity of

Sir N. Conant. *The Annual Register* for 1797 dismisses the faro case in the following brief paragraph:—

“March 11th. At the Police Office, Marlborough Street, Lady Buckinghamshire, Lady E. Lutterell and Mrs. Sturt [the wife, probably, of Sturt, the brewer] were convicted before N. Conant and T. Robinson, Esq<sup>rs</sup>, in the penalty of £50 each for playing at the game of faro. And Henry Martindale was convicted in the sum of £200 for keeping the faro table at Lady Buckingham’s house. The witnesses were two ci-devant servants of Lady Buckinghamshire.\* There were informations against Mr. Concannon and Mr. O’Burne for similar offences. Both the defendants were found guilty and paid the penalty.”†

Gillray, however, had not forgotten Lord Kenyon’s threat; and in a caricature published on March 25th, he represented Lady Archer and Mrs. Concannon as suffering in the pillory, and the Countess as undergoing the punishment of being publicly flogged at the cart’s tail. That the Countess of Buckinghamshire, both before and after she became a peeress, kept faro tables at her house is proved not only by the evidence given at the trial, but by the notorious fact that the Prince of Wales attended her faro parties, and lost money there. Probably the Countess of Mount Edgcumbe also kept a faro bank; though the case against her is merely one of strong suspicion. But to affirm, as Joseph Grego affirms, that both ladies kept faro tables in order to support their private extravagances by fleecing wealthy young pigeons, is a charge which, though easy to make and difficult to disprove, is not on these accounts entitled to be regarded as established. The probability is that, however nefarious the designs of these two ladies may have been (and that they cherished nefarious designs is a mere assumption), the more or less responsible positions occupied by their husbands were likely to render them discreet. I may add that, whatever his Countess may have been, the 3rd Earl of Buckinghamshire, who took up some minor diplomatic posts under his half-brother, and was a patron of the drama and a manager of the Opera, was the very reverse of a grasping man. In one obituary notice of him it is claimed for him that he never raised the rents of his tenants.

Horace Walpole makes many references to faro in his letters. Writing from Strawberry Hill to Sir Horace Mann, on May 17th, 1781, he says: “My old favourite game, faro, is lately revived. I have played but thrice, and not all night, as I used

\* Two footmen, Joseph Pafford and George Evett.

† For the testimony which Sheridan gives to the Duchess of Devonshire’s losses at faro and to her association with Martindale in running a faro-table, the reader should consult Dyce’s “Recollections of the Table-Talk of Samuel Rogers.”

to do; it is not decent to end where one began, nor to sit up with a generation two descents my juniors. Mr. Fox is the first figure in all the places I have mentioned, the hero in Parliament, at the gaming table, at Newmarket. Last week he passed four and twenty hours, without interruption, at all the three, or on the road from one to the other." Writing more than eleven years later, on December 7th, 1792, to the Countess of Upper Ossory from the same place, he says: "A good lady last year was delighted at my becoming a peer, and said, 'I hope you will get an Act of Parliament for putting down faro.' As if I could make Acts of Parliament! And, could I, it would be very consistent too in me, who for some years played more at faro than anybody." The lady, he explains, was "the learned Mrs. Carter," or as he puts it in a later letter, "Mrs. Epictetus Carter"; and this disclosure makes it additionally difficult to identify the Miss Carter mentioned in the Countess of Mount Edgcumbe's fifth and sixth letters to Edward Jerningham with the Elizabeth Carter who was a crusader against faro. Horace Walpole, I may add, was so eager to be in the faro movement that between the years 1782 and 1792, that is between the sixty-fifth and seventy-fifth years of his age, he was frequently guilty of the youthful foppery of talking in terms of faro. Thus on August 20th, 1782, he remarks: "I am mighty glad that war has gone to sleep, like a *paroli* at faro." And on November 18th, 1790, he protests to Mary Berry: "My fears cannot go to sleep, like a *paroli* at faro, till there is a new deal."

So much for faro, faro players, and faro language. But, perhaps, to this rather discursive note on Lady Mount Edgcumbe, I ought to add a few words about her friend, Lady Cecilia Johnston.\* This lady, who on the testimony of Horace Walpole and on that of one of Edward Jerningham's young women correspondents, seems really to have been a scandal-monger, a busybody, and an enemy of youth, was the Hon. Henrietta Cecilia West, daughter of the 7th Baron (afterwards 1st Earl) De la Warr. She married in 1763 Lieut.-General James Johnston, who enjoyed the reputation of being the handsomest man † and the best swordsman in the army. For reasons best known to himself, General Johnston, despite his love for duelling, preferred to leave Gillray unmolested, who on his part was never tired of launching his shafts against the

\* Mrs. Harris, writing on March 27th, 1780, to her son, the future Earl of Malmesbury, chronicles the elopement of General and Lady Cecilia Johnston's daughter with her father's former aide-de-camp, Mr. Anderson of the Guards. "Miss J. [she says] is but sixteen years old, very pretty, tall and genteel; but a most thorough chip of the old block—I mean her mother."

† He was painted by Gainsborough, at the artist's own request.

General's wife. In February, 1792, in a cartoon called "The Power of Beauty. St. Cecilia Charming the Brute, or the Seduction of the Welsh Ambassador," he waxed particularly virulent, portraying Lady Cecilia Johnston as practising her powers of fascination at the expense of a Welsh goat, Sir Watkin W. Wynn, of Wynnstay, a prominent figure in the Principality. Johnston, indeed, judged by an excellent story which Horace Walpole tells of him, a rather broad story, which perhaps had better be relegated to the decent obscurity of a note,\* seems to have been a good deal of an ass. He was also, it should be remembered, maternal uncle to that Colonel, the Hon. George Napier, who, by his marriage in 1781 with Charles James Fox's lovely aunt, Lady Sarah Lennox, became the father of "the most illustrious family of heroes that ever graced the roll of the British army."

LETTERS FROM THE COUNTESS OF MOUNT  
EDGCUMBE <sup>1</sup>

*Letter from Mr. F. Drake,<sup>2</sup> possibly the Earl's Chaplain.*

Mount Edgcumbe, Sept. 5th, 1779.

DEAR SIR,

When I recollect the pleasure you used to have in admiring these beautiful groves, I cannot forbear expressing my surprise that you have never once sent a single line of condolence upon their melancholy fate. The iron hand of war has spread desolation o'er the land; and yet not one pitying line from your cruel pen. The towering oaks, once the pride of the Mount, are laid prostrate on the ground; the shadowy elms, once your delight, are converted into palisades and abattis;<sup>3</sup> and the hatchet's unrelenting stroke still rings in our ears.

"Scriptorum chorus omnis amat nemus,"

old Horace says; but he must be mistaken, or you would have recorded their fate in immortal strains. The men without breeches could rouse your muse; but she seems petrified at this devastation. Let your lyre be once more strung, and let

\* The story is told in a letter written from Arlington Street to George Montagu, and dated June 12th, 1746. It runs as follows:—"Major John[ston] is chosen at White's, to the great terror of the society. When he was introduced, Sir Charles Williams presented Dick Edgcumbe to him, and said, 'I have three favours to beg of you for Mr. Edgcumbe. The first is that you will not lie with Mrs. Day [Dick Edgcumbe's mistress]; the second, that you will not poison his cards; the third, that you will not kill him.' The fool answered gravely, 'Indeed I will not.'"



us have some Gray-ish elegy, or an imitation of Virgil's 10th Eclogue, "Neget quis carmina?"

The other page is jest; but I must now speak seriously to you. The Enemy have appeared off this place, and the *Ardent* Man-of-War was taken in the presence of my Lady, and the port threatened to be forced; yet her Ladyship had the resolution to continue at this place, a heroism which was not expected by any of her friends. Her acquaintance in every part of the kingdom have written to her in the most friendly manner, offering their houses for her reception, and any other assistance in their power. With the utmost impatience I have enquired every post whether any letter has been received from Mr. Jerningham; and I am sorry to say that I have been always disappointed. You are the only acquaintance of this family who have not been alarmed at our danger and made the most pressing enquiries after us. I am totally at a loss what reason to give for this seeming neglect; and I can ascribe it to no other cause but illness.

I take a great liberty in speaking thus plainly to you; but I should be very sorry, should there be any misunderstanding betwixt my lady and you. I write this without her Ladyship's knowledge, and merely out of regard to you. Believe me, with the greatest regard,

Dear Sir,

Your most obedient humble servant,

F. DRAKE.

<sup>1</sup> In "The Journal of a Tour to the Hebrides," under date August 24th, 1778, Dr. Johnson speaks somewhat disparagingly of Lord Mount Edgcombe's Devonshire seat. Boswell relates:—"Dr. Johnson observed that the situation here [at Slain's Castle, the Earl of Erroll's place] was the noblest he had ever seen, better than Mount Edgcombe, reckoned the first in England; because at Mount Edgcombe the sea is bounded by land on the other side; and, though there is there the grandeur of a fleet, there is also the impression of there being a dockyard, the circumstances of which are not agreeable."

<sup>2</sup> I cannot discover anything about Mr. F. Drake. It is reasonable, however, to assume that his Christian name was Francis, and that he belonged to the famous family of the Drakes which included a baronetcy in its list of honours. Inasmuch, too, as he seems to have been domesticated with the Edgcombe family, and as the Viscountess alludes to him as Dr. Drake, it is possible that he was a clergyman, and the domestic chaplain of the Edgombes.

<sup>3</sup> The trees on the Edgcombe estate were cut down in order to strengthen the fortifications of Plymouth. As compensation for the damage caused to the woods, the 3rd Baron Edgcombe was created, on February 17th, 1781, Viscount Mount Edgcombe and Valletort.

## 1

Brussels, Friday, December 5th [1788].

Tho' I may sometimes be idle in consideration of you, and sometimes from bad habits of my own, I can be so no longer, when I hear of anything which concerns the health and happiness of my dear Lady Jerningham; of whom I last post received an account that makes me impatient for a better. I am told she has had a cold, and swelled face, and before that had been made ill by eating peas. All these, small in themselves, may be of consequence to her; and I wish to know that they are all happily over, and most heartily hope to hear it.

With respect to ourselves, Mr. Drake will have expatiated so largely that I have little to add to it. I cannot brag of my health, and less of my spirits, tho' they have all to flatter them that the greatest kindness and attention can give; for we cannot but consider it as a much greater favor to be admitted this year into small parties and suppers as inhabitants than last year into more numerous ones as strangers. Our accounts from Vienna are all we can wish; in itself I believe it the best place any young man can be in.<sup>1</sup>

I give you joy the Opera is begun; but I hear there is so little faith in this Coalition<sup>2</sup> that many prudent people delay to pay their subscriptions. The poor Mongi family<sup>3</sup> are here, and give a concert to-night, as they did in Holland, to pick up a little money, poor creatures, to carry them to Italy, their salary in England being still unpaid. Our national credit travels about in every shape. Our princes will spread it, who are retiring to different places par l'economie; the latter pair clumsily<sup>4</sup> carry with them a *lady* neither young nor handsome.<sup>5</sup> I suppose London is now in its perfection. I hope you are at liberty to partake of it, and not confined by that duty, which I wish all would imitate, and the anxiety attending it by any fear for our dear Lady. My Lord sends her and you his kindest compliments. Assure her of mine, and believe me, mon cher ami, partly [too] busy, and still worse too stupid to be able to amuse myself or you.

Your ever obedient servant,  
E. M<sup>r</sup> EDGCUMBE.

<sup>1</sup> Presumably the Viscountess is referring to some young friend or relation who was employed in the diplomatic service at Vienna. But I cannot elucidate the reference.

<sup>2</sup> The famous Coalition Ministry of North and Fox, of which the Duke of Portland, son of Mrs. Delany's old friend the Duchess of Portland, was the nominal head. The Ministry was formed on the 2nd of April, 1783; the Duke becoming First Lord of the Treasury; Lord North, Secretary of State for the Home Department; Charles James Fox, Secretary of State for Foreign

Affairs; Lord John Cavendish, Chancellor of the Exchequer; Keppel, First Lord of the Admiralty; and the Earl of Carlisle, Lord Privy Seal. William Windham was made Chief Secretary for Ireland; Richard Fitzpatrick, Secretary at War; Edmund Burke, Paymaster of the Forces; and Richard Brinsley Sheridan, Secretary to the Treasury. On December 17th the Bill for the better regulation of the government of India was thrown out, and on December 18th the King dismissed his ministers.

<sup>2</sup> I cannot discover who the Mongi (or is it Morigi?) family were.

<sup>4</sup> I cannot quite persuade myself that the adverb the Viscountess uses is actually "clumsily"; but "clumsily," spelt seemingly with two "l's" and without the "i," is the best I can make of it. Lady Edgcombe's characters are exceedingly hard to make out, "a" and "u," "r" and "i," "d" and "cl," "th" and "M" being written in the same manner. Addressing the Countess from Strawberry Hill, on November 29th, 1794, on the occasion of the birth of her grandson, William Richard Edgcombe, eldest son of Viscount Valletort, Horace Walpole, whose own handwriting was singularly elegant and clear, waxes quite caustic over that of his correspondent. "I know I am late," he says, "in my congratulations to you and your good lord on the birth of your grandson, the Prince of Mount Richmond; but my delay was meditated. I not only was sure that your Ladyship at last was happy enough; but I was aware that you would receive such a dose of compliments on the occasion that your poor fingers would be lamed with answering them and as your Ladyship's hieroglyphics are never easily expounded, I would not risk their being carried to the King's decipherer, on suspicion of their containing a new plot."

<sup>6</sup> The Princes are presumably the Prince of Wales and the Duke of York, Bishop of Osnaberg. But who the "Lady" was I cannot discover.

## 2

Mount Edgcombe, September 3rd [1785].

You are a great [deal] too good, mon cher ami, to have thought about me, before I had given you any notice where I was to be found. I meant to do it as soon as I will have it myself; and now the obligation is doubled by the favour of your kind and agreeable letter.

The adventure of the road was very well suited to his Lordship's taste, who went away to Lord Clifford's full of all the particulars; while I and poor Constance<sup>1</sup> dragged on under the miserable circumstances he was describing to our last stage, where we waited till he, and Richard and Mons<sup>r</sup> de Soynes<sup>2</sup> (who was obliged to stop at Exeter) joined us, and then came on hither, where all the invalid body immediately recovered except me, who am but a crawler still.

Our dear young traveller<sup>3</sup> seems perfectly happy in his old dull home, and makes no remarks upon the advantages of the gay scenes he has left, except that an Italian winter is warmer and finer than an English summer. Indeed such a summer month as August has been I never saw; nor such a day as Mons<sup>r</sup> Pinto<sup>4</sup> passed here on his way from Falmouth. It was just such a fog as the famous Queen's Birthday [one], when we all ran

*aboard* of one another in London Streets; so that not the distance of a hand could be seen. And so it continued without interval till one hour after he went; and then all cleared away.

I am expecting the honor to see Madame Pinto,<sup>6</sup> and the still greater honor to see Prince William;<sup>6</sup> neither of which delights me just at this moment when our Grand Jass<sup>7</sup> is coming on for the 14th. Lord E[dgcumbe] is already so affairé, it would put you out of breath to see him. Pray offer up a vow to every saint in every niche for fine weather; for if it is bad,

"Our boats can't run,  
Our fires won't burn,  
We're quite undone."

I wish I could bring you down pour la rareté du fait aussi pour vous dissiper dans le moment que vous éprouvez des infidélités de la Jeunesse;<sup>8</sup> but can you wonder any body that has been happy in long friendship with you should turn *Papish*? I wish au contraire you may not renounce *the Pope*, and abjure the name spiritual as well as temporal. If Lord E[dgcumbe] was not in a grand Jass, I daresay you would have a fine epigram. But his head is so full of flags and boats and guns that his poor Muse can't find a peep-hole; and mine [is so full] of dining and dancing and supping and lodging that it is quite as much occupied as his. Each, in our different ways, are in training for the Day. His Lordship every day or two takes physic, and I sea-bathing; and I hope he will be clear, and I shall be strong, to go through this great performance.

I am quite delighted with the King and Queen's kind and royal attention to Mrs. Delany.<sup>9</sup> It will revive her very few last days, and throw some light over the dead cloud that has overshadowed them; for she will consider it not only as beneficence to herself, but respect to the memory of her friend.<sup>10</sup> Who indeed was, I think, a very great and respectable character; and I am vain to think she honored me with her friendship.

In your desert there is always the *chez vous*<sup>11</sup> to interest me; out of it there is a person I am much concerned for, and that is the poor Vesey.<sup>12</sup> I left Mrs. Handcock<sup>13</sup> very ill, and I fear in some danger. If any accident should happen to her, she would die naked and starved. Is it true that Lord Sackville<sup>14</sup> is dead? Mrs. Walsingham's only son<sup>15</sup> is going to Naples far gone in consumption. Lord George Cavendish,<sup>16</sup> threatened with the same danger, [is] going there too. And poor Mrs. Dalrymple,<sup>17</sup> where is she? What comfort can we take for this anticipation of mortality (poor Charles Legge<sup>18</sup> too added to the list) but the dancing bloom of my sweet Richard, and the joyous birth of the Marquis of Hartington,<sup>19</sup> equally important to their families, tho' not equally important to the world.

The story of the Cardinal de Rohan<sup>90</sup> exhibits the only instance that emblots the felicity of France; and in these times it is rare, but seems in none to have been more extraordinary. His character and immense revenue seem to discredit the fact: it does not sound probable that he should either want jewels, or find any difficulty to purchase them. If he did, perhaps it will have some new explanation.

Mrs. Damer is a heroine of the first order: her mind is terra cotta, and she moulds it as she pleases.

I have never gone out of the limits of my island since I came to it; nor have read Freling's *quelquonque* of Mrs. Guineas.<sup>21</sup> All I know about *Guineas* at present is that I want a great many. If I hear any thing of this brighter coin, you shall know it. All possible remembrances attend you and my dear Lady,<sup>22</sup> who, to be as usual, is not as well as I wish, dating it from the last time I saw her. My best compliments attend her, and my most respectful admiration you. All sons should be carried once a day to look at you. I leave you to your virtuous task, "to rock the cradle of declining age," and assure you that I am, with true regard,

Your ever sincerely obedient faithful

E. M<sup>r</sup>: EDGCUMBE.

Dr. Drake's rough face and honest heart come here to-night or to-morrow. So hers's an epigram at last!

Dr. Drake is arrived, and presents his respects.

<sup>1</sup> I cannot suggest who this lady was.

<sup>2</sup> <sup>2</sup> The Hon. Richard Edgcumbe, Viscount Edgcumbe's eldest son, had just returned from making the Grand Tour, or at any rate from visiting Florence and other cities in Italy. With him had gone as his bear-leader or travelling tutor, an indispensable article in a young nobleman's baggage in the 18th century, M. de Soynes. Of this latter gentleman and of the writer's general acquaintance with the Edgcumbe family Horace Walpole, writing to Sir Horace Mann from Strawberry Hill on August 4th, 1784, gives the following account:—"I have been writing to you this morning; but you will not receive my letter immediately. It is to recommend Lord Mount Edgcumbe's only son, who is on his travels. The grandfather was my father's most intimate friend, and the late Lord a friend of mine; and with the present I have been much acquainted from a boy. Consequently I should wish you to be kind to the son, even if you were not always disposed to be so. But I have been so unlucky in my protégés, and your goodness has been so thrown away upon them, that I desire no work of supererogation on my account. The son of an English peer, whose father has a considerable office, is entitled to attentions enough; but, after Mr. Windham, I will never trust any man with particular credentials, nor will expose you to rudeness by beseeching you to fling your pearls before swine. I even restrain myself from recommending the gentleman who travels with Mr. Edgcumbe; though I think him a sensible, prudent young man. I did recommend him to Lord Mount Edgcumbe. He is a youngish French Protestant, of a very good gentleman's family; and left the service on, I believe, an affair of honour. He was addressed to the

Duke of Richmond and to me by the Prince de Bauffremont, in the strongest terms imaginable. He passed three years in this country in a manner that fully justified his character. He speaks and writes English well; his name is De Soynes. It was not in my power to serve him but in the manner I did; and he gives great satisfaction in his present situation. As the Mentor is so much a gentleman, I hope the Telemachus will give you no trouble. But, were it Minerva herself, I prefer your peace; and therefore pray lay yourself out in no attentions beyond what you find received with 'reciprocity.'"

\* "Monsieur Pinto was the Portuguese Ambassador. So I judge by a letter from Lady Jerningham (Mary Plowden), who, writing to her daughter-in-law, the Hon. Lady Jerningham, in August, 1774, says, "We are going to dinner at Mrs. Howard's, who has also invited M. Catinelar. After dinner I am to be presented to M<sup>de</sup> Pinto, the new Portuguese Embassadrice." Horace Walpole, writing to the Countess of Upper Ossory from Strawberry Hill, on August 24th, 1777, says:—"Madame Pinto came to see my house t'other day, and told me in Portuguese French that '*poutêtre* she detoured me from making des petite vers.' I hate to have a scrap of reputation, and had rather anybody thought I could not write my name; unless all Dame Pinto's had the simplicity of Balzac's neighbour, who assured him he had a profound respect for him and messieurs ses livres. I wonder how a real genius supports the absurd compliments he must meet with. I know, when they tumble down to my sphere, they make me sweat."

• The third son of King George III., subsequently Duke of Clarence (1789) and King William IV. (1830). He had lately returned to England after travelling for nearly two years in Germany and Italy, and was at the time a lieutenant in the *Hebe*.

† "Jass" seems to be nautical slang for a regatta or naval review; but the origin of the word I am unable to discover.

• Who "La Jeunesse" was I cannot discover. Earl Harcourt alludes to the lady in his 14th letter, styling her "La Jeunesse," "La Belle la Jeunesse," and "M.Y." All that can be gathered about her is that she was young and pretty, and one of Edward Jerningham's many flames, and that she appeared in some production of Robert Jephson's tragedy "The Count of Narbonne." See notes 2, 3, and 4 to the Earl's 14th letter.

• "Mary Granville was born May 14th, 1700, the daughter of Bernard Granville and the niece of George Granville, Lord Lansdowne. In 1718 she was forced by her uncle into marriage with Alexander Pendarves of Roscrow, near Falmouth, who was nearly sixty and died seven years later. Subsequently she was for several years *affaires* with Lord Baltimore. Eventually, however, she refused him, and in 1748 married Swift's friend, Dr. Delany, who died in 1768. From 1774 to 1784 she practised her art of "paper mosaic," of which she produced nearly a thousand specimens, one of which she presented to Queen Charlotte. In her last years she was friendly with Fanny Burney, whom she introduced to the King and Queen and got appointed to a place in the Household. Her great friend, however, was the Duchess of Portland, the wife of the 2nd Duke, Lady Margaret Cavendish Harley, only daughter and heiress of Edward, 2nd Earl of Oxford, the lady apostrophised by Prior as "My noble lovely little Peggy." Mrs. Delany passed the summers at Bulstrode, the Duke's country seat, and the winters in her own house in Thatched House Court and afterwards in St. James's Place. On the death of the Duchess (July 17th, 1785; *Burke* gives it July 7th) the King gave Mrs. Delany a house in Windsor and a pension of £300 a year. She died on April 18th, 1788, leaving six volumes of autobiography and correspondence, which Lady Llanover edited.

<sup>11</sup> Edward Jerningham's mother, Lady Jerningham, who lived with the poet in Grosvenor Square.

<sup>12</sup> Agmondesham Vesey had died early in June, 1765, making very inadequate provision for Mrs. Vesey. His nephew and heir, however, behaved to her with great kindness and liberality.

<sup>13</sup> Mrs. Handcock was the sister of Mrs. Vesey's first husband, William Handcock, of Willsbrook, Westmeath, M.P. for Fore. She lived with Mrs. Vesey, and managed her house, dying in February, 1789, by which time her sister-in-law was bereft of her faculties. For an account of Mrs. Vesey see Note 1 to Horace Walpole's second letter.

<sup>14</sup> Viscount Sackville, better known as Lord George Sackville or Lord George Germain, was born in 1716, and died on August 26th, 1785. The third and youngest son of the first Duke of Dorset, he held many important commands in the Army. On May 11th, 1745, he distinguished himself at the Battle of Fontenoy. From 1751 to 1756 he was Chief Secretary to his father, the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland. In 1758, having sat on the court-martial which tried Sir John Mordaunt for the part he took in the unsuccessful Rochefort Expedition of 1757, he took part in an equally unsuccessful descent on the French coast off St. Malo. On August 1st, 1759, he was in command of the British horse and foot at the Battle of Minden, and refused to obey the orders of the commander-in-chief, Prince Ferdinand of Brunswick, to dispatch his cavalry in pursuit of the French. For this refusal he was court-martialled in 1760, and sentence having been pronounced against him, was dismissed from the Army, and removed from the Privy Council by King George II. King George III., however, restored him to the Council in 1768, and on the fall of Lord North's Ministry, in which he had been Secretary to the Colonies from 1776 to 1782, created him a Viscount. Viscount Sackville was uncle to the notorious 3rd Duke of Dorset.

<sup>15</sup> This was Richard Boyle Walsingham, only son of Robert Boyle Walsingham (fifth son of the 1st Earl of Shannon) by Charlotte, second daughter of Sir Charles Hanbury Williams, K.B. He was born in 1762 and died unmarried in 1788. Writing to the Earl of Strafford from Strawberry Hill on Sept. 7th, 1784, Horace Walpole thus alludes to him, "Mrs. Walsingham was at Mrs. Garrick's with her son and daughter. He is a very pleasing young man; a fine figure; his face like hers, with something of his grandfather, Sir Charles Williams, without his vanity: very sensible and uncommonly well bred."

<sup>16</sup> This was Lord George Augustus Henry Cavendish (third son of William 4th Duke of Devonshire) who, so far from dying of consumption, was created Earl of Burlington as late as Sept. 10th, 1831.

<sup>17</sup> This Mrs. Dalrymple was probably one of Edward Jerningham's women correspondents. Under her maiden name of M. D. Harland a Mrs. Dalrymple wrote several letters to the poet in 1782 and 1783. In August or September of the latter year Miss Harland married a Mr. Dalrymple; and no letter of hers written to Edward Jerningham is extant subsequent to that of September 26th, 1783, in which she announces that she is about to be "presented" and signs herself for the first time "M. D. Dalrymple." She mentions Lady Mount Edgcombe as an acquaintance in one of her letters; and her father, judged from what she says of him, seems to have been Admiral Sir Robert Harland, Bart., one of Keppell's captains, and to have been holding at this time some position at the Admiralty. Whether Mr. Dalrymple, her husband, was connected with the Dalrymples, Barons, or with the Dalrymples, Earls of Stair, I cannot determine.

<sup>18</sup> Some relation presumably of the 2nd Earl of Dartmouth.

<sup>19</sup> A son of Georgina, Duchess of Devonshire, who died young.

<sup>20</sup> See Note 1 on Horace Walpole's 4th letter.

<sup>21</sup> I can find nothing about *Fréling*. No such name occurs in the Catalogue of the British Museum Library; and none of the *Frélings* mentioned there is likely to be the person alluded to.

<sup>22</sup> Lady Jerningham died about a fortnight after the Countess made these solicitous inquiries after her, and penned the subsequent eloquent eulogium on her son Edward.

## 3

Mount Edgcombe, November 7th, 1789.

DEAR POET OF THE MOUNT,

It seemed to me an age since I had had the satisfaction to hear from your higher regions. The long intervals which generally keep the longing mind in waiting reward it at last; for the stream, when it flows, is as pleasant as it is bountiful. Of this I had a testimony last post, for which I beg to thank you, and am really obliged not only for all the kind things you express towards me, but for all the interesting ones you acquaint me with on the subject of the great distracted country, which all must have admired, and now must pity. Whatever may have been their national crimes, very heavy judgments are now inflicted on them; and one cannot look at the sword of vengeance but with horror. The individual makes one's heart bleed. For all I am extremely concerned, and to as many as I have any fortune will certainly pay my small mite of commiseration and respect. I beg particularly to inquire after one to whom I have every obligation of hospitality, civility and friendship. Nothing could express them all in word and deed to us all more than Mad<sup>e</sup> de Rouchvalle.<sup>1</sup> And, if she and her daughter, Mad<sup>e</sup> de Cassellas<sup>2</sup> are really in England, I should take it as a particular favour if you would immediately take one of your agreeable folios and scrawl just three lines to let me know their direction and when they are to be found, that I may not lose a moment to explain to them that only because I am at a distance they do not find me their lacquey-de-place in London, which, when I come, I am sure I am bound to be. If there is any mode of paying any mark of respect to the Duchesse d'Orleans,<sup>3</sup> who the papers say is coming, I will be one of the first, from real admiration of her virtues and as deference to her rank. I hope, for the comfort of all these right noble fugitives, the Chevalier Jerningham will pass the winter at least in London; for, as it will neither suit their taste nor their situation in banishment to go into our crowds, which is all we understand to offer to any body, a small society of their only friends, of such as can pity and soothe them, will be very important to their comfort. I do not despair of making the Chevalier to lament before he



goes to his delightful distant abode our mortification not to have had the honour and pleasure of seeing him here. You must repair your own share of the loss; or I shall think the present Lord Chesterfield<sup>4</sup> has corrupted you more than the late did those who followed his maxims. His manners all should copy; and I cannot say as much of the present. Indeed his Lordship cannot blot our consciences; tho' he blots the only page of our history worth recording. Nor has the mischief he intended us spread as far as he endeavoured it<sup>5</sup> should; for all these are as kind to us as ever.

I enter upon no narrative till we meet: a short sketch of the family is all I can at present give. I cannot help thinking our latter season has been much distinguished, as it has been much gratified, by Mrs. Siddons's public performances and private society. She lived here all the intermediate days of her acting, and spent three further days with us on her return from Cornwall. She is perfection of virtues, sense and talents — yet grossly avarid.<sup>6</sup> Who won't be so dull and so vulgar as not to be avarid! Our sun now draws towards its close, and our young folks make a digression to Bath, which is thought good for Lady Valletort, who has not quite recovered her strength and her looks since *the accident* of the summer.<sup>7</sup> Credo anche che quieto e'l camino che conduce a quelle Monte delicato che solo Marcanno gas. They will stay more or less as the waters agree, and set out in about a fortnight. We shall follow *pensi piano* to London, and by this motion of theirs, rather sooner than the first intention. I suppose towards the middle of December you may recover your dormant title, "The Troublesome Man."<sup>8</sup> I have no great matter to say on my own subject. I have latterly had a little of the crawling lowness and want of rest that harrassed me in London, and shall not bear the embompoint and complexion of a mountain nymph as I proposed; but come as lean and weak an old woman at the beginning of the winter, as all the toils of London make many at the end of it. I intend to be very quiet, visit the sick, mingle my pity to console the noble fugitives when any claim admits me to that office, and listen to Pachierotti, the last man that can ever charm my ear again. I hope dear Lady Ailesbury will not come upon the list of charities by any contrivance of low spirits. This pity and these charities extend now to dear Brussels, where is war and tumult, but not yet ferocious barbarity as in France. Nor will [be]; because the cause is in the hands of the great, and has rulers and chiefs to manage it.

Poor Nuneham must be in affliction for Mr. Anson<sup>9</sup> and for the uncommon misfortune of poor Lady Waldegrave.<sup>10</sup>

And indeed I think Lord and Lady Aylesford <sup>11</sup> are included in them.

I do not attempt to describe to you the health, spirits, hours, and diet of his Lordship: I hope you will see and hear them all. God send he may now speak French better than he does; <sup>12</sup> for [if he don't] all our poor exiles would be frightened and go back again. I have a kind of confidence, without any foundation but my own feelings, that the K[ing] of F[rance] has soundness of heart and liberality of sentiment that will bring down upon him in time the blessings of restoration and prosperity. My trust is confined to himself.

Adieu, cher ami. Give me a word about Mad. de Rouchvalle. The more you add to it, the greater favor to

Your ever devoted.

The Lords and Lady send their kind compliments all, over to the Chevalier. Lord Belmore is at Blickling. <sup>13</sup>

<sup>1</sup> <sup>2</sup> I can discover nothing about either of these two ladies.

<sup>3</sup> Louise Marie Adelaide de Bourbon-Penthiève, daughter and heiress of the Duc de Penthiève, Grand Admiral of France, and the richest heiress of her time, was married to Louis Philippe Joseph, Duc d'Orleans in 1769. Her "virtues" seem to have consisted mainly in tolerating the notorious intrigues of her husband with the Comtesse de Buffon, the Comtesse de Genlis, and Grace Dalrymple Elliott. As *Citoyen Égalité* was living in England from October, 1789, to July, 1790, the Duchess probably came over from France with him.

<sup>4</sup> <sup>5</sup> This was the 5th Earl of Chesterfield, the cousin, godson, and heir to whom the 4th and famous Earl addressed a series of familiar letters of counsel similar to those he had written for the benefit of his natural son. He is best known as the pupil of Dr. William Dodd, author of the "Beauties of Shakespeare," a notorious clergyman who was hanged in 1777 for forging Chesterfield's name to a bond for £4,200. He was a man of bucolic tastes, interested in farming and hunting, and so got on well with King George III. He was Ambassador to Madrid from 1784 to 1787; though he never went to that city. And subsequently he was Master of the Mint, Postmaster-General, and Master of the Horse. There are portraits of him by Gainsborough and by Beechey. Fanny Burney, having met him in the course of her Court duties, declared, "he has as little good breeding as any man I ever met with," and gives several instances of his rudeness. But despite the fact that this lady mixed largely with the *émigrés*, and married one of them, I can find nothing in the "Diary and Letters of Madame D'Arblay" which corroborates the Countess's charge against the Earl of hostility to "the noble fugitives."

<sup>6</sup> The meaning of this piece of moralising is a little obscured, not only by its phrasing but by the "not" preceding the second "avarid," which, I need scarcely point out, is quite redundant, causing the Countess to say the exact opposite of what she intended to say. This is:—"Who is free from the dull and vulgar weakness of avarice!" a reflection which, thus baldly stated, is seen at once to be a ridiculously sweeping generalisation. At first I read the word to which this note is annexed as "afraid," a reading which gives no sense. But "avarid," meaning "avaricious," is a curious phrase to come across, a phrase of the Countess's own coining which has neither French nor

Latin equivalent. Possibly "avaric" is intended as an abbreviation of "avaricious," the "†" standing for "ious". This, however, I hazard as a mere surmise.

Like Garrick, Mrs. Siddons seems to have been fond of money, and to have been very close and stingy in disbursing it. At any rate popular report credited her with this kind of meanness. The testimony which the Countess of Mount Edgcombe bears to this weakness on the part of the great actress is the more telling because it is the testimony given (unwillingly, perhaps, but on the other hand not on oath) by hostess to guest. Nearly four years previously, on December 6th, 1784, when the great tragédienne was only twenty-nine, Gillray had pilloried her for avarice in a cartoon in which he represents her in profile, as Melpomene. One ample pocket is bursting with banknotes, the other is overflowing with sovereigns; while the actress grasps with outstretched hand a purse held out on the tip of a pitchfork. Meantime the dagger and the goblet, the familiar emblems of tragic passion, are quite disregarded, and the Temple of Fame is collapsing.

\* Probably this "accident" was a miscarriage. Lady Valetort had one in 1790. Horace Walpole, writing to Mary Berry from Strawberry Hill on July 17th, 1790, remarks:—"Lady Valetort was brought to bed of a dead daughter yesterday; but Lady Mount Edgcombe is more likely to die of the miscarriage than she." Again, writing from the same place, and to the same lady, he says on July 28th, 1791:—"I heard nothing at my dinner. But I have since been at Richmond, and heard that Lady Valetort is brought to bed of a daughter. So this time Lady Mount will cry with but one eye."

The Earl and Countess seem greatly to have desired grandchildren; and the Viscount and Viscountess seem to have done their best to gratify this desire. So at least I gather from the letter which Horace Walpole wrote to the Countess on November 26th, 1794, on the occasion of the birth of her grandson, William Richard Edgcombe. A letter in which he rather rebukes the lady for her impatience. He says:—"Did I not scold you black and blue, Madam, on your despair on the first mishap? Did not I tell you that you would have a flock of grandchildren? Would you have them all at once like the Flemish Countess, three hundred and sixty-five at a birth? I believe, from the rapidity of his proceedings, that Viscount Valetort, to punish you, intends that you shall grandamiss two or three dozen. . . . Pray, my good madam, dote on Lord and Lady Valetort, who have humoured you to your heart's content in your own way; though few young couples, that had been married four or five years, would have taken such unrelaxed pains to indulge a mother's fancy."

\* This seems to have been a title which the Countess bestowed upon Edward Jerningham in consideration of the fact that he was not easily to be persuaded into making a long country visit or into accepting an invitation to dinner in London.

\* George, Lord Anson (1697-1762), Admiral of the Fleet, who circumnavigated the globe, and as first Lord of the Admiralty gave Byng his command and sent out the abortive expeditions to Rochefort and to St. Malo in 1757 and 1758 respectively, left no issue, his property going to his sister, Janetta, the wife of Mr. Sambrooke Adams, and eventually to his nephew George, the son of this marriage. George Adams also inherited the estates of Shugborough from another uncle, Thomas Anson, and on April 30th, 1773, assumed the surname and arms of Anson. Born in 1731, he married on January 5th, 1768 Mary, daughter of George Venables Vernon, 1st Lord Vernon (by his first wife, Mary, daughter of Thomas, 6th Lord Howard of Effingham) and half

sister to Elizabeth, who on September 25th, 1765, married her cousin George Simon, 2nd Earl Harcourt. George Anson died in 1780. His eldest son Thomas (1767-1818) married on September 15th, 1794, Anne Margaret, second daughter of Thomas William Coke of Holkham Hall, the celebrated Whig and agriculturist (1754-1842) who was created Earl of Leicester on August 12th, 1837. He was created Viscount Anson on February 7th, 1806; but I am quite unable to say why his father's sister-in-law, Countess Harcourt, must have been "in affliction" for him in November, 1789. His eldest son, Thomas William (1795-1854) succeeded his father in 1818 as 2nd Viscount Anson, and was created Earl of Lichfield on September 15th, 1831.

<sup>10</sup> Lady Waldegrave was the Lady Elizabeth Laura Waldegrave, eldest daughter of James 2nd Earl Waldegrave, by Maria, the second of Sir Edward Walpole's illegitimate daughters. On May 5th, 1782, she married her cousin George, who succeeded his father as 4th Earl Waldegrave on October 22nd, 1784. He died just five years later; and his widow gave birth to a daughter on December 2nd, 1789.

<sup>11</sup> The 4th Earl Waldegrave, who died of the jaundice, was stopping at Packington Hall, Coventry, Lord Aylesford's place, when he was attacked by the illness. He died there.

<sup>12</sup> A large number of the English aristocracy of the time were accomplished French scholars; but the Earl of Mount Edgcumbe had had little opportunity of picking up the French language, having been a sailor most of his life.

<sup>13</sup> Armar Lowry Corry, Irish M.P., born April 7th, 1740, was created Baron Belmore on January 6th, 1781, Viscount Belmore on December 6th, 1789, and Earl Belmore on November 20th, 1797. He probably came into the Countess of Mount Edgcumbe's set through his second marriage, on March 2nd, 1780, his second wife being Lady Henrietta Hobart, eldest daughter of John, 2nd Earl of Buckinghamshire, and then Lord Lieutenant of Ireland. The third daughter of the 2nd Earl of Buckinghamshire, Lady Sophia Hobart, had married Viscount Valletort on February 21st, 1789. Lord Belmore's second marriage was dissolved by Act of Parliament in 1793, the lady subsequently marrying William, 6th Marquis of Lothian. Blicling Hall, the old seat of the Hobarts, now belongs to the Lothian family.

## 4

Mount Edgcumbe, September 6th.

I do not pretend, mon cher ami, to answer your two kind and agreeable letters, or to write anything worthy the name of letter myself; but must beg leave to trouble you with a proposition which is submitted to yours and the Chevalier Jerningham's consideration. It is that, whereas this is the moment when nothing is to be seen in London but parsons,<sup>1</sup> or heard but parrots,<sup>2</sup> you would both please to know that, if you will get into a chaise and move gently towards the West, we shall be most happy to have the honor and pleasure of seeing the Chevalier Jerningham here and showing him this spott and the caverns. And you "Troublesome Man" will be most welcome also. You will find a petite société, Lady Belmore,<sup>3</sup> and nous quatre, perhaps Mrs. Siddons, shall bask upon a

South Terrace in the morning, and rest in a South Book Room at night. If this quiet wholesome system has any temptation for you, it will be a charming one to us. And pray assure the Chevalier, with our best compliments, that we venture for once to press this petite tournée, in which also he may take many places worth seeing. We shall rejoice if it can be accommodated between you, and cannot but think this dead solitude in London had better be varied<sup>4</sup> and passed<sup>5</sup> in making us happy here. I shall tell you nothing of our eventful history till I know whether we have any chance to have the pleasure of seeing you. We go to-morrow for four or five days to make our bed of duty and gratitude at Weymouth before their Majesties leave the West;<sup>6</sup> but [we] shall return on Friday, and then take a long station, any part of which will be very much improved that you and the Chevalier shall chuse to favor us with your company. We beg to present to him our best compliments. And, if he prevails with you to risk your *petito santo* in this great expedition he will add to many obligations we can never forget; and you shall find that *société* ne change pas whatever crown<sup>7</sup> it wears.

Ever obediently yours,

E. M<sup>r</sup>: EDGCUMBE.

<sup>1</sup>, <sup>2</sup> These seem to be the correct readings; but the two words are very illegible.

<sup>3</sup> Lady Belmore, as explained in the last note to Letter 3, was the elder sister of Lady Valletort.

<sup>4</sup>, <sup>5</sup> These seem to be the correct readings; but the second of the two words is unusually undecipherable.

<sup>6</sup> The King first went to Weymouth in the autumn of 1789. This letter accordingly must date either from that year (in which case it should precede Letter 8) or subsequently. It bears no date, however, and from the absence of postmark and seal, had evidently been enclosed in a packet.

<sup>7</sup> "Crown" seemingly is the correct reading; but the word is very difficult to make out.

5

Mount Edgumbe, July 9th, 1794.

What better moment can I take, my dear poet, to trouble you with my dull prose than when I am just come piping hott (apart from the weather) from seeing and admiring your old flame, Mrs. Collins.<sup>1</sup> Whose beauty, in perfect preservation, would almost persuade me that you had lately stolen a march to Plymouth to look at her; as it seems impossible that after the twenty years<sup>2</sup> which have passed (more shame for you) since you was there, she should still be a very pretty woman. But so she is; and, with a pretty gold chain about her ivory neck, and an affected lorgnette at the end of it, is still spying

about, not without real pretensions to be attended to. This certificate of her charms contains much information, which may save *me* time and paper and *you* much patience. For ergo, if I have seen Mrs. Collins, I have been at the Ball at the Long Room; if I have been where she is, I have been from home; if I have been from home, I have been well and Lord M<sup>t</sup>. E[dgcumbe] has been well. And all this being true, in this short account of your Love is contained the history of your Friend, Love and Friendship bound up together making one little interesting paragraph.

We are surrounded by an immense world; and no more in the country than if we were in the midst of a garrison. I start with guns, am deafened with drums. As to sheep and cows and the proper inhabitants of rural scenes, they may as well hold their tongues, poor things; for they cannot be heard. From hearing these martial sounds with great ideas<sup>3</sup> carried to the Continent and prests<sup>4</sup> swelled to the hope of conquest, I now listen to them only with hope of safety, collecting even from the military and all the generals that little more is to be looked to now than *Home Defence*. For which purpose I heartily wish all our fine glorious troops, in number nothing compared to these monsters, in character angels opposed to devils, were all withdrawn from the chance of being sacrificed to them, and collected to save this charming country, which still, I trust, may be protected from ruin, and have virtue enough remaining to call down mercy to save us. We dread every courier from the Continent. How all the late accounts have ballanced all our naval honours, which, while they must ever be unfading laurels to the individuals, have an impending hand directing the general purpose,<sup>5</sup> which, tho' it cannot torment<sup>6</sup> me, quite counter acts the effect; and, while ourselves are half burning our houses to celebrate our naval victory, are not the less likely to have them in turn<sup>7</sup> burnt by our enemies.

This black picture of public history has a *pendant* in the private ones. Think of Lady Clarges, Lady Waldegrave, Mrs. Hervey, worst of all poor Lady Tankerville, where misery has even more of horror in than death itself. Poor Lady Clarges' son<sup>8</sup> died a little hero, Mrs. Hervey's husband<sup>9</sup> the same. Lady Waldegrave's misfortune<sup>10</sup> has no glory in it to offer her a little comfort; but Lady Tankerville's<sup>11</sup> is all horror. She had her share of accident to one dear son<sup>12</sup> and of anxiety for another,<sup>13</sup> now upon the dread continent, before. This week, beyond both, came death (probably), to be accounted for by her husband in the most solemn exhibition,<sup>14</sup> and the suspected character of her daughter,<sup>15</sup> to agonise her heart; herself a most excellent woman, and therefore the more shocked. I saw

her, poor creature, the evening before she left her poor mutilated son to set out, she said unexpectedly, on her return to London; but I really believe at that time [she] did not know the extent of her misery. We have a prodigious number of various kinds to attend to. The spirit is willing; and our health, thank God, is equal to it.

Our young are all well, and the infants, dear souls, quite perfection. They have been showing all their airs to the King and Queen,<sup>16</sup> who honoured them with their notice. Missy<sup>17</sup> made a low curtesey to the Queen, and said "Ta, Ma'am," and to the King "How do, Majesty." Little Car<sup>18</sup> insisted upon Prince Ernest's<sup>19</sup> shaking her by the hand. If I am come to gossip, like Old Mother Goose, it is time to end.

Adieu then, my good friend. Accept our loves. Give my compliments to the Chevalier, and tell him I have a letter from Miss Carter<sup>20</sup> full of inquiry after him. She has the *maladie du pais* upon her, and means to come home, whether the Palmerstons<sup>21</sup> do or not. But how or which way is she to come, every country surrounded with these monsters?

Pray set forth and begin to write; and be assured it will never be labour in vain. While I can read I shall very soon look for a folio, and find none in the library so welcome to

Your faithful and obedient.

E. M<sup>r</sup>: EDGCUMBE.

Admiral Cornwallis's fleet<sup>22</sup> is in our sight. I am in hopes of having the pleasure to see him, and shall not fail to acquaint Mrs. Cornwallis;<sup>23</sup> to whom, if she is still broiling in London, my kindest compliments.

<sup>1</sup> I can discover nothing about this lady.

<sup>2</sup> Are we to understand that Edward Jerningham (in 1794) had not been to Mount Edgcombe for twenty years? Or does the Countess merely mean that he had not visited Plymouth for that time? He had certainly been stopping at Mount Edgcombe in 1777; for he addresses a letter, written to Sir William Jerningham, Bart., his brother, "Mount Edgcomb, September 18th, 1777."

<sup>3</sup> "Ideas" seems to be the word written by the Countess; but, I confess, it gives very little sense.

<sup>4</sup> "Prests" seems to be the word written by the Countess. It would signify men who have received press money, and so are *prest* or ready to perform military service. But "prests" is probably a wrong interpretation of what the lady wrote.

<sup>5</sup> What this sentence exactly means I cannot imagine.

<sup>6</sup> "Torment" seems to be the word written by the Countess; but, I confess it scarcely gives the sense required.

<sup>7</sup> "In turn" is the best interpretation I can give of these two words.

<sup>8</sup> A young baronet named Sir Thomas Clarges is mentioned several times in the "Diary and Letters of Madame D'Arblay." He was M.P. for Lincoln, a great friend of Gasparo Pacchierotti (1744-1821), the famous Italian singer,

and died prematurely on December 23rd, 1782. His wife, Lady Clarges, who also died prematurely, was one of Susan Burney's greatest friends.

<sup>9</sup> I cannot identify this Mrs. Hervey; nor can I find anything relating to her husband.

<sup>10</sup> Lady Waldegrave's eldest son George, 5th Earl Waldegrave, born July 12th, 1784, was drowned in the Thames near Eton on June 25th, 1794.

<sup>11 to 15</sup> I cannot understand these references. Charles, 4th Earl of Tankerville, born November 15th, 1743, married on October 7th, 1771, Emma, youngest daughter of Sir James Colebrooke, Bart., who died on November 20th, 1836. The Earl died on December 10th, 1822. They had eight children, three sons and five daughters. Charles Augustus, the eldest son, succeeded his father as 5th Earl and died on June 25th, 1859. Henry Grey, the second son, died on May 29th, 1836. John Astley, the third son, was a Captain in the Navy and died on September 14th, 1812. The only event that happened to the Tankerville family in 1795, so far as I can discover, was the marriage, on June 23rd, 1795, of the eldest daughter, Lady Caroline Bennet, to Sir John Wrottesley, Bart., born October 25th, 1771. Lady Wrottesley died on March 7th, 1818; and in 1819 Sir John (created Baron Wrottesley in 1838) married the widow of his brother-in-law, Captain John Astley Bennet, Julia, daughter of John Conyers, of Copt Hall, Essex. Sir John served with the 16th Lancers in Holland and France during the Revolutionary War under the Duke of York, and was M.P. first for Lichfield and then for the county of Staffordshire. He was a practical and enterprising farmer, and died on March 16th, 1841.

<sup>16</sup> In June, 1789, King George III., just recovered from his attack of insanity, spent several weeks at Weymouth; and in subsequent years he and Queen Charlotte always passed some weeks of the summer there, having the household necessaries sent from Windsor in order to avoid paying the high prices charged at the watering-place.

<sup>17</sup> This was Viscount Valletort's eldest daughter, Emma Sophia, who married on July 24th, 1828, John, 1st Earl Brownlow, and died on January 28th, 1872.

<sup>18</sup> This was the Viscount's second daughter, Caroline, who married on February 13th, 1812, Reginald George Macdonald, chief of Clanronald, and died on April 10th, 1824.

<sup>19</sup> This was Ernest Augustus, fifth son of King George III. and of Queen Charlotte, subsequently Duke of Cumberland (1799) and first King of Hanover (1837). On the night of May 31st, 1810, the Duke's valet Sellis, a Piedmontese, was found dead in his bed with his throat cut from ear to ear. On the same night the Duke was said to have been roused from sleep by being attacked in bed by some person armed with a sword. He is also said to have fled from the bedroom pursued by this person, and to have received from him six distinct wounds. But whether the Duke murdered Sellis or whether Sellis attempted to murder the Duke is a disputed point. The coroner's inquest that sat on the body of Sellis, after debating four hours, returned a verdict of *felo de se*. Two of the wounds which the Duke received were rather terrible; one almost severed one of his little fingers, another, upon the forehead, towards the top of the head, would have been mortal, it is said, had not the assailant's weapon struck against the Duke's sword.

<sup>20</sup> Who this Miss Carter, friend of the Palmerstons, was I cannot discover. In one of Miss Harland's letters to Edward Jerningham, Miss Carter is mentioned as a friend of Lord Palmerston's; and the writer expresses some curiosity as to how this friend will look on the widower peer's second



marriage. Miss Carter can hardly be Miss Elizabeth Carter (1717-1806), the poet, translator of Epictetus, and friend of Johnson; for she was twenty-two years older than Lord Palmerston, and seems to have paid no visit to the Continent after 1782, when she accompanied Miss Pulteney to Paris. On the other hand, Elizabeth Carter knew Horace Walpole, one of whose friends was the 2nd Viscount Palmerston.

Possibly this Miss Carter may be the lady who wrote the following letter, unaddressed and undated, to Edward Jerningham :-

"I cannot suffer the temples of my head to take their rest without thanking you most kindly for the favor you granted me in seeing the house, which is charming and would answer in every respect, if we can afford it. I shall pick the bone you so kindly offer. My premier pas in the world has been to Lady Salisbury's, where there was the World, his wife and children. There is nothing like making yourself scarce: *Lady Derby* could not have had a more gracious accueil.\* Adieu. 'Tis morn, and the cocks crowing. I shall see you, I hope, to-morrow (that is Tuesday) night.

"Yours sincerely.

"M. CARTER."

<sup>1</sup> The Palmerstons were Henry Temple, 2nd Viscount, born December 4th, 1739, and his second wife, Mary, sister of Benjamin Mee, Director of the Bank of England, whom he had married at Bath on January 5th, 1783. He died on April 17th, 1802, she on February 8th, 1805. They were the parents of Henry John Temple, the 3rd Viscount and the famous statesman and Prime Minister. The 2nd Viscount (an Irish peer) sat in the English House of Commons for East Loos and Boro-bridge, wrote some rather decent verse, and was on the Board of Admiralty from 1766 to 1777. In 1782 he was proposed as member of The Club, and rejected against Dr. Johnson's advice; but he was subsequently elected. He was related collaterally to William Pitt the Elder, and was the grandson of Sir John Temple, younger brother of the famous Sir William Temple, the statesman who patronised Swift. Writing to the Rev. William Mason from Strawberry Hill on April 17th, 1778, Horace Walpole says:—"There is a pretty poem just published called 'The Wreath of Fashion': it is written by one Tickell, a [grand] son of Addison's friend. . . . 'The Wreath' is a satire on sentimental poets . . . ; but there is a great deal of wit, par cy, par la . . . . Tickell says Lord Palmerston *finers* (what an admirable word!) rebus's and charades with chips of poetry; and, when Lord of the Admiralty, like Ariel, wrecked navies with a song. Sure that is an excellent application!"

<sup>2</sup> William Cornwallis (1744-1819), fourth son of Charles, 5th Baron and 1st Earl Cornwallis, had been advanced to be Vice-Admiral on July 4th, 1794. On February 14th, 1799, he was made Admiral. In 1819 he was nominated Grand Cross of the Bath. He was brother of Charles Cornwallis, the 2nd Earl and 1st Marquis, who won fame as General in the American Revolutionary War and as Governor-General of India.

<sup>3</sup> I can discover nothing about this lady, presumably the wife of Admiral Cornwallis. In Burke's "Dormant and Extinct Peerages" no mention is made of the Admiral's marriage. Nor is it alluded to in the life of the Admiral contributed to "The Dictionary of National Biography."

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\* "accueil," i.e. "reception."

Mount Edgcumbe, September 20th [1794].

One would think your charming long kind letter was thrown away upon me, I have been so long without acknowledging it and laying in some small claim for another. Oh, no, my dear friend, that is not the case. It was welcome and pleasant, as all are that you bestow upon me; but my gossiping vagabond life does not allow me to gratify the sober delight of devoting myself, as I would often wish to do, to my absent friends. This gossiping and gadding however has in it consolations which belong not to them when they are merely moves: <sup>1</sup> they are then a duty, and, luckily for us, contain so much more agreeable in them than a <sup>2</sup> that we have reason to be thankful for our campaign. For, as the number and the obligation must always have been the same, the nature and kind are our particular good fortune. All the service we poor old folks can do our country is to honor those who nobly and gallantly offer up all the splendours of their sumptuous situation and the luxuries of their palaces to defend it. And, while a Duke of Beaufort <sup>3</sup> is blowing about in a tent, and a Lord Uxbridge <sup>4</sup> [is] crammed into a low damp barrack, is it not delight as well as duty to offer them every possible respect? These two in particular, however, have been so long absent that we have had the honor to see them less than many others, Lord and Lady Worcester, <sup>5</sup> Lady Charlotte <sup>6</sup> and Mr. <sup>7</sup>, Mr. St. Leger, <sup>8</sup> &c. Our staff and stay is the delightful family of Lennox. <sup>9</sup> Scarce a day passes without some communication; and many happy ones are spent together, both there and at Government House, which are not so far asunder as Richmond Hill and Mr. Cambridge <sup>10</sup> by a great deal.

We have had one subject of great anxiety to us all; and that was the very dangerous illness of Lord Bagot's eldest son, <sup>11</sup> an amiable young man just of age. A fever of 21 days left little hope of his recovery; but the very great skill and unremitting attention day and night of our excellent Dr. Geach <sup>12</sup> (whom you honor with your remembrance) restored him quite miraculously after having himself believed him dead. His convalescence was divided between this place and Mrs. Heywood's <sup>13</sup>; and, thank God, we two old women have nursed him up and sent him away in perfect health as well as strength to his family in Staffordshire.

Government House also has its share in every act of kindness: it is the asylum of the well and the sick, the living and the dead. Witness poor Lady Clarges' son. Lady Louisa <sup>14</sup> is a charming creature, as lively and clever as she is good and

benevolent. Lord George<sup>15</sup> I hold to be the best and noblest of men. And their daughter<sup>16</sup> the most charming of women. Think then what such a society is, brought so near, and there certain to remain as long as the War does.

Who shall tell how long that will be? when and where and how it can end? It can no longer be detailed, but must be given up as one great huge miracle beyond our comprehension. It seems to be grown indeed beyond the reach of human skill, and can be looked at only with awe and reverence, and waited for with patience and submission. What we used to call great events, such as royal marriages, new models, ministries &c., are such pigmies now that they are scarce discernible; because, while it is uncertain how long there shall be a *Prince*, what signifies it what he does?

If all was peace and security I should think a connection broken,<sup>17</sup> which never could avail to any good, and one made,<sup>18</sup> which may produce a good deal, might be considered as a national felicity. Will your friend *the Lucretia*,<sup>19</sup> by her virtue, gain any situation in the new establishment? I cannot but believe the former connection was ratified by the Communion Office of both Churches<sup>20</sup>; but the law disallowing it,<sup>21</sup> certainly while she is satisfied,<sup>22</sup> he is free. That angel, the Duchess of York,<sup>23</sup> has received the news with the good sense that governs her in all things. She is to be pitied, not so much for this disappointment of every possible object of ambition, as for the pains she must feel in all her filial and conjugal attachments, a father<sup>24</sup> not honored, a husband going through dangers without chance of glory, and bounded to a second station after looking, I dare say, to the first. Yet still she is steady and resigned.

I conclude you have left the desert of Green Street, and wandered at least to our friends at Nuneham and Park Place, whither Lady Cecilia is at present gone, and which I hear now is perfect and charming.—It is a very extraordinary business that Lord E[dgcumbe] should be grown ten years younger just when his health and strength are most wanted, and that we two old<sup>25</sup> should be so sturdy at the moment we could most wish it, and when the devotion of ourselves and of our place is, I hope, some relief to many.<sup>26</sup>—I trust you admired the dear Misses<sup>27</sup> when you was good as to visit the Casino,<sup>28</sup> and that they were as civil to you as they were to the King.<sup>29</sup>—Is it true that our Princess Sophia<sup>30</sup> is to marry her cousin, Prince Ernest—I wish you was with us in our warm South Library, and added one to the small comfortable partie which often meet there.—Soon shall we all have our happiness restored by the return of Miss Carter. Richard may watch her from his new house, as Lord E[dgcumbe] does Lady Louisa.

I trust we shall have her for life.—Your poor unhappy neighbour from Edgware Road<sup>81</sup> is now at Abergavenny in Wales *with her domestic chaplain.*<sup>82</sup> What a dismal latter end has she made for herself!

Adieu, my dear poet. If from your kind<sup>83</sup> *boudoir* you will deign to think once more of me, it will be as generous as it will be kind. And I hope you know that I can always feel, tho' I may not always express my feelings, and that they are always full of esteem and gratitude to you.—Lord M! E[dgcumbe] sends you a thousand loves. I am ever faithfully and obediently yours,

E. M! EDGCUMBE.

<sup>1</sup> "Moves" seems to be the correct reading of the word so interpreted; but it is impossible to be certain on the point.

<sup>2</sup> The word missing I cannot make out, not so much because it is undecipherable as because I cannot convert the combination of letters of which it is composed into any known English word.

<sup>3</sup> This was the 5th Duke of Beaufort, who, born on October 16th, 1744, succeeded his father on October 28th, 1756, and died on October 11th, 1803. He married on January 2nd, 1766, Elizabeth, daughter of Admiral the Hon. Edward Boscawen.

<sup>4</sup> This was Henry Bayly, 9th Baron Paget and 1st Earl of Uxbridge. He was born on June 18th, 1744, and succeeded his father as 3rd baronet in 1782, having been summoned to Parliament on January 18th, 1770, as 9th Baron Paget. He was advanced to the Earldom of Uxbridge on April 19th, 1784.

<sup>5</sup> This was the Duke of Beaufort's son and heir, Henry Charles, Marquis of Worcester, born on December 22nd, 1766. He married on May 16th, 1791, Charlotte Sophia, daughter of Granville, 1st Marquess of Stafford. He died on November 23rd, 1835, having succeeded his father on October 11th, 1803. She died on August 12th, 1854.

<sup>6</sup> I cannot identify Lady Charlotte.

<sup>7</sup> The name missing is one I cannot decipher.

<sup>8</sup> I cannot identify this St. Leger.

<sup>9</sup> That is the family of the 3rd Duke of Richmond. The Duke, the great advocate and subsequently the great opponent of Parliamentary Reform, was born on February 22nd, 1736, and succeeded his father on August 8th, 1750. He married on April 1st, 1757, Mary, youngest daughter of Charles, 4th Earl of Elgin and 3rd Earl of Ailesbury, and died without issue on December 29th, 1806. The Duchess, half sister to Mrs. Damer, died on November 5th, 1796. The Duke was Master of the Ordnance in the Marquis of Rockingham's second administration, that of 1782, and continued to hold this office when Lord Shelburne became Prime Minister, resigning it on April 3rd, 1783. He resumed it on the accession of Pitt to power in December, 1783, and continued to hold it till February, 1795. As Master of the Ordnance he would be frequently at Plymouth, his duties being largely concerned with the fortification of Plymouth and of Portsmouth.

<sup>10</sup> Richard Owen Cambridge (1717-1802), the poet, author of "The Scribleriad," was one of Edward Jerningham's correspondents. He was a wealthy man of literary tastes, who from 1751 till his death lived at a villa at Twickenham, where he was fond of entertaining contemporary celebrities.

<sup>11</sup> William, 2nd Baron Bagot, was born on September 11th, 1773, and married, first, on May 30th, 1799, Hon. Emily Fitzroy, 4th daughter of Charles, 1st Lord Southampton. She brought him a daughter, who died in infancy, and died June, 1800. He married, secondly, on February 17th, 1807, Lady Louisa Legge, eldest daughter of George, 3rd Earl of Dartmouth, K.G., by whom he had the 3rd Baron and other children. He died on February 12th, 1866.

<sup>12</sup> I cannot discover anything about Dr. Geach.

<sup>13</sup> I cannot discover anything about this Mrs. Heywood.

<sup>14</sup> <sup>15</sup> Lord George Henry Lennox, brother of the 3rd Duke of Richmond, was born on November 29th, 1737. He saw a good deal of service in the army, becoming ensign in 1754 and full general in 1793. He was for several years Governor of Plymouth. He married, in 1758, Lady Louisa Kerr, daughter of William Henry, 4th Marquis of Lothian, and died at Stoke, near Plymouth, on March 22nd, 1805. He had three daughters. Maria Louisa died in July, 1843. Emilia Charlotte married in 1784 the Hon. Sir George Cranfield Berkeley, G.O.B., and died on October 19th, 1832. Georgina married, in 1789, Henry, 3rd Earl Bathurst, and died in January, 1841. His son, Colonel Charles Lennox, who succeeded his uncle in 1806 as 4th Duke of Richmond, is mainly famous for the duel which he fought with the Duke of York on May 26th, 1789, a duel which induced Gillray to pillory the Colonel as a coward:

<sup>16</sup> To which of the three daughters the Countess is referring is not clear.

<sup>17</sup> <sup>18</sup> The Prince of Wales (the future King George IV.), who had married Mrs. Fitzherbert on December 21st, 1785, when she was 29 and he 23, agreed in August, 1794, to give up Mrs. Fitzherbert and to marry Princess Caroline of Brunswick. At this time he was completely under the influence of his mistress, the Countess of Jersey.

<sup>19</sup> This is probably a malicious allusion to the Countess of Jersey, who actually was thrust upon Princess Caroline as her principal lady-in-waiting.

<sup>20</sup> It was.

<sup>21</sup> The law disallowed it in a double sense. By the Act of Settlement an heir-apparent to the throne who married a Roman Catholic forfeited his right to the Crown; while by the Royal Marriage Act of 1772, which Charles James Fox so strenuously opposed, every marriage contracted without the King's consent by a member of the Royal Family, who was under twenty-five years of age, was made invalid.

<sup>22</sup> To say that Mrs. Fitzherbert was "satisfied" with the Prince of Wales's marriage to Princess Caroline is a quaint way of expressing the first wife's resignation to the inevitable.

<sup>23</sup> Frederick Augustus, Duke of York and Albany, second son of King George III., married at Berlin, on September 29th, 1791, and at the Queen's house, London, on November 23rd, Princess Frederica Charlotte Ulrica Catherina, eldest daughter of Frederic William II., King of Prussia. The Princess was a pretty young woman with a pretty, small foot, and was popular in London society, being treated respectfully even by Gillray. But husband and wife soon separated, the Duchess retiring to Oatlands Park, Weybridge, Surrey, where she died on August 6th, 1820.

<sup>24</sup> This is certainly a fair criticism of Frederick the Great's nephew and successor.

<sup>25</sup> The word missing I cannot decipher in the holograph.

<sup>26</sup> But the Earl died about five months later, on February 4th, 1795.

<sup>27</sup>, <sup>28</sup>, <sup>29</sup>. I can throw no light on these allusions.

<sup>20</sup> The Princess Sophia was the youngest but one of King George III.'s six daughters. She was born on November 3rd, 1777, and died unmarried on May 27th, 1848.

<sup>21</sup> <sup>22</sup> I cannot elucidate these references.

<sup>22</sup> "Kind" seems to give little sense; but it is, so far as I can make out, the word written by the Countess.

## 7

Thursday.

You are very kind to supply in the best, tho' an unequal, manner, the loss of our scientific connection.<sup>1</sup> I should propose an immediate renewal of it, with all the luxuries of broiled legs, toasted biscuits, and wise lectures upon all the virtues, especially self-denial, when no indulgence will be had, if I was at all certain about my family. But not knowing from day to-day when they may come, we must for the present be somewhat more romantic, and pass rivers and bridges to catch a word,<sup>2</sup> instead of conversing with all liberty as we have done.

Your desert will soon be peopled: the royal hymeneal train<sup>3</sup> will bring many upon duty and more from curiosity. I suppose even us old courtiers must collect, whenever any occasion is announced of paying our duty. I foresee an eventful winter; and I foresee much which I will not tell. But, if my prognostics<sup>4</sup> are realised, I will study the arts and graces of an oracle, and stand upon a pivot, where you shall come and bow to me for the rest of my life. Lady William<sup>5</sup> has never entered upon my predictions; for I fancy it requires little skill to know it<sup>6</sup> will all end in nothing, as it did before. When, I believe, there was as little reason to suppose it ever could be any thing as then or now. All this I have heard from good authority. I am sorry for it; for it must be bad for her health,<sup>7</sup> and *cela fait parler*.

I do not think I should like Mad<sup>e</sup> de Corquy,<sup>8</sup> and still less do I think she would bear me. *Nous sommes des Antipodes*. She is Democrat; and I detest the whole clan. She is *Bel Esprit affichée*; and I should be afraid of her. She has been used to live with nothing but men, and hates women. *Enfin elle trouve<sup>9</sup> son fait* with the lady she is most connected with; and certainly nobody can less resemble her than I do. If she falls into the line I belong to, perhaps I may be known to her; but that is not likely. Our ladies here<sup>10</sup> are, as usual, well and agreeable, and assemble every evening at Lord Onslow's,<sup>11</sup> who is recovered from pain, but still weak and confined; and there we all *rendez vous*. They are all sensible of your *souvenirs*, and return you theirs.

My Lords have been living in a round of amusements, much in the style of Sir John Jollys,<sup>12</sup> about as refined and agreeable.

Lord E[dgcombe] is so well that Richard says he has not even a pretence left to say "Poor me." I don't know how after all this true "English Merryment" they will bear the quiet refinement of our petites parties. After living a fortnight with Lady B<sup>h</sup>m<sup>13</sup> and Lady Emily,<sup>14</sup> they will fancy they are got into the Whispering Gallery at St. Paul's. The Broad-Stairs story<sup>15</sup> has reached every place they have been at except Blickling. It *must* arrive there at last. Pray announce yourself before you arrive at Mr. Cambridge's; and let us see whether still a day or two may yet be found, when, my family being here perhaps only in a part, you may stop, coming or going; and let us steal a few more wise hours before you condescend to mingle with the multitude.<sup>16</sup> Adieu.

Most sincerely and obediently yours.

E. M<sup>r</sup>: EDGCUMBE.

I forgot to thank you for the account of Paris. It corresponds with [that given by] our ladies, who must now soon know what they are ever to expect. The 1st of January will decide whether the Princes shall return in peace or hostility; and that will decide for them. It is a dismal situation. God send the poyson may never be imported to us. My dear Missy is quite well, and cries for some <sup>17</sup>

1. . . . ? I can explain none of these allusions.

\* This seems quoted as a proverbial expression; but I must confess that I have never heard of such a proverb, and that I am quite unable to understand what it means.

† In the absence from the letter of any date or postmark, it is impossible to say to which of the royal marriages this allusion refers.

‡ I cannot identify this lady, unless I am to suppose that the Countess has got her name entirely wrong. In which case I should imagine her to be Madame de Créqui. Ranée Caroline de Froulay, Marquise de Créqui, was born on October 19th, 1714, the daughter of Lieut.-Général Charles François de Froulay, and married in 1737 Louis Marie, Marquis de Créqui, author of "Principes philosophiques des saintes solitaires d'Égypte," who died four years later. After her husband's death Madame de Créqui devoted herself to the care and education of her son Charles Marie, who distinguished himself more by his skill as a soldier than by his gratitude as a son. In 1755 Madame de Créqui started a salon, which was attended by D'Alembert and Rousseau; but subsequently, having got religion, even a touch of Jansenism, she lost the friendship of the former philosopher. The great friendship of her later life was that she contracted with Sénac de Meilhan, her junior by 23 years, whom she met in 1781, and materially helped by criticism and counsel. During the Terror of 1793 and 1794 she was imprisoned in the convent of Les Oiseaux. She died in Paris on February 2nd, 1803. The so-called "Souvenirs de la Marquise de Créqui," published in 1834 and 1835, are now known to be spurious, the production of a Breton adventurer called Causen.

§ "Trouve," so far as I can decide, is the word written by the Countess.

¶ I can explain neither who "our ladies" were nor where they were staying.

<sup>11</sup> Clandon Park, near Guildford, Surrey, was Lord Onslow's country seat. George, 1st Earl of Onslow (1731-1814), son of Arthur Onslow, Speaker of the House of Commons, was, as became his father's son, a great stickler, in his way, for the privileges of Parliament. He moved, for instance, the invalidation of John Wilkes's election for Middlesex in 1769. He was also a great flunkey, holding such offices at Court as Comptroller of the Household, Treasurer of the Household, Lord of the Bedchamber and Lord in Waiting. And he was not only one of "the King's friends," he was also one of the Prince of Wales's friends. He was one of the nuncios sent to summon Mrs. Fitzherbert back to England on the plea that her absence would endanger the Prince's life, and he was present at the marriage of the Prince to Mrs. Fitzherbert. "Junius" calls him "a false, silly fellow." He succeeded his cousin Richard as 4th Baron Onslow in 1776, and was created Earl of Onslow in 1801.

<sup>12</sup> I cannot discover who Sir John Jollys was.

<sup>13</sup> The allusion seems to be to Lady Buckinghamshire. This was the 2nd wife of the 2nd Earl of Buckinghamshire, who on September 24th, 1770, married Caroline, daughter of William Conolly, of Stratton Hall, co. Stafford, by Lady Anne Wentworth, his wife, daughter of Thomas, 2nd Earl of Strafford. Lady Valletort and her two sisters were thus the step-daughters of this Countess of Buckinghamshire.

<sup>14</sup> Who Lady Emily was I cannot say.

<sup>15</sup> I cannot explain this allusion.

<sup>16</sup> In the absence of date, postmark or allusion, it is impossible to say in what year this letter was written. If it was written after August 3rd, 1793, on which date the 2nd Earl of Buckinghamshire died, then the Lady Buckinghamshire referred to in the letter would be the wife of George, 3rd Earl of Buckinghamshire. George Hobart, 3rd Earl (1732-1804) was the eldest son of John, 1st Earl, by his second wife, Elizabeth Bristow. In 1754 he was elected member of Parliament for St. Ives, and in 1761, 1768, and 1774, for Boaralston. He was devoted to theatricals, professional and amateur, and for a time was manager of the Opera in London. In 1762, when his half-brother John, the 2nd Earl, was Ambassador at St. Petersburg, he was made secretary to the Embassy there. On August 3rd, 1793, he succeeded as third Earl. On May 22nd, 1757, he married Albinia, eldest daughter of Lord Vere Bertie, and grand-daughter of Robert, 1st Duke of Ancaster.

Albinia, Countess of Buckinghamshire, was famous for her stoutness and rotundity. Writing to the Countess of Upper Ossory (previously Duchess of Grafton) from Arlington Street, on April 30th, 1773, Horace Walpole says that at a ball given at Mons. de Guisnes's, the French Ambassador's: "Harry Conway the younger was so astonished at the agility of Mrs. Hobart's bulk that he said he was sure she must be hollow." In a caricature for October 3rd, 1791, entitled "*La Dernière Ressource*;" or *Van Butchell's Garters*," Gillray represents her as trying on a garter which was expected to reduce her bulk through its alleged galvanic properties; while in one for January 3rd, 1792, describing "*A Sphere projecting against a Plane*," the cartoonist contrasts the thin, flat figure of the Prime Minister, William Pitt, with the flowing proportions of the Hon. Mrs. Hobart. The letter-press runs: "A sphere is a figure bounded by a convex surface; it is the most perfect of all forms; its properties are generated from its centre. A plane is a perfectly even and regular surface; it is the most simple of all figures; it has neither the properties of length or breadth, and when applied ever so closely to a sphere can only touch its superficies without being able to enter it." This



rather broad joke, it will be seen, is more at the expense of the "Virgin Boy" than at that of the buxom married lady.

The rise of the 1st Earl of Buckinghamshire to fortune was due to the same cause which brought about the early elevation of the great John Churchill: his sister became her monarch's mistress. The sister was Henrietta Hobart, who by marriage with one of the Howards became the Mrs. Howard who figures in Swift's and Lord Hervey's correspondence, and subsequently the Countess of Suffolk. Thanks to her being the reigning favourite of King George II., her brother John Hobart, the 5th Baronet, was made Knight of the Bath in 1725, Baron Hobart of Blickling in 1728, Lord Lieutenant of Norfolk and member of the Privy Council in 1745, and Earl of Buckinghamshire in 1746.

<sup>17</sup> The word missing I cannot decipher in the holograph.

IX

THE COUNTESS OF JERSEY

## A NOTE ON THE ASSOCIATION OF THE COUNTESS OF JERSEY WITH THE PRINCE OF WALES

INASMUCH as gossip and tradition, after a lapse of nearly a century and a quarter, have not yet seemingly crystallised into history, there is no really authentic record of the association of the Countess of Jersey with the Prince of Wales. At a time in which hundreds of popular net-price biographies of famous or notorious men and women of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries have been published, no modern author, so far as I am aware, has been interested or bold enough to tackle the career of the Countess of Jersey, the reason for such reticence probably being that the data are so very scanty. Horace Walpole, in letters to Miss Berry, makes one or two allusions to the Prince of Wales's relations with his "old woman," as the Countess was most ungallantly styled. He calls her "*Madam de Maintenant*." He talks of the house in Warwick Street which the Jerseys are going to take. He describes Tommy Tyrrwhit's dismissal from the post of Groom of the Bedchamber to the Prince for the offence of rebuking the Countess. And he speculates on the possibility of Edward Jerningham succeeding to the office, Jerningham—a master of *doubles ententes* and a *persona grata* with Lady Jersey. On the other hand, the first Earl of Malmesbury, true to his calling, says not a word about the Jersey scandal either in his "Diaries" (1844), or in his "Letters" (1870); yet he was the special envoy sent out to marry Princess Caroline, to whom he certainly gave some most uncommonly broad hints on the subject of personal cleanliness. Samuel Rogers, Sir Nathaniel Wraxall, Dr. Parr and Lord Holland are all equally silent about the connection. And it is fair to say that these letters of the Countess to Edward Jerningham are the first authentic documents available which set the Prince's liaison with the Countess beyond question.

Edward Jerningham, indeed, seems to have been the "Cayley Drummle" of this tragi-comic romance; and in one of "The Jerningham Letters," a letter addressed to his sister-in-law, Lady Jerningham, in 1798, he gives a very significant account of the endeavours made by Lady Jersey to preserve her influence over the Prince:—

“To ascend to a higher order of amourship, I think Lady Jersey is now in the Transit of Venus: it was very evident her reign was drawing to its period. I believe I have mentioned this circumstance before; but the singularity attending the progression of this affair is that the lady will not acknowledge any difference or diminution of regard on *his* side. This embarrasses the Prince exceedingly; for he wishes to let her down gently, and to separate amicably, which he thinks cannot be done, if he should dismiss her in town and unequivocally. I have given her intimations and broad suggestions, which she will not understand, or at least does not seem to understand. This day se'n'night the Prince was confined with a sprain, and he sent me an order to be with him at 10 o'clock in the evening. He received me in his bed-chamber, and, talking over this business, said he would hobble to her the next day and endeavour to bring her to a conference, and would promise never to withdraw from her and her family his protection. But she has had art enough to evade the conference, and, after an elapse of a week, things remain in the same uncertain, undecided situation. . The delicacy, the reluctance, or call it whatever name you please, which he shows on this occasion is very extraordinary. I sent Lady Jersey word that I had been at Carlton House, and that the Prince had spoken in the highest terms of her; that it was in her power to secure his friendship, and that the Prince had desired me to say something to that effect. She writes a note, and desires me never to mention his name to her, saying that I am under a mistake, and that I am an *honest* Iago. I have declined calling upon her since her note; for I am at a loss how to act. I have not seen the Prince since last Saturday. But he has sent a message to me, by Colonel McMahon, to continue my visits to her, but not to enter upon the subject of separation unless she begins, and then I am to keep there the same language.”

A year later, writing to Edward Jerningham from Middleton Park, in 1789, the Countess says:—

“I am quite alone; for my husband is gone to the Duke of Grafton's to hunt. My girls are very pleasant. I read to them, and they draw all day and all night. When they leave me I work very hard upon the harp. I enjoy all the delights of good health, good spirits, and good humour; it is a perfect calm, but a calm that inspires neither melancholy nor regret. *Ma retraite est mon Louvre, et j'y commande en Reine, &c., &c.* All my brats are well; the two old ones desire their compliments.”

A year later, writing to her daughter, Lady Bedingfeld, an account of a breakfast given by the Duchess of Devonshire on July 5th, 1800, Lady Jerningham takes up the tale:—

“The Prince was *En Polisson*, a brown dress, round hat, and

a brown wig. He stood almost the whole time by his band with Dr. Burney, ordering different pieces of musick. Lady Jersey was coasting round the spot where he stood with her daughters, Lady Ann Lambton and Lady Elizabeth Villiers, who has not yet been presented, and appears to be quite a girl. The Prince was quite annoyed with her, and eyed her askance; but she is resolved to plague him; she professes it to be her resolution."

"The Dictionary of National Biography" contains no life of the Countess of Jersey; but it gives a brief account of her husband, George Bussy, the 4th Earl, and in this account reference is made to the love-affairs of the Prince and the Countess, and to what is said about them by Huish and Lloyd in their respective "Memoirs of George IV." I have consulted these two works, and, having remembered that the Rev. George Croly, who wrote a novel called "Salathiel," also wrote a life of George IV., I have looked into his book too. I may as well give the titles of these volumes:—

1. "Memoirs of George the Fourth." By Robert Huish. (Two volumes. 1830.)

2. "George IV.: Memoirs of His Life and Reign." By Hannibal Evans Lloyd. (1830.)

3. "The Personal History of his late Majesty George the Fourth." By George Croly. (1830.)

All three histories, published, be it noted, only a few months after the death of George IV., are, from a modern point of view, almost incredibly outspoken in their condemnation of the late monarch's profligacy, drunkenness, cowardice, and insensibility. Huish, who seems to be merely "a picker-up of unconsidered trifles," relates a singularly nauseating story of seduction on the part of the Prince, in which, the better to accomplish his purpose, he posed as a mere peer's son, and employed as procuress, or to use the language of the period, as "Lady Abbess," the notorious Lady Lade.\* This person was

\* That this was not a solitary instance of the Prince of Wales's habit of systematic debauchery, and that Lord Malden continued years after the "Floral and Perdita" episode to be a most assiduous pimp to His Royal Highness, is evident from an entry made in the MS. Journal of Captain E. Thompson, R.N., for Dec. 1st, 1784:—

"Mr. Angelo told me a piece of duplicity and ungenerous conduct in the Prince of Wales, which will for ever do him discredit; but it marks the man who has the vices of Henry the Fifth without one of his virtues. He told Angelo, as soon as his Household was established, he would give Mrs. Angelo a good place, to support her and her family; and he held out his hand to the old florid upright Italian to kiss. This he used as an introduction for Lord Malden to bring letters to her two fair and beautiful daughters, Sophia and Ann. The mother detected the disingenuous conduct, and wrote a letter

successively mistress and wife of Sir John Lade, Bart., nephew of Dr. Johnson's friend Henry Thrale, the brewer, and at one time an aspirant to the hand of Fanny Burney. Despite Johnson's advice to the young man: "I would advise no man to marry, Sir, who is not likely to propagate understanding," Sir John ventured on matrimony, and chose for his wife this utterly common person, who, *née* Smith, had been a servant maid and a cook, and was generally supposed to have been the mistress of the notorious highwayman, Rann, *alias* "Sixteen-String Jack," who was hanged at Tyburn. Under Sir John's able tuition, Lady Lade, already famous for her bad language ("He swears like Letitia Lade," the Prince used to say) became an adept in stable slang, and a famous whip and horsewoman. She married her niece, Miss Goulding, to the 7th Earl of Barrymore, thereby raising the daughter of a sedan-chairman to the rank of Countess, and she lived for the last years of her life on a joint annuity of £300 a year which the Prince Regent granted, for services rendered, to her and her husband. Society never accepted Lady Lade, despite, or probably in consequence of, the P. of W.'s championship. At Brighton in 1789, hoping thereby to rehabilitate herself, she persuaded the Prince to dance with her at an assembly. The only result was, that the Duchess of Rutland, Lady Elizabeth Luttrell, Lady Charlotte Bertie, and Mrs. Fitzgerald rose from their seats and left the rooms; while the next day the Duchess of Rutland, Lady Charlotte Bertie, and the Duchess of Ancaster left Brighton for Eastbourne, as a further protest against Lady Lade. Lord Chancellor Thurlow, himself no Puritan, held Sir John Lade in supreme contempt, and on one occasion entered a stern protest against being asked to sit down with "this coachman" at the Prince's table.

Hannibal Evans Lloyd (1791-1847) is an authority more safely to be relied on. From 1800 to 1813 he lived at Hamburg. There he suffered severely from the hardships to which the city was exposed during its occupation by the French Army, and joined the inhabitants in taking up arms

with the proper resentment of her bosom; the Prince read it, and with great *sang froid*, said, "The woman may be right."

The Angelo here alluded to was of course not Henry Angelo (1760-1839), Byron's friend and fencing master, but Henry Angelo's father, Dominico Angelo Malevolti Tremamondo (1716-1802), reckoned the first master in his day in the *manège* and of fencing. Dominico Angelo was for some years, *circa* 1755, the "protector" of Peg Woffington; so his son says in his "Reminiscences," wherein, too, there is a good deal of interesting matter concerning Gillray.

It is pleasant to know that Henry Angelo bore no malice against the Prince who had tried to seduce his sisters: it was indeed to his Majesty King George IV. that, with a rare magnanimity, he dedicated his "Reminiscences."

in its defence. Eventually he effected his escape, but with the loss of nearly the whole of his property, and, coming to England in July, 1813, was appointed by Lord Bathurst, the Foreign Secretary, who appreciated his excellent knowledge of French, Italian, and German, to a post in the Foreign Office, which he retained till his death. A great Germanophile, he translated the "Messiah" of Klopstock, who was a friend of his, but never published his version; and he married a Miss Von Schwartzkopff of Hamburg, by whom he had a son and several daughters. His statements about George IV. are, of course, not exactly evidence; for he was born about the time at which the Prince of Wales's connection with Lady Jersey may be supposed to have commenced. But his acquaintance with Lord Bathurst and with the Foreign Office is bound to give his "History" something like authority. Croly, though a more trustworthy guide than Huish, had probably no access to inside knowledge. But the open comment of the newspapers of the day, comment which neither the Earl nor the Countess of Jersey dared appeal to the law courts to suppress, and the equally unabashed pictorial comment of Gillray, who pilloried the Countess and the Prince in half a dozen cartoons, make it impossible to doubt the existence of the intrigue, and render it necessary to remember that in 1795, when the Prince married Princess Caroline, he was 33 years old, the Countess 42, and the Earl 60, and that the Countess had three married daughters and four grandsons!

Fortunately for the elucidation of the trilateral relations of the Prince, the Countess, and the Princess, there is nothing *à priori* improbable in what Huish, Lloyd, and Croly relate about them: all three are agreed in testifying to the following circumstances:—

i. That Lady Jersey took advantage of her official position as Lady of the Bedchamber to the Princess to travel with her, on her arrival in England, from Greenwich to London, and, finding the Princess impulsive and incautious, extracted from her the confession, that she had left behind her in her native land a German Prince to whom she was attached, and that "she was persuaded that she loved his little finger better than the whole person of the Prince of Wales." This information Lady Jersey took care to repeat to the Prince before he had his second interview with the Princess.

ii. That Lady Jersey brought it about, soon after the marriage between the Prince and Princess took place, that the latter was fully informed of the relations that had subsisted between the Prince and herself (Lady Jersey), the newly-married wife being assured that Lady Jersey was the real wife, and Princess Caroline merely the nominal spouse.

iii. That the Princess, in 1796, hearing that Dr. Randolph, her "English preceptor," was intending to make a visit to Germany, entrusted him with a packet of letters, written to her relations at Brunswick. That the doctor, owing to his wife's illness, abandoned the contemplated visit, and dispatched the letters back to Brighton, where the Princess was staying, in a packet addressed to Lady Jersey. That the letters never reached the Princess; but that one of them, reflecting on Queen Charlotte, was read to the Queen, having, it is surmised, been opened after having been purloined by Lady Jersey.

iv. That the Princess, having failed by appeals to the Prince to bring about the discontinuance of the attendance of the Countess upon her, appealed to King George III., through whose influence the Countess was induced to resign her position of Lady of the Bedchamber. The Countess, however, at the invitation of the Prince, still continued to visit Carlton House as a guest.

In the Catalogue of the British Museum Library there are four entries under the name of "Villiers, Frances, Countess of Jersey":—

i. "A Review of the Misrepresentations which have been circulated in all the Daily Papers relating to a late domestic fracas" (1796).

ii. "Correspondence between the Earl and Countess of Jersey and Dr. Randolph upon some letters belonging to the Princess of Wales" (1796).

iii. "An Epistle in Verse to Dr. Randolph, Occasioned by the publication of the Correspondence between the Earl and Countess of Jersey and the Doctor" (1796).

iv. "An Equestrian Epistle to the Earl of Jersey, Occasioned by the Correspondence between the Earl and Countess of Jersey and Dr. Randolph" (1796).

Document i. is a collection of newspaper extracts, with comments, taken from *The Morning Herald*, *The Morning Chronicle*, *The Times*, *The Sun*, *The True Briton*, *Bell's Weekly Messenger*, and other newspapers, and all dealing with the affair of the Princess, the Countess and the Prince.

Here is an extract from *The Times*, of Monday, June 6th, 1796:—

"The Prince declined to be at the Birthday, and had previously set out INCOG for the Grange, where he now is. We have reason to think that his own servant did not know whither his Royal Highness was going. On the evening of the Prince's leaving Carlton House for Hampshire, Lady Jersey left her house in Pall Mall INCOG. She has retired, though NOT UNOBSERVED, to the house of her daughter, Lady Ann Lambton, in Berkeley Square."



Here is one from *The Morning Herald*, of Thursday, May 26th:—

"The speed with which the Prince and Lady Jersey rode over the course at Epsom a few days ago is spoken of with astonishment by the beholders of the sight."

"A packet, containing secret despatches for the Duke of Brunswick on the subject of a recent alliance, has lately been intercepted by a Jersey cruiser; in consequence of which act of hostility a separate treaty is expected very shortly to take place between certain high contracting parties. An extraordinary embassy on the occasion will, it is thought, be dispatched to the Court of Brunswick in a few days."

"The Prince and Lady Jersey took an airing in their curricule on Tuesday, and attracted particular notice."

"Lady — is said to be one of the most adroit hands in England at opening a letter that is not addressed to herself."

"The Princess of Wales has of late employed her attention in having drawings made of her native bowers, the scenes of her habitual joy."

Documents ii, iii, and iv. are bound up in two collections of pamphlets; and all that need be said about ii. is, that the correspondence contained in it, which was never repudiated as unauthentic, establishes the fact that a packet of letters intended for her people was entrusted by the Princess of Wales to Dr. Randolph; that he handed it in at the Golden Cross, Charing Cross, for the Brighton Post Coach, enclosed in a packet for Lady Jersey, addressed to the Pavilion, Brighton; and that somehow or other the packet never came back into the hands of the Princess.

I may add that the two anonymous "Epistles" are the work of Thomas James Mathias, author of "The Pursuits of Literature," and, as sub-treasurer, a member for many years of Queen Charlotte's household. I wonder, by the way, if Mathias ever provided subjects for Gillray to work upon. In turning over volumes of this artist's works, readers must have been struck again and again by the literary style of many of the cartoons. Those derived from Miltonic and classical allegory are particularly marked by this character, and seem to owe their inspiration more to the reading of the bookman than to the observation of the draughtsman. Similarly several of the allusions which the caricatures make to the social follies and scandals of the day are rather too recondite to be considered the spontaneous ebullitions of a workaday pictorial satirist: they must have proceeded from some person who, being in society, was in the know. I am inclined to think that the author of "The Pursuits" may often have given Gillray the literary tags on which he built up examples of these

two classes of cartoons. Editor of Milton, accomplished classical scholar, and Court official, Mathias, as a suggester, would have been invaluable to Gillray, whose humble origin, lack of early education, and intemperate habits, can hardly have allowed him to be either well versed in books or acquainted with fashionable society.

LETTERS FROM THE COUNTESS OF JERSEY  
(1753-1821)

1

From Middleton Park. September 7th, 1786.

Lord Jersey desires me to say that we shall certainly be here the 29th, and very glad of the pleasure of seeing you. Pray don't forget to make my uniform. The coat must be of the darkest Corbeau you can find. A black cape. The buttons are made by Williams in St. Martin's Lane. The summer waistcoat is sold by Willis in Bond Street, and the winter one by Bargman Taylor in Charles Street, Grosvenor Square. If you have any new French books, I hope you will bring them. believe me ever, &c.

F. J.

2

From Middleton Park. October 5th, 1787.

I am just setting out for Nuneham; so I have only time to tell you that we shall remain here till the 4th of November, and be very happy to see you. I have had great uneasiness for the health of a Person very deservedly dear to me, one whom I know to be amiable, and whose attachment to me through life has been constant and sincere. Need I tell you this person is . . . myself. I have been unwell almost ever since I was at Brighthelmstone. My health and temper have mended, and I believe I am fit to live with human creatures again. Pray bring your harp. I have practised a great deal lately, and I think we shall make fine harmony. Let me have a line to say what day we are to expect you.

F. J.

3

From Middleton Park. August 5th, 1791.

No news of my harp strings! I can only account for their not arriving by supposing that the box was not sent to you. If so, pray go directly to Grosvenor Square and carry it away. When it is filled desire your *maitresse d'hôtel* to paper and seal

it up, and order the maid in my house to send it by the coach, not [by] the waggon. I am in the utmost distress for those strings.

I have had a constant low fever ever since I came here, which, tho' it will make me very interesting, has made me so stupid that I will say nothing but bon jour. With which of her gentle and amiable qualities has the "Sea Cowcumber"<sup>1</sup> endowed Miss Edgumbe? Tell me all the news and gossip of the remains of London, and when the Good Bishop will come here.

<sup>1</sup> The Countess of Jersey's nickname for the Countess of Mount Edgumbe.

## 4

From Middleton Park. September 2nd, 1792.

This is to inform you that I am established at Middleton, and that if it finds you at Park Place, I order you to come here immediately. If you delay you will not find the director<sup>1</sup> of this, whom I conclude you wish to meet. If this should follow you to Norfolk I entreat that you will make your arrangements for visiting us at your return. I shall stay here till after Xmas, unless I go for a week to Nuneham; but that will suit you too. Adieu.

F. J.

<sup>1</sup> Since the "direction" means the "address," the "director" must mean "the person addressing you," "your correspondent."

## 5

From Des Rochers de Meillerai.<sup>1</sup> October 23rd [1792].

I wrote to you the last week in August or in the beginning of September. You have not answered my letter, and I conclude you have not received it. It contained only an order to come to Middleton, which I hope you will obey now. I return on Friday next. The sooner you arrive the better; but you will find me there till after Xmas. We have been acting, and I played "Mrs. Oakly"<sup>2</sup> to perfection. We wanted you as a performer; and if we do contrive to get up a play, I depend on you. Pray tell me when we may expect you. Of the contents of this place I say nothing; but read the date of my letter. Ever yours.

F. J.

<sup>1</sup> I can find this place in no gazetteer.

<sup>2</sup> The leading female character in George Colman the Elder's comedy, "The Jealous Wife," which was brought out at Drury-Lane, on February 12th, 1761, with Garrick in the part of Mr. Oakley and Mrs. Pritchard in that of Mrs. Oakley.

## 6

From Middleton Park. November 16th, 1792.

Thank you very much for your letter. It was a great while coming; but it was full of too many friendly and partial ideas to admit of any reproaches. I intended informing you that I remain here till about the 15th of January, and shall probably act again during one week, from the 23rd to the 30th of December or from the 30th to the 6th of January, and entreating your company and performance. If you are in London before that time you could easily come, and Lord C. [Carlisle?] would be an agreeable companion in a post-chaise. The horrible accounts from Brussels<sup>1</sup> make me conclude that Lady Jerningham will not remain there; and her arrival in London will probably bring you and Sir William southward sooner if the charms of Lady Mount [Edgcumbe], Lady Cic,<sup>2</sup> and Lady Mary Cooke are not unusually powerful. I do not see why you should stay in that vile town of London at this season. We think of getting up "The Rivals." We want an excellent actor for the part of Acres. What do [you] say to it? I am sure you would surpass Dodd,<sup>3</sup> if you would undertake it. I find that our plays must be from the 6th of January; but, if you are amiable, you will come sooner. Pray answer this directly. Lord Car[lisle] bids me say that you will find him in London in a few days.

I enclose the Epilogue. What do you think of it?

<sup>1</sup> The people of Belgium rose in revolt against Austrian rule towards the end of 1789, declared their independence in the following year, but eventually had to submit. In 1792 the armies of Revolutionary France marched into the country, and were welcomed by the people. On November 7th, 1792, the victory won by Dumouriez at the battle of Jemappes made the French masters of the whole of the southern portion of the Austrian Netherlands.

<sup>2</sup> Lady Cecilia Johnston.

<sup>3</sup> James Dodd (1741-1796), "the most perfect fopling ever placed upon the stage," famous as Lord Foppington, Sir Benjamin Backbite, Sir Andrew Aguecheek and Bob Acres.

## 7

From Brighton. Sunday, July 28th, 1793.

You promised you would write to me; and I have been here three weeks without hearing one word from you. Pray don't be so idle, and tell me what you do and what you think, which is always curious. I have seen a little of your friend Mrs. Walpole,<sup>1</sup> and should have liked to see more; but when I proposed asking her to dinner, I was desired not, which I was sorry for. She seems civil and entertaining, I think, and not like every body else.

I had a melancholy letter from Meilleraie the other day. I hope they<sup>2</sup> will move to London, which will certainly agree

with their spirits better than the ruins in the flower garden. My mother says, and I think she is right, that there is nothing dismal in snow and rain; but that a fine evening in August is a thing which requires the utmost happiness and gaiety to support.

I refer you [to] Lord Carlisle for an account of Brighton: he returns on Wednesday. But don't be so French as to write by him; use the vulgar conveyance of the post, and let me hear from you sooner. Adieu! My letter is but a question and an order, and appears to me too long already.

I forgot to tell you that "Grey Frontham" (?) won yesterday, and great sport is expected from "Amelia" to-morrow. How shall you bet at Lewes?"

<sup>1</sup> I cannot identify this lady.

<sup>2</sup> I cannot guess who "they" are.

## 8

From Middleton Park. Sunday [1793].

Thank you for your letter and the print, which I think excessively good. The idea and the execution are excellent, and I am impatient to show it to my neighbour Mr. Fermor<sup>1</sup> who has sacrificed two daughters. It is very vexatious that you cannot come here now. The Aylesburys and Mrs. Damer are going to Meilleraie next week. Why will not you accompany them? And then the journey would be nothing. You could never give me a greater proof of friendship than by doing this. Think of it, and at all events let me hear from you immediately. Enclose letters to Lord J.

I was in perfect health and spirits when I came here; but I have been entirely alone, and l'Épée use le fourneau. This is a confession entirely for yourself: I depend upon your secrecy. Your expectations of my stupidity cannot be disappointed, let them be raised to the highest pitch; but I hope to recover in the brilliant atmosphere of Grosvenor Square, whenever I am so happy as to enjoy its fogs. Tell us all the news you hear. I tremble at the next from France: trying the Queen is murdering her.<sup>2</sup> Send me the book you talked of; it will not hurt my spirits, for I have none to hurt. I have been expecting my mother every day this month, and now am uncertain when she arrives; but she will, I am sure, be delighted to see you.

Adieu, Father Edward! Pray for the soul of Sister Frances.

<sup>1</sup> Mr. Fermor's seat was at Tusmore, Oxfordshire.

<sup>2</sup> A prophecy that turned out true. Marie Antoinette was tried on October 14th, and guillotined on October 16th, 1793. Louis XVI. had been guillotined on January 17th, 1793.

From (probably) Middleton Park. Friday, Nov. 1st, 1793.

I am angry with myself and ashamed of having been a great while without answering your letter. A multitude of little grievances have worn out my patience, and subdued my spirits, and made me for some time incapable of doing anything. They have at last produced a bilious attack, which, after having made me very ill for a few hours, has done me good. And I am able to tell you how sorry I am that you cannot come here.—You must send me the play.<sup>1</sup> The secret is in the news papers; but I will continue to deny your child, as much as if you was a maid-of-honour.—Vous vous moquez de moi, when you talk of epilogues. I never had courage to produce that which I invented for my theatre. As to Lord C. he must speak for himself. I wish I could attend the first performance; but I fear I have no chance of seeing London for a great while. Lord J. will be there on Wednesday, and you will probably see the Harcourts. Perhaps you may come with them when you are safely delivered, at least when your month is up. Don't talk of my having been ill. I have not been confined, and I hate tormenting people about my liver like Mrs. St. John.<sup>2</sup> Pray continue to send me as much news as you can collect or invent. I am convinced that surprise makes a greater ingredient in our composition than people generally imagine. The murder of the Queen [of France, Marie Antoinette] has not had half the effect which that of the King had.—Adieu once more! Send us the play: you have not even told me the subject.

<sup>1</sup> Edward Jerningham's tragedy, "The Siege of Berwick," was produced at Covent Garden on November 13th, 1793, and acted there again on the four following nights.

<sup>2</sup> "Barbara, daughter of Colonel Thomas Bladen, married in 1771 Colonel (afterwards General) the Hon. Henry St. John, second son of the 2nd Viscount St. John." In Mrs. Paget Toynbee's edition of Horace Walpole's Letters this note is appended to the following extract from a letter addressed by Walpole to the Countess of Upper Ossory on August 11th, 1775: "Have you heard that Mrs. St. Jack has declared that, if the Colonel goes to America, she will accompany him? G. Selwyn says she will make an excellent *breastwork*." I looked up the Viscounts St. John in works on "Extinct Peerages," but I could not discover a Mrs. St. John living in 1793. I suppose, however, that she may be the lady Horace Walpole mentions.

From Middleton Park. Monday, September 10th, 1794.

I had not time to answer your letter at once, and now I have but an instant to say that you may depend, and I hope are sure, that any thing in my power you shall always command. The

thing you mention belongs to the Monsieur,<sup>1</sup> and all his charges are long since filled up. His wife will have much fewer than his mother had (being a widow), and, I understand, but one male attendant. I confess I am alarmed at Mrs. D.'s<sup>2</sup> writing upon the subject: I fear you have been too communicative sans le scavoir. Pray write to me on Wednesday, and believe me always most sincerely yours,

F. J.

<sup>1</sup> Who "the Monsieur" is I cannot guess. The King of France's eldest brother was generally known as "Monsieur."

<sup>2</sup> Probably Mrs. Damer.

11

From Middleton Park. September 30th, 1794.

I shall be in town to-morrow night, and glad to see you as early as you please on Wednesday morning. I wish now to remind you that our appointments are still a secret, and that you must express surprise as well as joy when you are informed of them. Adieu. Ever most sincerely yours.

F. J.

12

*From Lady Sarah Villiers.*<sup>1</sup>

October, 1795.

DEAR MR. JERNINGHAM,

I am sure you will be glad to hear that Mamma was brought to bed this morning at seven o'clock of a very fine little boy,<sup>2</sup> and that they are both as well as possible.

I am, dear Mr. Jerningham,

Ever yours sincerely,

SARAH VILLIERS.

<sup>1</sup> Lady Sarah Villiers, the Countess of Jersey's fifth daughter, married, in 1800, Charles Nathaniel Bayley and died on May 25th, 1852, leaving issue.

<sup>2</sup> The "very fine little boy" is too important (or unimportant) to be included in *Burke's* account of the Countess of Jersey's children. According to Horace Walpole he died an infant.

13

[November 4th, 1795.]

I have hardly time to thank you for your letter; I must employ you in an act of charity. Last spring I was the means of relieving a Mrs. Poole, an officer's widow who was starving. In her present distress she wrote the enclosed to Anne's house-keeper,<sup>1</sup> who was the person I sent to see her at Falmouth. The letter went to Durham, only arrived here a day after I was brought to bed, and was put away unopened. I read it and sent

it to town with Waite,<sup>2</sup> with orders to get her out of the Marshalsea at all events. The Keeper said there was no such person there, and that it required more forms than those scraps of paper to get her there. Her letter being dated Petersham only, I do not know how to discover her. I want you from yourself to employ Mr. Cambridge to find her out and to give or send her the enclosed note. The writs you will keep till she asks for them. Or, if Mr. C., to oblige you, should interest himself about her, you may trouble him with them. Remember, you must take all this upon yourself; for, though I know him well through poor Mr. Whitehead, which induces me to desire you will mention the business to him, I am not acquainted with him, and I only desire *you* to find out Mrs. Poole.

You will laugh at "*kindly*" interlined [Lady Jersey means "written over the line"]; but I put it that she may not think you are an attorney.

I am really quite well to-day. I have been plagued with headache, owing, I believe, to the horrid storms which have prevented my sleeping. You may judge what they are here in a paper house that rocks like a ship. Pray continue to write. I do not promise to be a good correspondent; for I have my madre and three daughters fidgety if they do not hear from me. Don't you intend to keep your promise of coming to see me? Will you next week? Adieu.

<sup>1</sup> Lady Anna Barbara Frances Lambton. See note to the 9th Letterette.

<sup>2</sup> Seemingly the Countess's confidential servant.

## 14

*From Lady Jersey to Mrs. Poole.*

Brighton, November 4th [1795].

MADAM,

Your letter to Mrs. Braddon went to Durham, and unluckily arriving here the day after I was brought to bed was put aside unopened. As soon as I read it I gave it to Lord Jersey, who carried it to town last week with the writs. I ordered a servant to go to the Marshalsea and get you out if your enemies had succeeded in their cruel designs. As the Keeper assured him there was not any person of the name of Poole there, I flatter myself you have escaped. But I wish to know if I cannot be of some little assistance to you; as perhaps you may only have quieted your creditors, and have not yet been able to pay them. Your letter being dated Petersham only has made it impossible for me to write by the post; but I hope this will reach you. If you want the writs, you will send to



Edward Jerningham, Esqre., Green Street, Grosvenor Square,  
who has kindly undertaken to deliver this to you.

I am, Madam,

Your . . . servant, &c., &c.,

F. JERSEY.

15

*From Mrs. Poole to Edward Jerningham.*

Petersham, November 9th, 1795.

In consequence of Lady Jersey's letter which you did me the favour to forward to me, I took the liberty of waiting on you yesterday evening; but not being so fortunate as to meet with you at home I have enclosed her Ladyship's letter. With the present state of the business, which I find you are acquainted with, I need not explain to you, Sir, the progress [process?] of the Marshalsea writs. It was absolutely necessary that an immediate stop should be put to the proceedings; therefore, in order to gain a little time, I was compelled to accept the proposal held out to me, which was to sign a judgment for to pay the money on the 25th of this month. Which, if I fail doing, I am utterly ruined; as every thing I have will be seized, and by that step I shall be deprived of getting my livelihood and supporting my family. Mr. Sanders's—the attorney's—letter was sent me last week by way of reminding me of the time; which, God knows, he need not have done, as it is never from my thoughts. His chambers, Sir, are in Clifford's Inn. But how far you are commissioned to act in this business I know not. Therefore I beg you will pardon the liberty I have taken in requesting the favour of a line; as at all points it is absolutely necessary that I should lose no time in thanking Lady Jersey for her repeated goodness to me, which never can be eradicated from my grateful heart. I have the honour to be,

Most respectfully,

Sir,

Your obedient and humble servant,

MARGARETTA POOLE

16

No address and no date save "Monday" [1796].

Though I wrote to you the other day I must say one word to you again: it is to tell you that the Primate<sup>1</sup> has out-done himself in kindness and good-nature, and arrangements are so made that the remainder of the summer and autumn will be delicious. We go on Wednesday to Bognor: you must direct to Pall Mall. And I think now it is time for you to turn your

eyes towards the South. My Mother has had letters from Ireland with an account of Lord Moira's having done much good in my defence. The tide is certainly turning here, and at Bath. The Brighton people have addressed the P. to stay, and they would have mentioned me in the address if it had not been declined. Adieu! Pray, write soon and often. I shall want amusement and kindness for the next fortnight. God bless Father Edward.

<sup>1</sup> Obviously the Prince of Wales. The ecclesiastical title is used, instead of the secular, as a blind.

17

From Bognor. September 2nd [1796].

I really have not had spirits or courage to write, or I should have thanked you for your letters. And I believe I have two of yours unanswered. The Primate arrived last night. And when I have got over the agitation of seeing him again after three weeks' absence, I shall be more comfortable than I have been for some months. At present I feel giddy with something which I suppose is joy. You are very disagreeable and stupid about coming or rather not coming here. You will certainly find me here for three weeks to come, possibly longer; but you must come within that time, as afterwards many things may prevent our stay. He is in great beauty, spirits, and pour aimable il est toujours like himself, and not like any body else.—Adieu! If you think it likely that I should write a long letter to-day, you do not know me or my heart.—I send my blessing to Father Edward.

18

From Bognor. September 5th [1796]

You are very tiresome and dawdling, and so dawdling that you will not be at liberty to come here till we are moving, if you do not haste. I received your letter desiring me to direct to Green Street the day after I had written to Cossey. Pray make haste to come and write by the return of the post. You know your coming is not a *visit* to us, but obedience to an order of the Primate, and therefore should not be delayed, or, what is worse, omitted.

Do not think I am out of humour because I scold. I am very well, very happy, and very gay. Our future plans you shall know when we meet. At present I can only tell you that the Primate is delighted with the quiet life and with the place, and seems not to have any desire to change it. Adieu.

## 19

From Bognor. September 14th, 1796.

I have not had time to write since I received your letter, the contents of which I am doubly sorry for. First I regret not seeing you here, and secondly I am sorry that you do not obey the wishes and commands of the Primate. I am very comfortable here at present; but I believe I shall only remain till the 24th, and then visit London for a few days. I wish I was never to visit it again. Pray tell the artist<sup>1</sup> that I am perfectly sensible of her good-nature to me, and that, if I was anxious for your coming here now, it was more for your sake than for my own. And, as the Primate goes away on the 10th, I really have no desire to see you till we meet in London. Perhaps then you may make some arrangements for being of the Christmas party in Dorsetshire. This is now a secret; so pray do not say a word of my motions. Write to me soon, and believe me always sincerely yours.

<sup>1</sup> Probably some young woman friend in whom Edward Jerningham was taking a temporary interest.

## 20

From Bognor, with no date.

I am really so provoked at you (for your own sake) for not having been here during the Primate's séjour that I have scarcely patience to write to you. He went away on Saturday, very sorry indeed to go, having passed his time quite to his liking. He is going to fly round Dorsetshire, make a nest for me and my young ones, and perch in London this day se'ennight, when we shall meet him and take possession of our new house, into which they begin moving our furniture the moment what belongs to him is taken away. I am not sure how long we shall stay in town; but I conclude not many days. You must come to see us on Friday the 30th. The Dorsetshire part of my project you must keep to yourself; but the house may be talked of, and the delay about the furniture mentioned, that people may not say we use his. Adieu! Remember me to your companion, and believe me ever very sincerely and affectionately

Yours,

F.

Pray write to me by the return of the post. A letter from you is always acceptable; but *here* and *now*, invaluable. Am not I sincere?

## 21

From Bognor. Tuesday, the 16th.

Thank you very much, Father Edward for your long and comfortable letter. Your account of the lady I have sent to the Primate, who is as amiable upon paper as usual. I do not know what day he will come; but I think in the next week, and I shall certainly see him. This place is delightful, in itself quiet, cheerful, clean. The air is delicious, and the country around it beautiful. But it wants some of God's creatures. My house is delightful, much better than any lodging at Brighton; my eating- and drawing-room just the size and shape of my rooms at the Pavilion. Sir R. Hotham,<sup>1</sup> the King of the place, has taken me under his protection, sends me fruit, has put up a tent for me and the children under my windows, and appears to like me excessively. He is a clean old man, with white hair, white eyes, and white hands; was a great merchant; and has laid out above £100,000 in making this place. He will die contented if any of the Royal Family inhabit one of his houses. *Vous sentez bien qu'il est au pieds de Francisca!*

Mrs. Damer is here with Miss Burny. She called upon me last week and was fort aimable. We have met since riding, and greet each other most cordially. But nothing more will happen; for I am not capable of forcing myself upon her, and I do not conceive that my family party would suit her or her friends. I have got books, work, drawing, music, in short every sort of comfort, which gives me no sort of amusement. The state of my poor mind requires dissipation and hurry; and I was never so well as the day I travelled from London. As [however] I cannot afford to spend much money in post-houses, I must wait till Mahomet comes to the mountain, and not finish the saying.

Pray write to me instantly, and tell me the day that you will arrive. We cannot lodge you; but we will feed you, and procure you a room close to us. The hotel is an impossible place to go to, and above a mile from this house. Lord J. is gone to see Howards (?) at the Grange, returns to-day. The Prince has taken Critchil,<sup>2</sup> and it will do well in every respect. Adieu! Still continue to pray for

F.

<sup>1</sup> I cannot identify this person.

<sup>2</sup> I cannot identify this estate; but I find that there is a parish in Dorsetshire called Long Critchell.

## 22

From Bognor. Tuesday [no other date].

I expected to have heard from you to-day, Father Edward. I write to say that we shall be glad to find you in Warwick Street<sup>1</sup> on Thursday at six o'clock. I am low and nervous to-day; so I will only say "vale."

<sup>1</sup> Into which the Jerseys moved or thought of moving from Grosvenor Square. General Conway's town house was in Warwick Street.

## 23

From Bognor. Wednesday, September 28th, 1796.

Thank you for your letter of yesterday. I write to say that, as we dine upon the road, I cannot expect you at six o'clock; but the sooner you come after your dinner the better.

Ever yours,  
F.

Pray get the enclosed and bring it with you.

## 24

From Middleton Park. Friday, November 12th, 1796.

Thank you for your letter. I shall be in town on Sunday. When I see you, you will think I do right in coming. The Primate is behaving like an Archangel; mais, comme les absens sont torts, and the day for going to C[ritchil] must come, I think I may as well be on the spot. Send no more after Mr. Morris,<sup>1</sup> ask no more after the Islands for fear it should be known. Adieu. I believe there is a poor man dying in the house, Mr. Alt,<sup>2</sup> whom you have seen in Grosvenor Square. You had better dine or come on Sunday evening. Adieu.

<sup>1</sup> Mr. Morris is, I suppose, Captain Morris, one of the Prince of Wales's and Charles James Fox's convivial companions. He composed and sang many of the pro-Foxian ballads which were popular during the Westminster Election of 1784. He figures more than once in Gillray's cartoons.

<sup>2</sup> In a letter written to Sir Horace Mann on August 8th, 1759, Horace Walpole mentions an Alt who was Hessian Minister to the Court of St. James. Possibly this Mr. Alt was related to him.

## 25

Neither date nor address.

I am ashamed of having been so long silent, or rather I am sorry that I have not written; because you may think me ungrateful, when I am only unhappy. My life at present, is, as you know, intolerable to endure and more than insipid to describe. The P. staid in town till Friday noon, and returned on Saturday. The time has been passed either in seeing

Charlotte's nursery,<sup>1</sup> which brings afresh to my mind my angel Augustus,<sup>2</sup> or in cheating myself into fancied amusement by going to shops for things I do not want, and cannot afford to buy, or in hearing Mrs. Stephens's discussions<sup>3</sup> on events no longer in question, or listening to the eternal grievances, real and imaginary, of Mr. Honeywood.<sup>4</sup> So much for my days! My nights are sleepless and weary, my appetite as you saw it, and in short my whole existence such as but for hope could not last many weeks. Every day has produced fresh proofs of treachery from all quarters. Your account of Lady Harcourt does not surprise me. I believe I should scarcely say "O," if I discovered you setting fire to a train of gunpowder under my bed. The conduct of the Primate, as usual, is perfect. The Brighton people have made every sort of apology, but in vain; and I conclude their recantation will deter others from running into the same error. Chritchil, I hope, will do, and that we shall pass many Christmases there en *dépit des envieux*. Write to me and direct to Pall Mall. You shall hear again the moment my day is fixed for going out of this accursed house: it cannot be above a week longer that I am condemned to such purgatory. I think I may begin and sin as if I had been born but yesterday: this *séjour* must have expiated all and more than I could have committed in my long life. Vale!

<sup>1</sup> Lady Charlotte Anne Villiers, the Countess of Jersey's eldest daughter, married Lord William Russell, brother of the Duke of Bedford, on July 11th, 1789, and died on August 31st, 1808, leaving issue. Lord William was murdered by his valet, a Swiss, on May 6th, 1840.

<sup>2</sup> William Augustus Henry Villiers, the Countess's second son, was born on November 15th, 1780, and died unmarried in 1818. He seems to have been of a delicate constitution.

<sup>3</sup> \* Mrs. Stephens and Mr. Honeywood seem to have been persons domesticated at this time with the Jerseys; but I cannot identify them.

From Middleton Park. September 30th.

To tell you why I did not write to you from Brighton would be to describe a life of hurry, variety(?) and noise, which, though very delightful at the time, would make you giddy to think of. Since I came here I have passed a month in the other extreme, and have found Mr. Whitehead's observation upon this place true, that the extreme quiet is as disturbing as a paper-mill. However Caroline<sup>1</sup> and I have passed through the month without being stopped by the ennui of others, which has been very fatiguing. I intend that October should be more agreeable, and having first finished Dr. Beattie's "Elements of Moral Science,"<sup>2</sup> I choose to study modern wits, and command or entreat (choose which you like

best) that you come here as soon as you can pack up your yellow waistcoat. I should have made this proposal sooner, but that I have lived in daily fear of going to Bath. My beau père<sup>3</sup> has had the gout, and detained my Mother. If his illness had continued I must have gone to her; but it is over, and she comes here. You shall have a warm room, a great deal of hot bread for breakfast, and every nastiness to eat that you can think of. Your friend Elizabeth<sup>4</sup> is well, and fat, and handsome. I saw the Chevalier at Meilleraie last week. He tells me to direct to you in London. I can and will not take any excuse: so pray let Wednesday's post tell me the day on which I may expect you. Caroline desires a great many things to you. Believe me ever yours sincerely.

<sup>1</sup> Caroline presumably is the Countess of Jersey's third daughter, Lady Caroline Elizabeth Villiers. She was married, first, on July 25th, 1795, to Henry William, 1st Marquis of Anglesey. But in 1810 the union was dissolved at the suit of her Ladyship, who married, secondly, on November 29th, 1810, George William, 6th Duke of Argyll.

<sup>2</sup> The first volume of this work appeared in 1790, and the second in 1793.

<sup>3</sup> ' I can identify neither of these persons.

## 27

Wednesday night. No address and no other date.

You will think that I might have found time "in this deep solitude" to have thanked you sooner for your letter, and my thanks it certainly *does* deserve; but time I have none, though I find enough pour m'ennuyer. I exist myself as much as a human creature can, and I do beguile the thing I am by seeming otherwise.<sup>1</sup> My letters have been written upon roses with pens dipped in honey, and those I have received are of the same materials.

I do not expect much from my Bath journey, and shall not be disappointed; but I find that in the joy of expecting me my Mother has dropped her fears. I shall tell her all is over, all is well, and that now we have only to divert ourselves,—and laugh at past dangers and storms. I conclude you will be cautious of the enclosed and dispose of it immediately. Remember to see the Primate, and to send me an account of your visit.—I shall keep your letter and read it over whenever the devil of suspicion lays holds of me. As to the devil of certainty about the Harcourts and such people, they may live to torment each other; I feel not about them.—I eat, drink, sleep, and I believe, *look* better than I did when you saw me last. This is all I can say except that I beg you will write again and constantly.

F. J.

<sup>1</sup> Cf. "Othello," ii. 1, 123.

*From the Earl of Jersey to Edward Jerningham.*

No date and no address.

DEAR SIR,

H.R. Highness wishes you to desire Mad<sup>ms</sup> Nolcken not to let the music wait for him ; though he purposes to come early. I must trouble you to make Lady Jersey's excuses and mine to Mad<sup>ms</sup> Nolcken : poor Augustus is suddenly taken so ill again that it is impossible for us to go out.

Ever yours, &c.,

JERSEY.<sup>1</sup>

Most likely the Prince may bring you to supper.  
Wednesday, 7 o'clock.

<sup>1</sup> George Bussy Villiers, 4th Earl of Jersey, was born on June 9th, 1736, the second and only surviving son and heir of William Villiers, 3rd Earl, by Anne, daughter of Sarcop Egerton, 1st Duke of Bridgewater, and widow of Wriothesley Bussell, 3rd Duke of Bedford. From 1742, in which year his elder brother died, to August 28th, 1769, on which date he succeeded his father as Earl, he was known as Viscount Villiers. He was M.P. for Tamworth from 1766 to 1761, for Aldborough from 1761 to 1768, and for Dover from 1768 to 1769. From 1761 to 1768 he was one of the Lords of the Admiralty, and in 1765 was sworn of the Privy Council. He was Vice-Chamberlain of the Household from 1765 to 1769, Extra Lord of the Bedchamber from 1769 to 1777, Master of the Buckhounds from 1782 to 1783, Captain of the Gentlemen Pensioners from May to December 1783, and he was appointed Lord of the Bedchamber and Master of the Horse to the Prince of Wales in 1795. On March 26th, 1770, at General Johnstone's house, St. Martin's in the Fields, he married Frances, posthumous daughter and sole heiress of the Right Rev. Philip Twysden, Bishop of Raphoe, son of Sir William Twysden, Bart., by his second wife Frances, daughter of the Right Hon. Thomas Carter. The Earl was then nearly thirty-five, and the Countess just seventeen. He died on August 22nd, 1805. She, who was born on February 26th, 1753, died at Cheltenham on July 23rd, 1821. The issue of the marriage was three sons and eight daughters. Of the latter six were married. Nothing much seems to be known of the Earl save that he was a great "blood," and fond of amateur theatricals. Mrs. Montagu calls him "the Prince of Maccaronies." In 1745, when he was ten years old, William Whitehead (1715-1785), the future Poet Laureate, became his tutor and afterwards, as bear-leader, accompanied him and Viscount Nuneham, the 2nd Earl Harcourt, on the Grand Tour.

*Seventeen Letterettes from the Countess of Jersey, and other matter.*

In addition to other matter the Jersey dossier contains seventeen letterettes from the Countess of Jersey, most of them undated, unsigned and unaddressed. Here they follow, placed, of necessity, in a purely arbitrary order.



## 1

Pray think me as I am, idle, instead of believing me to be, as I appear, very ungrateful, in not having thanked you for the gown, which I received on Sunday. If my wearing it can promote the interest of your Norwich friends, they may depend upon success; though I shall be working against the Whigs of Manchester. I go to the Grove to-morrow, and to the Forest of Arden next week. Let me hear from you when you come to London: we shall always be delighted to see you at Middleton.

## 2

Friday.

I was in hopes of hearing from you to-day: I sent Waite to know if you were dead or alive after your *elopement* on Tuesday night. Lord Hippisley<sup>1</sup> has just written to announce the P[rin]ce of Wurtemberg on Monday next; so I shall be in town on Tuesday. Pray write to-morrow. This place is delightful. The Prince desires you will tell us tout ce qui se passe to-morrow. Perhaps I may go to Bath on Monday; but I am not sure.

<sup>1</sup> I cannot discover who Lord Hippisley was.

## 3

Brighton, Thursday.

If I had more time I could say more than that the Prince will be excessively glad to see you on the 20th, and desires you will stay as long as you can. The Harcourts not coming is a great disappointment; but this is not a prosperous year. I wonder all the eggs that are hatched do not bring forth toads. I shall load you with bundles when you arrive. Pray write immediately and tell all manner of news. As to this place, it seems as good a hot-bed for lies as St. James's Street or Lady Mount's heart.<sup>1</sup> Adieu.

<sup>1</sup> Lady Mount is, of course, Lady Mount Edgcumbe.

## 3

I quite forgot to tell you yesterday that the Prince, before he went, desired you might dine here to-day. Whatever engagement you may have, you must put it off. Come at half-past six.

## 5

You know the dinner with the Prince is to be to-morrow; but I hope you will dine here to-day. This morning [I] claim your kind promise of assisting me in arranging some papers

which I am not equal to doing alone. I go on Thursday. Pray come: it may be the last act of friendship *almost* that you can do for me.

## 6

I cannot be at home before 8. Pray call at 8 o'clock. At 9 or soon after I shall go out; and, if you have any intelligence, write it by the bearer. But do up your letter tight, that it may not be read.

## 7

Thursday night.

It is our will and pleasure that you, E. J., shall find yourself at Hammond House to-morrow at one o'clock, then and there to take your departure in a vehicle to Bushey Park.<sup>1</sup>

F. J.

<sup>1</sup> Bushey Park had been occupied by Lord North, and, after his death, by his widow. After the Countess of Guilford's death, in January, 1797, the Duke of Clarence was made Ranger of the Park.

## 8

Do not come this morning for a reason: I want to see the Primate alone. All goes well. We sup at Miss Van's<sup>1</sup> to-night: Meet us there. Augustus is quite well.

<sup>1</sup> Miss Van is, I suppose, Miss Gertrude Vanneck, the third and unmarried daughter of Sir Joshua Vanneck, 1st Baronet. She died a spinster on March 14th, 1798. From a note on her in Mrs. Paget Toynbee's edition of Horace Walpole's "Letters," I gather that she occupied the position of Keeper of the Purse to the Princess of Wales.

## 9

Pray come here as soon as you can: do *not* say I sent to you. Lord J. quite miscomprehends a letter from Mr. Lambton,<sup>1</sup> wants to go from hence, and I want you to explain it to him.

<sup>1</sup> William Henry Lambton, of Lambton, was the first husband of the Countess of Jersey's second daughter, Lady Anna Barbara Frances Villiers. He married her on June 19th, 1791. He was the son of General John Lambton and the father of John George Lambton, who was created Baron Durham in 1828, and Earl of Durham in 1833.

## 10

Are you dead? Will you dine here and go with us to Tessier's<sup>1</sup> (He reads "Le Gentilhomme Campagnard et cadet"), or meet me there and sup? I thought I should have

seen you to-day, or should have sent sooner. I have been still en retraite.

<sup>1</sup> Le Tessier had been "receveur général des fermes de Lyon" before he took to the stage. Horace Walpole makes several allusions to him in his letters. Writing to the Countess of Upper Ossory on November 23rd, 1775, he says:—"On Sunday night I was singularly entertained at Monsieur de Guines's, who gave a vast supper to the Prince of Hesse and the goddesses most in fashion, as the Duchess of Devonshire, Lady Sefton, &c. We were twenty-eight at supper; but before it a Monsieur Tessier, of whom I have heard much in France, acted an entire play of ten characters, and varied his voice, and countenance, and manner, for each so perfectly that he did not name the persons that spoke, nor was it necessary. I cannot decide to which part he did most justice; but I would go to the play every night if I could see it so acted." Writing to the Countess of Ailesbury on December 11th, 1775, he says:—"There is another comedy infinitely worth seeing, Monsieur le Tessier. He is Prévile, and Caillard, and Garrick, and Weston, and Mrs. Clive, all together, and as perfect in the most insignificant part as in the most difficult."

Writing to the Countess of Upper Ossory on January 8th, 1777, of a performance of "The Provoked Husband" and of Rousseau's "Pygmalion," given at Bolney Court by the Earl of Jersey and other amateurs, he says:—"I have just got an account of Lord Villiers's play. It went off to admiration; and Le Texier, which I believe was inimitable." Writing to the same lady two years later (on February 1st, 1779), and alluding to Garrick's death, he says:—"I should shock Garrick's *devotees* if I uttered all my opinion: I will trust your Ladyship with it,—it is that Le Texier is twenty times the genius. What comparison between the powers that do the fullest justice to a single part, and those that instantaneously can fill a whole piece, and transform themselves with equal perfection into men and women, and pass from laughter to tears, and make you shed the latter at both?" At Christmas, 1784, Le Tessier was reading plays at Ditchley, Viscount Dillon's country seat.

In an entry in her "Diary and Letters," for Saturday, July 12th, 1788, Fanny Burney speaks with great admiration of Le Tessier's performance in "Le Roi à la Chasse."

Le Tessier was a member of the famous Pic Nic Society, which used to hold its earlier meetings at his rooms.

## 11

Probably you are out of town; for I think you would not be so long in London without coming to see us. Will you sup here this evening? And then we will settle about the German gentleman. I conclude he could not [come] this evening instead of you? If he can, you must send me his name, &c.

Ever yours,  
F. J.

## 12

I return you "Eloisa" and the Sermons. I hope I shall see you to-night at Lady Salisbury's.<sup>1</sup> If I should not, accept my good wishes, and remember your promise of writing me when you come from Norfolk.

<sup>1</sup> James, 1st Marquis of Salisbury, was born on September 4th, 1749, and was married on December 2nd, 1778, to Lady Emily Mary Hill, daughter of Wills, 1st Marquis of Downshire. He succeeded his father as 7th Earl of Salisbury on September 19th, 1789, and was created Marquis of Salisbury on August 18th, 1789. He was made a Knight of the Garter in 1798. From 1788 to 1804 he was Lord Chamberlain to King George III., and in this capacity is portrayed in many of Gillray's cartoons. He died on June 18th, 1823. Lady Salisbury survived him for over twelve years, meeting her death in a fire that consumed the west wing of Hatfield House on November 27th, 1835. About 1782 her name was frequently coupled with that of the Prince of Wales.

13

Uxbridge, 5 o'clock.

We shall expect you to-morrow: remember that. My reason for being here in preference to Salt Hill or Staines is that both those places will be full to-morrow of Ascot race people; so don't find fault with this place. Pray send to Pall Mall and Berkeley Square for letters. You know we should have been out of town sooner, if Lord J. should or would have permitted him to travel.

14

I waited Lord J.'s return to send you an answer about the dinner. But now I have not mentioned it to him: as I am so low upon the subject of Lady C. Campbell<sup>1</sup> that I do not like to engage in anything at the distance of 3 days. I am not less desirous of seeing your nephew?<sup>2</sup> Pray bring him here some morning soon. I am very grateful for your gratitude to the horse and saddle, and very impatient for the ode.

<sup>1</sup> Lady C. Campbell is, I suppose, Lady Charlotte Susan Maria Campbell, second daughter of John, 5th Duke of Argyll. On June 21st, 1796, she married Colonel John Campbell, her cousin, son of Walter Campbell, of Shawfield. The Countess of Jersey's third daughter, Lady Caroline Elizabeth Villiers, took for her second husband Lady Charlotte's brother, George William, 6th Duke of Argyll, whom she married on November 29th, 1810.

<sup>2</sup> It is impossible to say which of Sir William Jerningham's sons is alluded to.

15

I wish very much that you would sup here to-night. If you come to the Opera, I can bring you away the moment the dance is over. If I do not hear to the contrary, I shall expect you.

F. J.

16

Wednesday night.

I have an engagement for dinner to-morrow: so pray call here in the morning, it must be before two. A thousand thanks to the artist.

17

Sunday.

Pray dine here, if you can. I go on Wednesday for ever. If you cannot dine, come to coffee.

Yours, F. J.

Letters 18, 19, 20 and 21 are written by [Colonel] J. McMahon to Edward Jerningham. The first, undated, says that "The Commander-in-Chief will call *at your own house* about three o'clock to-morrow." The second, dated Saturday evening, November 24th, 1798, entreats him "*without fail* to meet the Prince *here* at one o'clock to-morrow on special business." The third, dated Tuesday, January 11th, 1799, says that "The Prince wishes to see you to-morrow at  $\frac{1}{2}$  past one precisely at this place." And the fourth, dated Wednesday, January 30th, 1799, runs:—"You are to attend the Commander-in-Chief *at this place* to-morrow at  $\frac{1}{2}$  past 2 o'clock." All four letters are addressed from No. 3, Bury Street, St. James's.

In the Jersey dossier is also included a statement about the conduct of the Prince of Wales, written by the Countess, unsigned of course, but obviously intended for publication in the Press. It runs as follows:—

"When the attention of the public has been excited by a multiplicity of circumstances the least expected and the least probable, and upon subjects too the least likely to create a general interest, if fairly and dispassionately considered, it becomes the duty of every disinterested and dispassionate mind to state what they feel, especially if supported by an unusual knowledge of the existing circumstances. Most of the daily papers have, upon a late occasion, been filled with a variety of statements equally and intentionally incorrect. Their object has been but too evident to be mistaken; but that we have in view is neither to colour with panegyric, to palliate with artifice, or to blacken with malevolence. The public will therefore allow us at a future date to lay before them such particulars as will not only open their eyes, but impress the generous soul of our nation with the regret of having too hastily passed a censure on the character and conduct of an exalted Personage who never can be too dear to our countrymen, but whom party and private enmity have dared to traduce, and to whom every true-born Englishman must look up to with that reverence and respect so justly his due; for, in spite of every malignity and misrepresentation, he is and must be the only support and basis of their Rights, Privileges, and Constitution."

X

THE REV. NORTON NICHOLLS

SOME PARTICULARS OF NORTON NICHOLLS'S RELATIONS WITH GRAY, WALPOLE, TEMPLE, BOSWELL, JERNINGHAM, AND MATHIAS.

NORTON NICHOLLS (1742-1809), born seemingly about 1742, was the son of Norton Nicholls, who married, at Somerset House Chapel, in 1741, Jane Floyer, daughter of Lieut.-Colonel Charles Floyer. The elder Nicholls appears to have died young, so young indeed that Mathias affirms that the boy can be said scarcely to have seen the father. His widow, however, survived him for many years, obtaining from her son Norton, as Lady Jerningham obtained from her son Edward, a dutiful regard, a tender affection, and a pleasant companionship, a piety which Gray celebrates in a famous passage of one of his letters to his pupil. Governor Floyer, his maternal uncle, seems to have looked after the education of young Nicholls, who was sent first to Eton, where he received private lessons from the distinguished classical scholar Dr. Sumner, and then to Trinity Hall, Cambridge, where he had the good fortune to meet Gray, who, his senior by twenty-six years, practically directed his course of reading, having become "more affectionately attached to him [says Mathias] than to any other person," save his early friend, Richard West. At Trinity Hall, Nicholls made the acquaintance of W. J. Temple, who, admitted pensioner in 1758, and made scholar on the foundation in 1759, was already an intimate friend of Boswell's and of Gray's. At a very early stage of their relations, Gray appears to have urged Nicholls to enter the Church, and to secure some ancillary occupation. But Nicholls was already too much of a dilettante to relish regular employment; and it was not till his uncle's death (on September 7th, 1766) considerably reduced his means that he thought fit to act upon his friend's advice. The same cause, *res angusta domi*, that compelled Nicholls to become a clergyman forced Temple to venture on a similar career. Both young men accordingly took the degree of LL.B., the former in 1766, the latter in 1765; and they both received orders, Temple in 1766, and Nicholls, Temple's junior by three years, in 1767. Thenceforward their paths separated; for Temple, having obtained the rectory of Mamhead, near Exeter, was practically confined to the west of England for the

rest of his life, while Nicholls, made Rector of Lound and Bradwell, near Lowestoft, in 1767, held that position till his death. True the two men corresponded, and Temple introduced Nicholls to Boswell; but I cannot discover whether they met in subsequent years, while the annexed extracts from his "Letters to Temple" will show that "the great man" was not drawn to Nicholls. "Bozzy," in fact, disapproved of the "foppery" of his friend's friend, and, knowing that Johnson thought the merriment of parsons "mighty offensive," never introduced him, as he had introduced Temple, to the "great Cham of Literature." It is only fair, however, to remember that two of Nicholls's most intimate friends, Gray and Walpole, heartily disliked Johnson; probably, therefore, Nicholls was in the case of the former, who refused to be introduced to the man whom he described to De Bonstetten as "Ursa Major."

I shall not discuss Boswell's account of Nicholls's story of his ordination: it is an ugly story, and shows Nicholls to have borne a kindred spirit to that of his friend Horace Walpole, the eighteenth-century Gallio. Possibly, however, this spirit may have been roused by the whisky or wine with which Boswell was certain to have plied his guest. In any case, judged by his own "Reminiscences of Gray," and by what Mathias says of him, Nicholls seems to have been too well-bred a man to disregard, save occasionally, professional decorum and decency. To claim that he had a vocation for the Church would, of course, be absurd. Nicholls was indeed more of a French abbé than an Anglican parson; he was a cultivated man of the world. "In every department of elegant literature [says Mathias] Mr. Nicholls displayed the same correct taste. His knowledge of history was copious but chosen; in ancient and in modern writers he was accurately versed; and in all subjects he had recourse to the original springs of knowledge. In the French and Italian languages, as well as in the particular modes of the life and manners of these countries, he was eminently instructed; and the merits of every author and poet of distinction were familiar to him. In the more polished society of un-Revolutionised France and in the Tuscan conversations [*i.e.*, Assemblies] he was received as a native. . . . Many persons were inclined to think that either the Seine or the Arno might have claimed him for its own. . . . He was passionately, perhaps rather too much, devoted to music; he had studied it accurately as a science under some of the greatest masters." I may add that he was a connoisseur of Italian pictures, something of a botanist, and no mean gardener.

As there was no rectory at Lound, Nicholls settled with his mother at Blundeston House, in an adjoining parish, and employed his leisure to such good purpose in laying out the



grounds, planting trees and flowers, and improving the "ample lake," that Mathias calls his villa an "Oasis," and says that he could have made his fortune as a landscape-gardener. Gray stopped with Nicholls at Blundeston in September, 1768, and again in the spring of 1770; and in July and August of the latter year he went with him "for a six weeks' ramble through Worcestershire, Gloucestershire, Monmouthshire, Herefordshire, and Shropshire," the younger man writing up a journal of their doings which the poet kept in his possession "to recall and to fix the fading images of those things." In September of the same year, Nicholls and his mother seem to have spent some time at Cambridge with Gray. But illness prevented the poet from accompanying his friend on that tour of France, Switzerland, and Italy which he commenced at the beginning of June, 1771. Nicholls made this tour with Gray's and his own friend, Barrett; but whether he went as travelling tutor to Barrett, as had been proposed in 1768, or merely as fallow-traveller, does not appear. Probably he shared expenses with Barrett; for he left him behind at Florence and went on to Sienna alone. In the course of his travels, of which he printed an account in order to give copies to his friends, Nicholls met Gibbon in Switzerland, and there renewed his acquaintance with Charles Victor de Bonstetten, the lively Bernois youth whom he had introduced to Gray with such success. But he refrained from visiting Voltaire, whom De Bonstetten knew, in compliance with a special injunction from Gray, who disliked the French poet's cynical and anti-religious temper. This Continental tour was made the more pleasant and instructive to the traveller owing to his introduction, through De Bonstetten, to "the celebrated and learned Count Firmian, the Austrian Minister at Milan," who became his intimate friend, says Mathias, and gave him "access to every circle of distinction in every foreign country which he visited." Walpole, whom Nicholls knew probably through Gray, had also given him introductions to Sir Horace Mann, the English resident at Florence. Gray died on July 30th, 1771, and therefore can have received few, if any, of those travel-letters which he looked forward to obtaining from his pupil, who did not return to England till the spring of 1773.

When and in what circumstances Nicholls contracted the second of the three great friendships of his life, that with Edward Jerningham, I cannot discover. But a well-bred, cultivated, and travelled clergyman who held an East Anglian living would, as the case of Robert Potter proves, naturally be welcome at Cossey; and Nicholls seems to have been on terms of intimacy by 1775, not only with Edward Jerningham, but with his two brothers, Sir William and the Chevalier Charles. That the terms on which Norton Nicholls lived with Edward

Jerningham were intimate is proved sufficiently by the allusions which he makes in his letters to his unfortunate love affair; but whether the intimacy proved durable is, as I shall endeavour later to show, a point of considerable dubiety.

Henceforward no striking external incident marked the career of Nicholls. From the spring of 1773 to the end of 1790, he passed the greater part of his time at Blundeston, save when he revisited the Continent. There, in 1799, he entertained "the gallant Admiral Duncan soon after his return to Yarmouth, crowned with the laurels won at Camperdown"; and there he died in his sixty-eighth year, on November 22nd, 1809, "from the sudden bursting of a blood-vessel." But he was often at Richmond, drawn there partly by the lure of his beloved Thames, partly by friendship for Horace Walpole, and for that of the social and literary celebrities who made their home there, partly doubtless by attachment to the "very old uncle," William Turner, who had purchased for him the presentation to his rectory. Turner died there on November 11th, 1790, aged ninety-two, leaving Nicholls and his mother a considerable fortune; and after his death son and mother seem to have taken up at least a partial residence at Richmond. She died first; and he lies buried with her in a vault on the south side of Richmond Church, where a marble slab placed on the south side of the chancel celebrates his memory.

In what year and through whose introduction Nicholls met Mathias, the great friend of his later years, I cannot state definitely\*; but, however they became associated, it is probable that they were attracted to one another by the fact that they were both Cambridge men, both accomplished Italian scholars, and both admirers of Gray. As a matter of fact, Mathias edited Gray, bringing out a rival edition to John Mitford's in 1814, at the ruinous price of seven guineas. For this edition of the poet, Nicholls furnished Mathias with a good deal of original material. He gave him all the anecdotes of Gray which Mathias included in his "Observations on the writings and on the character of Mr. Gray." He also wrote for him, on November 18th, 1805, those "Reminiscences of Gray," which quaintly enough were neglected by Mathias but included in Mitford's fifth volume (1843). Moreover, he left him all his books, and a large sum of money in the event, which failed to occur, of his surviving one of his own [*i.e.* Nicholls's] near relatives. In return Mathias made Nicholls, under the name of Octavius, one of the two interlocutors by whom the plan of his satiric poem, "The Pursuits of Literature," is carried out. And when his friend died in 1809, he not only commemorated him in an Italian canzone, but printed for private circulation, "A Copy of a Letter occasioned by the

\* See, however, note 4 on Lady Beauchamp Proctor's 2nd Letter.

Death of the Rev. Norton Nicholls," a verbose and inadequate memoir, which, often reprinted since, is the only contemporary account of Nicholls. Now all these reciprocal tributes seem at first sight to be perfectly becoming, and to reflect equal honour on Nicholls and on Mathias. It is not indeed till one remembers that Mathias pilloried Edward Jerningham in "The Pursuits of Literature" that one begins to realise what this connection of Nicholls with Mathias really involved. It involved, on Nicholls's part, treason to an older friendship.

To prevent any misapprehension, let me give chapter and verse. In the "Introductory Letter" to "The Pursuits of Literature," a letter first published in January, 1798, as a preface to the fifth edition—the first edition issued in single-volume form—Mathias remarks:—

"If we pass to subjects of lighter moment, even the Bavian drops from Mr. Gifford have fallen off, like oil, from the plumage of the Florence and Cruscan geese: and at *home* also I am sorry that his success is imperfect. I am told that Mr. Great-head and Mr. Merry still write and talk; and Mr. Jerningham (poor man!) still continues sillier than his sheep."

In the "Fourth Dialogue," describing Dr. Morosophos, Mathias introduces Edward Jerningham into the text of his poem in the lines:—

"A Poet too he was, not very bright,  
Something between a Jerningham and Knight."

To this reference he adds the following grossly insulting note:—

"Let them both hear the advice of Boileau:—

'Soyez plutôt maçon, si c'est votre talent,  
Ouvrier estimé dans un art nécessaire,  
Qu'écrivain du commun, et poète vulgaire.'

And in a later edition of the poem he adds a second note:—

"Mr. Jerningham may possibly remember and admire those beautiful lines in Dryden's 'Epistle to Mr. Julien, Secretary of the Muses'; and other persons may apply them.

'All his care  
Is to be thought a poet fine and fair.

Rhyme next his heart he takes at morning peep,  
Some love-epistles at the hour of sleep;  
And, when his passion has been bubbling long,  
The scum at last boils up into a song.'

Of the virulence of Mathias's attack upon Jerningham, and of Nicholls's indifference to this attack, there can then be no doubt. Nicholls could not plead that he liked the man, but thought little of the poet. In several of his letters to Jerningham

he confesses his affection for the man ; but in his last extant letter to him, dated February 14th, 1784, he definitely commits himself to a strong admiration of the poet. Why and when he recanted this admiration is not manifest. Horace Walpole died in 1797, aged eighty. In none of his references to Nicholls, in none of his references or letters to Jerningham, is there any hint of any quarrel having taken place between the two men. So probably I am right in imagining that while this common friend lived no breach occurred between them. Walpole, it must be remembered, was twenty years older than Jerningham, and twenty-five years older than Nicholls, and, warned by his own quarrel with Gray, he would naturally wish the two younger men to keep the peace. I am inclined, however, to believe that possibly, owing to the peculiar circumstances of the publication of "The Pursuits of Literature," no breach *ever* occurred between Nicholls and Jerningham on Mathias's account. All the impressions of the poem were published anonymously. Moreover, Mathias did his best to put the public off the trail by including in the text of his work, and in the notes, advertisements and puffs of his own books. Madame D'Arblay, it is evident, never suspected Mathias of being the author of "The Pursuits of Literature." Writing to her father, Dr. Burney, in 1796, Fanny Burney ascribes the work to Gray's biographer, William Mason, advancing, as she thinks, many cogent reasons for the ascription. And though, after her marriage, she mentions Mathias, and speaks of the stroke which compelled him for his health's sake to go to Italy in 1816, even then she seems ignorant of his connection with "The Pursuits." Yet, as lady-in-waiting to Queen Charlotte, she knew Mathias well, who was a clerk to the Queen's treasurer ; and, in her "Diary and Letters," she lays stress on the delicacy with which he discharged his duty of paying her her salary.

Dawson Turner, who possessed letters addressed to the unknown author and Mathias's answers to them, declared that the authorship "was scarcely made a secret by the family after Mathias went to Italy," in 1816. As a matter of fact, though Mathias *never* publicly claimed the authorship of "The Pursuits," his secret had been disclosed to the literary world as early as 1798. In that year, the year after Horace Walpole's death, an anonymous scribe, who styled himself "Andrew Œdipus, an injured author," pierced the anonymity of the hitherto unknown libeller in a work of forty-eight heroic lines entitled "The Sphinx's Head Broken: a Poetical Epistle, with notes, to Thomas James M<sup>th</sup>\*, Cl<sup>r</sup>k to the Q<sup>ueen</sup>'s Tr<sup>ans</sup>\*r\*, proving him to be the author of 'The Pursuits of Literature.'" In this shilling pamphlet "Andrew Œdipus" also attributed to Mathias the "Epistles" to Dr. Randolph

and to the Earl of Jersey. A dozen years later the authorship of "The Pursuits" was revealed to "*all and singular*" in the pages of *The Gentleman's Magazine*. Mathias's "Letter occasioned by the death of the Rev. Norton Nicholls" had been published in the issue of the magazine for October, 1810. Now "Sylvanus Urban," the editor, otherwise John Nichols, had an unpleasant habit of turning on his contributors; as Edward Burnaby Greene and others discovered to their cost. Accordingly in the Supplement to Volume 80 of the *The Gentleman's* appeared a letter from "Philalethes," who, writing from Kirk Wall, Orkneys, on November 29th, 1810, in ostensible praise of Mathias's panegyric on Nicholls, wound up his communication in the following significant passage:—"Nature, it has been truly observed, seldom fails to place a remedy by the side of a poison. The salutiferous quinquina [*i.e.* quinine] waves its branches over the plains where the Vomito Prieto, or Black Vomit, exerts its baleful sway; and the heart-soothing sweetness of Mr. Mathias's Eulogy is a powerful antidote to the dark and nameless venom of 'The Pursuits of Literature'!" To the general public then Mathias's authorship of "The Pursuits" was laid open a year after Nicholls's death; and about the same time, if not before, Edward Jerningham must have discovered from the testamentary dispositions left by Nicholls that his old friend had been intimate with the anonymous assailant who had made such unprovoked attacks both on himself (Jerningham) and on his friend, the Countess of Jersey. I should like, however, to think that, as long as Nicholls lived, his connection with "The Pursuits," equivocal as it was, escaped detection. Remembering that Nicholls and Mathias were both Italianate Englishmen, I would not absolutely scout the hypothesis that the former may have died in complete amity, if not in the old intimacy, with Edward Jerningham, having preserved this amity by reason of his friend's absolute ignorance of his treachery.

With Horace Walpole Nicholls was on terms of friendship and of familiarity, as may be gathered from Walpole's own letters; but these letters also prove that Walpole occasionally waxed impatient at the display which Nicholls was so fond of making of his talents for singing and for gossip. He evidently thought him a good deal of a *petit maitre*. On his side Nicholls probably got a little weary of his friend's undue affection for rank and for social position. Writing, a few years after Walpole's death, his "Reminiscences of Gray," he delivers his mind with great frankness and downrightness on the subject of Walpole's snobbishness. "Except during his travels [*says he*] Gray had *never lived much* (as the phrase is) *in the world*. And even at that time the total want of congeniality and similarity of

disposition and pursuits between him and his companion, and the vanity, conceit, and airs of superiority in the latter, never forgetting that he was son of the First Minister, could not inspire with much gaiety a mind not naturally prone to it, and probably contributed to depress his spirits. When I once endeavoured to learn from him the cause of his difference and separation from Walpole, he said, 'Walpole was son of the First Minister; and you may easily conceive that on this account he might assume an air of superiority (I will not answer for *the exact expression*; but it was to this effect), or do or say something which perhaps I did not bear as well as I ought.'

Nicholls seems to have been regarded with mixed feelings by contemporary men of letters. William Mason, Gray's "Troddles," told Walpole that "Nicholls drinks like any fish," and protested that he was bored with the "eternalities of the foreign tour of Nicholls." Sir Egerton Brydges, who knew his friends, Barrett and De Bonstetten, regarded Nicholls as "a very clever man, with a great deal of erudition, but, it must be confessed, a supreme coxcomb." Dr. Parr, "the Whig Dr. Johnson," discovered in him "some venial irregularities, mingled with much ingenuity, much taste, much politeness, and much good nature."

So far as I am aware the letters written to Edward and to Sir William Jerningham are the first set of Nicholls's letters to be published since the fifteen addressed to Gray and the three to Barrett, which Mitford printed in his fifth volume. In the preface to the original issue of "The Letters of James Boswell to the Rev. W. J. Temple," the editor states: "Besides those written by Boswell, which are here published, were found several from Mr. Nicholls, Mr. Claxton, and other persons alluded to in the following pages, as well as a few unpublished sermons and essays by Mr. Temple." The editor, however, for some reason or other, failed to print these letters of Nicholls, which possibly may have covered the whole period of Temple's life since he left Cambridge; for I take it that they were written to Temple. Whether they have disappeared, or still exist, I have been unable to discover.

Inasmuch as Mathias appears to give an inaccurate account of Nicholls's first meeting with Gray, I quote Nicholls's own description taken from his "Reminiscences of Gray":—

"My first acquaintance with Mr. Gray was one afternoon drinking tea at the rooms of Mr. Lobb, a fellow of Peter House. The conversation turned on the use of bold metaphors in poetry, and that of Milton was quoted, 'The Sun to me is dark, And silent as the Moon' [*Samson Agonistes*, lines 85 and 86]. When I ventured to ask if it might not possibly be imitated from Dante, 'Mi ripingeva la dove il sol tace,' Mr. Gray

turned quickly round to me, and said, 'Sir, do you read Dante!' and entered into conversation with me."

The reader will see at once that Nicholls's rendering of Gray's question is the correct one. "Right; but have you read Dante, sir?" is a rather patronising and rude query. "Sir, do you read Dante!" is a polite expression of pleasant surprise.

Not very much information can be gathered about Nicholls's circle of acquaintances. It included Gray's friends, Mason, Temple, De Bonstetten, and Thomas Barrett, of Lea Park, Canterbury, Cowper's friends, Sir Thomas and Lady Hesketh, and, of course, Horace Walpole, Dr. Parr, Jerningham, the Beauchamp Proctors, and Mathias. Nicholls seems to have been fond, too, of aristocratic society, numbering among his noble hosts, Lord Huntingdon, the Earl and Countess of Findlater, the Duke and Duchess of Gordon, and probably the Duke of Athol. What degree of intimacy subsisted between Norton Nicholls and that very aristocratic person, Sir Samuel Egerton Brydges, Baronet (and, *per legem terræ*, Baron Chandos of Sudeley), I cannot discover. The only reference Brydges makes to Nicholls in his "Autobiography," is the one I have already quoted. Brydges knew Thomas Barrett well; he calls him "maternal uncle to the mother of my eldest son!"

Perhaps I should add a word or two on the successive owners of Blundeston. At one time Blundeston belonged to the Jernegans or Jerninghams. Early in the 17th century, Bute Bacon, created a baronet on July 29th, 1627, became its possessor. In 1668, Admiral Sir Thomas Allin, Comptroller of the Navy, bought the place. In 1770, it became the property of Frances, the daughter of the Rev. Asburst Allin, the 3rd baronet of that line; and it was from this lady, who died unmarried, that Norton Nicholls rented it. It then reverted to the Bacons, having been purchased from Miss Allin's executors by Nicholas Henry Bacon, the second surviving son of Sir Edmund Bacon, Bart., of Raveningham, Norfolk, who, however, sold it in 1832 to Charles Steward, an officer in the East India Company's service. An aged pollard oak and a summer-house placed at the termination of the lake, are said to have been Gray's favourite haunts at Blundeston.

## HIS FRIENDS' OPINIONS OF NORTON NICHOLLS

### (1) *References in Gray's Letters.*

1. It is long since that I heard you were gone in hast into Yorkshire on account of your mother's illness; and the same letter informed me that she was recovered. Otherwise I had then wrote to you, only to beg you would take care of her, and

to inform you that I had discovered a thing very little known, which is, that in one's whole life one can never have any more than a single mother. You may think this is obvious, and (what you call) a trite observation. You are a green gosling! I was at the same age (very near) as wise as you, and yet I never discovered this (with full evidence and conviction, I mean) till it was too late. It is thirteen years ago; and every day I live it sinks deeper into my heart. . . . You, I hope, are better off, riding and walking in the woods of Studley with Mr. Aislaby, singing duets with "my cousin Fanny," improving with Mr. Weddell, conversing with Mr. Harry Duncomb."

Pembroke Hall, August 26, 1766.

2. That Mr. Brocket has broke his neck you will have seen in the newspapers, and also that I (your humble servant) have kissed the King's hand for his succession [i.e. as Professor of Modern History and Letters at Cambridge]. . . . I am commissioned to make you an offer, which I have told him (not the King) you would not accept long ago. Mr. Barrett (whom you know) offers to you a hundred pounds a year, with meat, drink, washing, chaise, and lodging, if you will please to accompany him through France into Italy. He has taken such a fancy to you that I cannot but do what he desires me, being pleased with him for it. I know it will never do; though, before you grew a rich fat rector, I have often wished (ay, and fished to) for such an opportunity [for you]. No matter! I desire you to write your answer to him yourself, as civil as you think fit, and then let me know the result; that is all. He lives at Lee [Priory], near Canterbury.

Jermyn Street, Mr. Roberts, August 3rd, 1768.

3. At length, my dear Sir, we have lost our poor de Bonstetten. I packed him up with my own hands in the Dover machine at four o'clock in the morning on Friday, 23rd March. . . . And here am I again to pass my solitary evenings, which hung much lighter on my hands before I knew him. This is your fault! Pray let the next you send me be bald and blind, dull, unapprehensive, and wrong-headed. . . . This place never appeared so horrible to me as it does now. Could not you come for a week or a fortnight? It would be sunshine to me in a dark night.

Pembroke Hall. April 4th, 1770.

4. I cannot bear this place, where I have spent many tedious years within less than a month since you left me. I am going for a few days to see poor N[icholls], invited by a letter wherein he mentions you in such terms as add to my regard



for him, and express my own sentiments better than I can do myself. Says he:—

“I am concerned that I cannot pass my life with him. I never met with any one who pleased and suited me so well. The miracle to me is, how he came to be so little spoiled; and the miracle of miracles will be, if he continues so in the midst of every danger and seduction, and without any advantages but from his own excellent nature and understanding. I own I am very anxious for him on this account, and perhaps your inquietude may have proceeded from the same cause. I hope I am to hear when he has passed that cursed sea, or will he forget me thus in insulam relegatum? If he should, it is out of my power to retaliate.”

Surely you have written to him, my dear Bonstetten, or surely you will! He has moved me with these gentle and sensible expressions of his kindness for you. Are you untouched by them?

To Charles Von Bonstetten. April 19th, 1770.

5. I shall pass a fortnight here, and perhaps within that time may see you in town. At least I would wish so to do. I am but indifferently well, and think, all things considered, it is best not to keep you in suspense about my journey. The sense of my own duty [as Professor of Modern History], which I do not perform, my own low spirits (to which this consideration not a little contributes), and (added to these) a bodily indisposition, makes it necessary for me to deny myself that pleasure, which perhaps I have kept too long in view. I shall see, however, with your eyes, and accompany you at least in idea. Write, or come, or both, soon.

London. At Frisby's, Jermyn Street, May 20th, 1771.

6. I continue here much against my will. The gout is gone, the feverish disorder abated, but not cured. My spirits [are] much oppressed, and the more so as I foresee a new complaint, that may tie me down perhaps to my bed and expose me to the operations of a surgeon. God knows what will be the end of it. It will be alleviation to my miseries if I can hear you are well, and capable of enjoying those objects of curiosity that the countries you are in promise to afford you. The greater the detail you give me of them, the happier I shall be.

Jermyn Street, June 28th, 1771.

(2) *Notices in Horace Walpole's Letters.*1. *To Sir Horace Mann.*

Arlington Street, April 21st, 1772.

P.S.—I knew Mr. Nicholls, and have a great regard for him. Pray tell him so, and show him so.

2. *To Sir Horace Mann.*

Strawberry Hill, Nov. 4th, 1772.

Are Lord Huntingdon and Mr. Nicholls still at Florence? You never say a word to me of the latter, who I thought likely to please you. Consider, we have not so many people left that we both know, that you need be sparing of naming those we can talk about. I am often going to ask you what remains there are of my Florentine acquaintance; but you never indulge my curiosity that way, though it would amuse me. Well—Adieu.

P.S.—If Mr. Nicholls has not left you, he might bring me a parcel of my letters.

3. *To the Rev. William Mason.*

Strawberry Hill, March 27th, 1773.

Mr. Nicholls is returned transported with Italy. I hope he will come hither with me next week; Gothic ground may sober him a little from pictures and statues, which he will not meet with in his own village, and which I doubt will at first be a little irksome. His friend Mr. Barrett stands for Dover, I suppose on the Court interest; for Wilkes has sent down a remonstrating candidate. I like the "Parliamentary Right" in his City remonstrance.

4. *To the Rev. William Mason.*

Strawberry Hill, June 26th, 1776.

Mr. Nicholls has been here, and tells me he has seen you, and that you have not been well, for which I am very sorry indeed. He says York disagreed with you, and that you will go thither no more in winter. The rest of his account was much more welcome; that you have made charming progress in your third book [of "The English Garden"], and inserted divine lines on Gray. Them I do thirst to see, and trust I shall ere many moons have put on their nightcaps; for Lord Harcourt has asked me to meet you at Nuneham.

5. *To the Rev. William Mason.*

Strawberry Hill, July 16th, 1778.

Mr. Nicholls and I went last week to see the new apartment at Osterley Park.

6. *To the Rev. William Mason.*

Strawberry Hill, July 24th, 1778.

I did not discover, and certainly did not suspect, a bacchanalian disposition in a certain person [Norton Nicholls];<sup>1</sup> for we dined together but once. We think alike on that subject, I assure you; but I will reserve it for our meeting.

<sup>1</sup> Nicholls had recently visited Mason at York.

7. *To the Rev. William Cole.*

Arlington Street, Nov. 4th, 1788.

I have not strength to dictate more now, except to add, that if Mr. Nickolls [Nicholls?] has seen my narrative about Chatterton, it can only be my letter to Mr. Beverley, of which you have a copy; the larger one has not yet been out of my own house.

8. *To Miss Mary and Miss Agnes Berry.*

Strawberry Hill, June 26th, 1789.

I am seriously alarmed at Thursday being come, and no letter! I dread one of you being ill. . . . Mr. Batt and the Abbé Nicholls dined with me to-day, and I could talk of you en pais de connoissance. They tried to persuade me that I have no cause to be in a fright about you; but I have such perfect faith in the kindness of both of you, as I have in your possessing every other kind of virtue, that I cannot believe but some sinister accident must have prevented my hearing from you.

9. *To Miss Mary Berry.*

Strawberry Hill, Aug. 6th, 1789.

General Fitzwilliam is dead, at Richmond; extremely rich. He has not, I believe, extremely disappointed his nephew, the Viscount, who did not depend upon hopes that had been thrown out to him, nor is much surprised that the General's upper servant and his late wife's woman are the principal heirs, as the Abbé Nichols [Nicholls] and others long foresaw.

10. *To Miss Mary Berry.*

Strawberry Hill, Aug. 2nd, 1790.

Miss Cheap, whom I met last night at a concert at Mrs. Udney's . . . is certainly your friend; for she told me that Mrs. Udney, whom I took for two-and-twenty is eight-and-thirty. There I found the Abbé [Nicholls] singing glees with the Abrahams.<sup>1</sup> I insisted that he had been warbling at the Worcester and Gloucester music meeting.

<sup>1</sup> The Abrahams, or Abrams, were fashionable concert singers. They are referred to by Baroness Nolcken in a letter to Edward Jerningham.

11. *To the Hon. Henry Seymour Conway.*

Strawberry Hill, Aug. 9th, 1790.

Mr. Nicholls has offered to be postman to you; whereof, though I have nothing, or as little as nothing, to say, I thought as how it would look kinder to send nothing in writing than by word of mouth.

12. *To Miss Mary and Miss Agnes Berry.*

Strawberry Hill, Nov. 28th, 1790.

The very old uncle of the Abbé Nichols [Nicholls] is dead, and, as he tells me, has left well to his mother and him. And he is come to live there [at Richmond] with her, and I shall hear him sing, I conclude, at the Duke's<sup>1</sup> concerts.

<sup>1</sup> The Duke of Clarence had a palace at Richmond.

13. *To Miss Mary Berry.*

Strawberry Hill, April 8rd, 1791.

I can have nothing to add, nor indeed do I think of anything, but the fall at Pisa, of which I went full to Lady Hesketh's last night. And there were so many of your friends, that my sad news seemed like throwing a bomb into the room. You would have been flattered at the grief it occasioned; there were Mrs. Lockart, the Pepys's, Mrs. Buller, Lady Herries, George Cambridge, the Abbé Nichols [Nicholls], Mrs. Carter, and some who scarce know you, who yet found they would be very unfashionable if they did not join in the concern for you and in your panegyric.

14. *To Miss Mary Berry.*

Berkeley Square, April 11th, 1791.

The Abbé has come in and distracted me with news for which I do not care a straw, nor would have listened to,

but that you like my telling you all I hear. But what are all those marriages to me who am separated from both my wives?

15. *To Miss Mary Berry.*

Strawberry Hill, May Day, 1794.

The Abbé Nichols [Nicholls] is in favour with me for carrying the good news [of the Duke of York's victory over the French at Cateau Cambrésis on April 26th, 1794] to you. Did not he seem quite an emigré, hoping he should soon be restored to his chanoinie at Paris!

(3) *Excerpts from Thomas James Mathias's "Memoir of Norton Nicholls."*

1. "In addition to the attentions which he experienced from the celebrated Dr. Barnard, then master of the school, I have heard him frequently express his grateful sense of the assistance he received at Eton from the voluntary private instruction of Dr. Sumner, whose classical erudition was deep and extensive."

2. "By the intervention of a common friend Mr. Nicholls, when between eighteen and nineteen years of age, was introduced to Mr. Gray. I remember he told me what an awe he felt at the time at the lightning of his eye, at that 'folgorantes-guardo,' as the Tuscans term it; but Mr. Gray's courtesy and encouraging affability soon dispersed every uneasy sensation and gave him confidence. Shortly after this Mr. Nicholls was in a select company of which Mr. Gray was one; and, as it became his youth, he did not enter into the conversation, but listened with attention. The subject, however, being general and classical, and as Mr. Nicholls, even at that early period, was acquainted not only with the Greek and Latin but with many of the best Italian poets, he ventured with great diffidence to offer a short remark, and happened to illustrate what he said by an apposite citation from Dante. At the name of Dante Mr. Gray . . . suddenly turned round to him and said 'Right; but have you read Dante, Sir?' 'I have endeavoured to understand him,' replied Mr. Nicholls. Mr. Gray, being much pleased with the illustration and with the taste which it evinced, addressed the chief of his discourse to him for the remainder of the evening, and invited him to his rooms in Pembroke Hall. Mr. Gray found in his young acquaintance a ready and a docile disposition, and he became attached to him. He then gave him instruction for the course of his studies, which he directed *entirely*, even to the recommendation of *every*

author, and to the very order in which they should be read, which happily continued till the time of Mr. Gray's death."

3. "As a country magistrate Mr. Nicholls was diligent and regular in his attendance, and useful, discerning, temperate and impartial in the discharge of his duty in that function."

4. "To those friends who visited Mr. Nicholls and partook of his refined hospitality and of his entertainments at Blundeston it may possibly have appeared that his mode of life required a large command of fortune. Yet his inheritance, which was inconsiderable, and his professional income, which was not large, defrayed the whole. He had indeed the most discerning economy which I ever observed in any man, an economy which neither precluded liberality to his equals, nor, what is far more important, charity to his inferiors."

5. "He resided generally nine or ten months every year in his parishes, and during his residence he read prayers and preached twice every Sunday. Though his mode of preaching was not peculiarly eloquent, it was impressive and often affecting. The matter of his sermons tended more to the discussion and enforcement of the moral duties of the Gospel than to the consideration of the subtle points of theology. His compositions for the pulpit were, as I think, formed chiefly on the mode of Masillon and Flechier, in whose writings he was conversant. He conscientiously adhered to the Church of England from principle, and had an aversion to all dispute and controversy. . . . He dreaded the influence and the principles of the Romish Church . . . and deprecated their encouragement or their revival among us."

6. "When he was a child his constitution was delicate; but, as years advanced, by care, by exercise, and afterwards by foreign travel and change of scene and of climate, by a scrupulous attention to his person and to a neatness never exceeded, and by an even placid temper, his frame acquired a strength, an alacrity, and a springy activity which, I think, accompanied him to the last, and gave a zest to his pursuits and vigour to his faculties. . . . His appearance never bespoke his age: and in the best sense of the word, I think, he was always young."

7. "In the spring and summer of the year 1809 Mr. Nicholls was attacked by a species of cough, the nature or the cause of which he could not ascertain. . . . A very few days before that termination which was so soon to take place, he returned home much indisposed to Blundeston, and experienced every affectionate attention and relief from his physician, Dr. Girdlestone of Yarmouth. But his complaint, which was bilious, increased beyond the reach of art. A dissolution of strength succeeded, and from the sudden bursting of a blood-

vessel he breathed out his virtuous spirit by an instant and quiet expiration."

(4) *Mentions in "Boswell's Letters to Temple."*

1. "Remember me to Nicholls with the remembrance of esteem: I hope to be much better and much longer acquainted with him."

Inner Temple, July 26th, 1763.

2. "I am glad Nicholls is so good a man."

Edinburgh, August 29th, 1767.

3. "Might I not see Bath and Bristol in coming to see you? How would it do to get Claxton or Nicholls to come with me? But we will be better alone; as we can

'Pour out all ourselves as plain  
As downright Shippen or as old Montaigne.'

Grantliam, March 18th, 1775.

4. "Nicholls was some days here on his way home. His foppery is unbecoming in a clergyman. But I was really much offended with him one night, when he supped with me. McLaurin, who, I fear, is an infidel, was the only other person in company. Nicholls gave a ludicrous account of his ordination, said he applied to the Archbishop of York (Drummond), who asked him what books he had read in divinity. 'Why, truly, my Lord,' said he, 'I must tell you frankly—none at all; though I have read other books enough.' 'Very well,' said the Archbishop, 'I'll give you a letter to one who will examine you properly.' Accordingly he got a letter to a clergyman in London, who examined him; and, to cut short this disagreeable story, Nicholls said that he did not well understand what was meant when desired to write on the necessity of a Mediator; that he wrote some strange stuff as fast as he would do a card to a lady; and that he had never read the Greek New Testament. He made a very profane farce of the whole. McLaurin laughed exceedingly. I could only be grave; for, if I had argued on the impropriety of the story, the matter would have been made worse, while they were two to one. Now, my dear friend, I do not believe, in the first place, that the Archbishop would be so shamefully unfaithful to his awful trust. If he had been so, it was dishonourable in Nicholls to tell. Upon either supposition Nicholls was avowing himself a cheat. Neither could it be true that he was so grossly ignorant as he alleged he was. I shall never receive

him again into my house. What I have now told you happened on a Saturday night. I called on him next day to have talked to him of it; but did not find him. I sent on Monday morning to know if he was gone, that I might still see; he was just stepping into the post-chaise to set out for his living. Perhaps it was as well that I did not see him. You know I speak pretty strongly. And why should I take any concern about him?"

Edinburgh, November 3rd, 1730.

6. "I unexpectedly met Nicholls last Wednesday at a club at the Blenheim Tavern, Bond Street, of which I am an honorary member. We were civil to each other."

London, March 31st, 1739.

## [ LETTERS FROM THE REV. NORTON NICHOLLS

### 1

*To Sir William Jerningham, Bart.*

Blundeston, Sept. 20th, 1775.

Whether you will go to Shardales,<sup>1</sup> or, if you do, whether you will write to me in consequence, I begin to doubt; so I shall defer no longer thanking you for your very obliging letter before your departure from Cossey. You imagined, I suppose, that, when you had once turned your back on this country, its inhabitants thought no more about you. You are much mistaken. I was really very anxious to hear how Lady Jerningham bore her post-phæton, and rejoiced to learn from Mr. Walter<sup>2</sup> (who had seen you at Foot's Theatre<sup>3</sup>) that you were both well in town. Have you been at Strawberry Hill and Osterley?<sup>4</sup> At the former admiring the elegance of antient art drest a little finer than it used to be in its own days; at the latter struck with the splendid improvements of modern taste carried to their highest perfection. You have seen the Thames too, my early friend and favourite, in some of its most beautiful parts, and a thousand other things which I wish to have seen with you instead of going perpetually backwards and forwards on this dull sea coast between Blundeston and Yarmouth, which has been constantly full of some thing or other all the season, and continues so still.

Mr. and Miss Schutz<sup>5</sup> have been there some time.

As for this place, it would astonish you to see how I am improving it within and without. If my works prosper, I do not despair of having next year a room large enough for a



sopha, and a lawn in which you may turn your coach and four without coming to the brink of the sunk fence. I am glad Mrs. P. Wodehouse<sup>6</sup> makes up deficiencies. Be assured that your invitation to Cossey is too agreeable to be refused; as I am, my dear Sir,

Very faithfully and affectionately yours,  
NORTON NICHOLLS.

## 2

*To Lady Jerningham. (A Postscript to the letter to Sir William.)*

If your Ladyship is half as proud of your botanical knowledge as I am of my postscript, I have much to answer for. If it were possible for you to have vanity, and it knew its own interests, it would certainly persuade you always to write. I have lived lately very much with Madame de Sévigné<sup>7</sup> (to console myself as well as I could for the loss of your society) both at Madame de la Fayette's<sup>8</sup> [and] aux Rochers,<sup>9</sup> and have even taken the trouble of going with her to the Chateau de Grignan.<sup>10</sup> She knows you very well, and is far from being offended with the resemblance I have found out for her. After you and Mad<sup>me</sup> de Sévigné you may be sure I have relished exceedingly the beaux esprits and manières nobles of Yarmouth. There is a very, very little Miss Schutz there, however, about seventeen years old, who has some idea of playing on the harpsichord and a great ambition to hear you. Which she was once very near doing; for you did her the honour of asking her to dine. And will be very near doing it again; for she and her father are going in the autumn to Mr. Bacon's.<sup>11</sup> As for the rest (except Mr. and Mrs. Walter, with whom I was exceedingly pleased, because they told me they had seen you well in town) they were all people that one is delighted to see, because one is sure at least of one pleasure in quitting them. Have you condescended to see anything? or [directed] your eyes against my favourite Thames and all its beauties? I have received a very obliging letter from Mr. Jerningham,<sup>12</sup> and have the honour to tell you, and with an air of triumph too, that (in spite of your Ladyship's insinuations to the contrary, when you endeavoured to convince me of another impossibility, viz., that you had no eyes) he is a great admirer of picturesque beauties of landscape, and pleased (or he deceives me) with Mamhead.<sup>13</sup>

I am more than pleased with the idea of returning to Cossey; as I shall always be with every occasion of assuring

your Ladyship of the respect and regard with which I have the honour to be

Your much obliged humble servant

N. N.

I hope I preserve the ground I have gained with Miss Charlotte.

<sup>1</sup> I cannot identify this place.

<sup>2</sup> This may possibly be John Walter (1789-1812) founder of *The Times*. We know from Horace Walpole's letters that Edward Jerningham knew this Walter in 1795. At that time he had a house at Teddington. See Horace Walpole's letter to Mary Berry of August 19th, 1795.

<sup>3</sup> Samuel Foote (1720-1777), actor, mimic, wit and dramatist, erected a new theatre on the site of the present Haymarket Theatre in May, 1767, and played there till July 30th, 1777. His main success was won in his own comedies, in which he caricatured prominent public and private men. He had little talent as an actor, but was famous for his mimicry and for his "gags." In private life he was much sought after as a boon companion and as a conversationalist, in which capacity Johnson, who failed to admire him him as a mimic, found him "irresistible." The last year of his life was overshadowed by a false charge brought against him of odious vice. There was, in fact, nothing unnatural about Foote's vices, which were the normal vices of the *bon viveur* and raconteur. Foote was spiteful, a liar, an egotist, a gourmand and a voluptuary. He left his money to his two illegitimate sons, Francis and George Foote.<sup>4</sup> When Boswell, who says that Foote was an infidel, told Foote, *more suo*, of some of the sharp things Johnson had said of him, the comedian entered a serious protest. "What, sir (said he), talk thus of a man of liberal education, a man who for years was at the University of Oxford, a man who has added sixteen new characters to the English drama of his country!"

<sup>4</sup> The seat at this time of Robert Child, the banker.

<sup>5</sup> An Augustus Schutz was Master of the Robes and of the Privy Purse to King George II. But the Schutzes here referred to are probably near relatives to a Mr. Francis Schutz, who married Susan Bacon, only sister and sole heiress of Sir Edmund Bacon, 6th Baronet, and in her right became possessed of Gillingham Hall, Norfolk, and of the estate attached to it.

<sup>6</sup> This was Apollonia, daughter and co-heiress of John Nourse of Wood-eaton, Oxfordshire, who married, on July 29th, 1775, the Rev. Philip Wodehouse, second son of Sir Armine, 5th Baronet.

<sup>7</sup> The greatest letter writer among French women. She was born in 1628 and died in 1696. Many of her most important letters are written to her daughter, the Comtesse de Grignan, with whom she maintained a correspondence for twenty-six years.

<sup>8</sup> Madame de la Fayette kept up an unbroken friendship with Madame de Sévigné for over forty years, and said to her towards its close, "Croyez, ma très chère, que vous êtes la personne du monde que j'ai le plus véritablement aimée." She died in 1696.

<sup>9</sup> The Rochers was Madame de Sévigné's famous country house.

<sup>10</sup> The seat of the Comte de Grignan, Madame de Sévigné's son-in-law, who was Lieutenant-Général of Provence, and frequently in financial difficulties.

<sup>11</sup> Sir Edmund Bacon, 8th and 9th Baronet, succeeded his uncle, Sir Richard Bacon, who died, without surviving issue, on March 26th, 1778. He was born on October 14th, 1749, and had a younger brother called Dashwood, born in 1752, who possibly is the Bacon referred to.

<sup>12</sup> Obviously Edward Jerningham.

<sup>13</sup> Edward Jerningham, it seems, had been visiting Temple, who was Rector of Mamhead, Devonshire, from 1766 to 1776.

## 3

*To Edward Jerningham, Conduit Street.*

Blundeston, May 31st, 1777.

Sara servita, V Eccellenza ; non trovava ne mica un gatto. No, I had designed to have invited Mr. Gibson,<sup>1</sup> a very sensible, agreeable man, and an intimate friend of Mason, to meet you ; but your orders are so vigorous and peremptory that I should not dare to ask the paring of his nail or the hem of his garment. Instead of bals masqués and tournaments you shall have a cold solitary walk in the East Wind in the evening, with nothing but my chien de visage to accompany you, and, at your return, neither fire nor supper. Are you content ? If not, I will play and sing to you all night, not two notes in tune, not two bars without a blunder, the Prestos andante, and Allegros adagio. Are you satisfied yet ? If not, I will show you every cabbage in my kitchen garden, and read you a lecture on the various soils, manures, and aspects that are best adapted to each plant that grows ; and you shall hear an exact enumeration of all their genera and species, ay, and their method of propagation too ! After all I am sincerely glad that you are coming, and take it very kindly of you. And should be very anxious to facilitate your approach by giving you all the information in my power with regard to your road ; only that you have made it a little difficult by forgetting one trifling circumstance, which is to inform me of the route you propose to take. Taking it for granted, however, that you come by Bury, you must go from thence to Harleston, Bungay, Beccles. Hinds, the man who keeps the King's Head there, will give you a driver who knows the road hither. I am looking out for you already. Thank you for saving me £1. 16. 0. : I was on the very brink of buying Robertson's " America ; " <sup>2</sup> but I hate people who are cold when they ought to be warm. <sup>3</sup> Be so good [as] to bring me the French work you speak of, " Memoires of the Noailles Family : " <sup>4</sup> it should be curious. My mother presents her compliments.

Believe me to be very faithfully and affectionately yours,

N. NICHOLLS.

Best respects to Lady Jerningham.

<sup>1</sup> I cannot identify Mr. Gibson.

<sup>2</sup> William Robertson's "History of America" appeared in 1777, in two volumes quarto. Published during the war with the American colonists, it became much more popular than the same author's "History of Scotland" or "History of the Emperor Charles V."

<sup>3</sup> I cannot explain this allusion.

<sup>4</sup> The "Memoires" alluded to are possibly "Memoires Politiques et Militaires pour servir à l'histoire de Louis XIV. et Louis XV., composés sur les pièces originales recueillis par A. M. de Noailles," 1776. Adrien Maurice, 3rd Duc de Noailles (1678-1766), served in all the more important wars in Italy and Germany during the reign of Louis XV., and became a Marshal in 1734. His last command was given him in the War of the Austrian Succession, in which he was defeated by the English at the battle of Dettingen in 1748. He married François d'Aubigné, a niece of Madame de Maintenon.

## 4

*To Edward Jerningham, at Lady Jerningham's, Grosvenor Square.*

Blundeston, January 16th, 1778.

All that you say in your chair and out of it deserves and has my best and warmest thanks. You are too reasonable to expect bricks without straw; therefore you will not expect from me a long, entertaining, and interesting letter like yours. Indeed! I write now chiefly to ask how you would have the extract relating to Rousseau sent; should it be directed to you under cover to Lord Harcourt, or will you send me a frank to yourself? I shall copy what you desire, and it will wait only for your answer.

I am under some anxiety at not having received any answer from Maltby.<sup>1</sup> From the Oggetto<sup>2</sup> I scarce expected one; but from my cousin, who had in a manner entered as a party into this affair, I did before this time. I believe they are arrived in London (according to their plan they should be). If so, they are to be heard of at Jennings's, a tailor in Henrietta Street, Covent Garden. I do not ask of you to call there; but I wish to know what is become of my poor Oggetto.

You torment my poverty with your panegyrick on Pacchierotti.<sup>3</sup> Certainly! I would sacrifice one ear to hear him with the other. But money is not to be got in exchange for an ear; so I must stay here, where I can live on credit with both my ears.

I love the Cambridges;<sup>4</sup> so their amore is not unrequited. E una buonissima casa!<sup>5</sup> Pray tell them, if you see them again, that I feel for them all, and am particularly concerned for the sick part of the family.

I am not quite pleased with the idea of Cossey without you,

but I think I *ought* to go, and will before long. Oh! that you had your redbreast wings! If thro' fatigue, or from bad provision on the road, you should be guilty of such a filthy accident (if one can be guilty of an accident) as you mention, I would forgive all!

Eh, mon Dieu! la poletesse de ces barbares! The whole French nation at once must be a distressing midwife.<sup>7</sup> Je plains le pauvre Mr. Walpole.<sup>8</sup> I have before laughed [at], and been pleased with, the delightful nonsense you send me.

Was I so distrahit as to trouble you to send to Lord Weymouth's? It should have been Lord Suffolk's.<sup>9</sup> You will do a service to the miserable family of Booth<sup>10</sup> by making the enquiry at Lord Suffolk's.

I have been and am immersed among my books. I am not very unfit to be a Briton; for I am a Roman double-distilled. I have read Dionysius Halicarnessensis quite through, and am now in the arms of Polybius.

Au reste. I am always a degree above a cockscomb,<sup>11</sup> which no longer suits my age, as proud as you desire, and the third Heaven above prostitution.

Adieu! Pray send me notice how I am to convey my Rousseauical intelligence to Lord H. Adieu!

Yours ever,  
N. N.

I have not wrote to the Chevalier. Que voulez vous que je lui dise? My mother and her cats send their compliments. My respects to la respettatissima et amabilissima Signora, sua madre.

<sup>7</sup> The place of residence, apparently, of Nicholls's cousin, Mr. Floyer.

<sup>8</sup> Italian for "object," "aim," "end." Who the lady was I cannot discover.

<sup>9</sup> An Italian singer, whose Christian name was Gasparo. He is frequently mentioned in Madame D'Arhley's "Diary and Letters."

<sup>10</sup> For an account of Richard Owen Cambridge, see Note 10 on the Countess of Mount Edgoumbe's 6th Letter.

<sup>11</sup> The "very fine house" is the villa.

<sup>12</sup> I can elucidate neither of these obscure references.

<sup>13</sup> Why I cannot exactly say. I fancy, however, that the reference must be to the death, on December 27th, 1777, of Frederick Keppel (1729-1777), Bishop of Exeter, Temple's diocesan, and the brother of Admiral Keppel. He married Laura, the eldest of the three illegitimate daughters of Sir Edward Walpole, K.B., by Maria Clements. Writing to Sir Horace Mann from Arlington Street, on January 4th, 1778, Horace Walpole says:—"We have had a great misfortune in our family: the Bishop of Exeter is dead, who married my brother's eldest daughter. She is left with four children and a very small provision indeed; but Sir Edward has acted nobly, and gives up to her an estate at Windsor of eight hundred a year, and a house in town,

and keeps her a coach. He has, indeed, been a most bountiful father always, and has not made his children wait for his death."

"The Lord Suffolk of the day was Thomas, 14th Earl, born June 11th, 1721. He died on February 23rd, 1783, leaving no male issue. Who Booth was and in what way Lord Suffolk was expected to assist him I cannot discover.

"Nicholls's naive protestation will remind the reader of a similar one made to Boswell by Johnson, who solemnly assured his disciple that he (Johnson) was a very polite man.

## 5

*To Sir William Jerningham, Bart., Cossey, Norwich.*

Maltby, March 22nd, 1778.

My departure was too sudden to allow me the pleasure of seeing you before I left Blundeston. I have been here more than a fortnight. The situation is very pretty. The house stands on the declivity of a narrow valley wooded, watered, sprinkled over with houses, and opening one way to a distant horizon of blue Derbyshire hills, the other, winding out of sight among woods and rocks which conceal the venerable ruins of Rock Abbey. Yews of immense size grow from the rocks, covering their naked sides with the most fantastick roots imaginable, and with their dark foliage producing a gloom well adapted to the scene. Tho' there is scarce any soil visible, trees nevertheless of all sorts thrive astonishingly. Elms and limes of the most stately growth shade the ruins. A stream pours thro' the middle of the valley, dashing itself against rocks and stones. Mr. Brown<sup>1</sup> has dared to *undertake* this romantick scene. Art should touch it with a trembling hand; for Nature has done almost all that is wanted. A sand path is led very naturally under the rocks; the trees that hang on the declivity are well shown. The stream, I think, is not managed as well as it might be; a great, formal, and very visible head spreads it out into a quiet expanse, where it ought to have murmured over a bed of stones; the shape besides is too artificial. This is above the Abbey; below it is better, but not exactly suited to the wild character of the place. Lord Scarborough<sup>2</sup> (for to him it belongs) means to improve a much greater length of the valley, in which Mr. Mighel, the foreman, tells me the strictest regard will be paid to simplicity. But, in spite of criticisms, it is such a scene as I have seldom seen. The walks are continued quite into Sandbeck Park<sup>3</sup> (Lord Scarborough's), which contains great variety of ground, noble oaks, water, a pleasure-ground of two miles, and variety of distant views of a fine country. The house, built by Carr,<sup>4</sup> the architect of Yorkshire, has a large dining-room, a very fine

drawing-room, and is in other respects a good house without being a fine one. The outside is simple, a portico in one front; and built of handsome stone dug from the quarry which gave birth to Rock Abbey. (I forgot to say that nothing remains there but part of the church.)

I think I mentioned to you the cause of my coming here. My poor cousin has to add to such misfortunes as have seldom centred in a person of thirty-three years of age the additional one of losing since I came here his little girl of eleven months old. My time is now devoted to his service and consolation; so that my plan of going to town is for the present laid aside, and I shall probably bring him back with me the second or third week in April to Blundeston. Be so good [as] to present my respects to Lady Jerningham, and believe me to be with the most real regard, my dear Sir, most affectionately yours.

N. NICHOLLS.

Don't trouble yourself to answer this; as my stay here is uncertain.

<sup>1</sup> "Capability" Brown, the landscape gardener. See the notes on the letters of Edward Jerningham.

<sup>2</sup> This was Richard Lumley, 4th Earl of Scarborough, who died in 1782.

<sup>3</sup> Sandbeck Park, Rotharham, is one of the two Yorkshire seats of the Earl.

<sup>4</sup> John Carr, architect, called Carr of York, was born near Wakefield, in May, 1733, and died at Askham Hall, near York, on February 22nd, 1807. He designed, among other buildings, Harewood House, Farnley Hall, York Castle, the crescent at Buxton, and the bridge over the Ure at Boroughbridge. He was twice mayor of York, in 1770 and in 1785. He is said to have left property to the amount of £150,000 to be divided amongst collateral relations.

6

*To Edward Jerningham.*

Cossey, May 14th, 1778.

By this time, I suppose, you have concluded me lost on a Yorkshire Moor, or buried under an old yew tree among the ruins of Rock Abbey. Here I am, however, and after having hurried you, according to antient prescriptions in such cases, thus in media res, I will now take breath, and tell you my history as tediously as possible. We (that is my cousin and I) left Maltby this day three weeks, [and] employed one of these weeks, at my request, in seeing, what I believe you care very little about, and he less, Gothick architecture, viz. Lincoln Minster, a noble building! Tattershal Castle,<sup>1</sup> Crowland<sup>2</sup> and Thorney<sup>3</sup> Abbies, in the fens, Boston Church,<sup>4</sup> and the Cathedral of Peterborough. But are not all these things described at length in the journal of my tour? And it would be a grandissima sæccatura both for you and me, if I were to copy the

description of them from that most elaborate and accurate work. It is sufficient to say that, partly from the beauty of those edifices, partly from the memory of old times which they suggested, and partly from the novelty of the country, this journey answered very well. From Tattershal to Boston, twelve miles, one went entirely through the fens. If you wish to have an idea of them, you have nothing to do but to prolong that of a card-table covered with green [baize] to a boundless extent. Or, (as assemblies may fatigue you with their heat at present) figure to yourself, to refresh your imagination, a green ocean in a calm. And now, if you have still no idea of these delightful marshes, it is no great matter, and I comfort myself at least that it is not for want of tropes and figures on my part. I wish I could find as easily consolation for the mortification I feel from being deprived of the pleasure of seeing you in town.

I told you the history of my unfortunate cousin. I give up my time entirely to him at present. He wished rather to go to Blundeston than to London: I am happy in doing any thing that may give him pleasure. We entered Norfolk on this side. I called here for half an hour as I passed, and was very obligingly solicited to come soon and bring him with me. In compliance with this invitation we came here on Monday evening, and go from hence to-morrow morning. He will stay with me a month longer. I shall then go with him into Essex for a few days to his detestable mother, and from thence look at empty London and smell its stinking fish, go to Richmond, perhaps into Kent, and then, Dio sa! but I suppose return to Blundeston.

In the above plan is there a mesh to catch you? Otherwise tell me how you may be caught and je ferai mon possible. At least inform me of your projects for the summer. A thousand thanks for your "Fugitive Pieces,"\* and the musick, which I found at my return. When you write to the Chevalier be so good [as] to assure him of my most affectionate attachment and that he must not attribute my silence to any failure in that respect, but to my uncertainty where to find him. Let me know, if you please, how I am to direct to him. Best respects to Lady Jerningham: I am thoroughly sensible of her kindness to me, though I have had the mortification of not being able to profit by it. Adio! Caro amico.

N. N.

[On the fourth side of the paper on which this letter is written a Mr. Buxton, presumably a Catholic priest, writes the following letter to Edward Jerningham:—

"Would to God, my dear pupil, that my pen could flow with as much readiness as that of your friend Nicholls. I am



now recovering from that torpid state which winter always brings upon me.

'Diffugere nives, redeunt jam gramina campi.  
Arboribusque comæ. . . .'

Friendship, love, and all the joyous and social passions return with the warm invigorating sun. I ought many months since to have thanked you for your kind notices of me and for the new edition of your poetry. As this is only P.S. I defer saying any thing upon them till I can do it *vivâ voce*; but I hear we are not to enjoy your company this summer in our vale. I am sorry for it; as you always add so much to the cheerfulness of it. Poor Lord Chatham! My paper just now informs [me] of his death.<sup>5</sup> It occasions some moments of serious reflection, the glory to which he raised this nation,<sup>7</sup> the low estate to which it is fallen.<sup>8</sup> But do not think me a mad politician; I am now quite calm upon all publick occurrences. Adieu. Nicholls demands what remains of this paper. Love and respects to Lady Jerningham."

Immediately underneath Nicholls writes:—

"Indeed! I demand no such thing; for it is impossible to add any thing to what Mr. Buxton writes with the vivacity of five and twenty."]

<sup>1</sup> Tattershall is a small market town situated on the banks of the river Bane, near its junction with the river Witham, distant from Lincoln twenty-two miles, from Boston fourteen, and from Horncastle nine. Tattershall Castle stands about 250 yards south-west of the town, and was erected by the Lord Treasurer, Ralf, Lord Cromwell, about the year 1440, at a cost of over 4000 marks. "The part now remaining is a rectangular brick tower of exquisite workmanship, about one hundred feet in height, divided into four stories, and flanked by four octagonal turrets, and is raised on ponderous arches, forming spacious vaults, which extend through the angles of the building into the bases of the turrets. Under the crown of these vaults was a deep well, which is now filled up" ("The History of the County of Lincoln," vol. ii. p. 74). The College of the Holy Trinity, Tattershall, was founded in 1439 by Ralf, Lord Cromwell, the parish church being transformed into a college for seven priests, six choristers, and six laymen. The college was dissolved on February 4th, 1545, the last master being George Heneage. In 1778 the Tattershall estates belonged to Mathew Fortescue, 2nd Baron Fortescue.

<sup>2</sup> Crowland Abbey was a house of Benedictine Monks. A monastery is said to have been founded at Crowland, then a lonely island in the marshes, as early as in Saxon times; but there was certainly a monastery there in 1051. The last abbot, John Wells, *alias* Bridges, ruled the house from 1512 to 1539, when the monastery was surrendered to Thomas Cromwell's commissioners.

<sup>3</sup> Thorney is a small market town on the north-west side of Cambridgeshire bordering on Northamptonshire. Thorney Abbey dates from 1128, in which year it was dedicated to St. Mary and St. Botolph by Hervæus, Bishop of

Ely. At the dissolution of the monasteries in the reign of King Henry VIII. great part of the church was destroyed; but the remainder escaped destruction by being made parochial. The aisles were removed in the year 1636; and the nave, which is sixty-six feet in length and twenty-eight in breadth, was repaired and fitted up for divine worship. John Russell, Earl of Bedford, who founded the fortunes of the Russell family on the spoils of the monasteries, obtained from King Henry VIII. the possessions of the abbey of Tavistock in 1540, and from King Edward VI. the possessions of the abbeys of Woburn and Thorney. Woburn was a Cistercian, Thorney a Benedictine house.

<sup>4</sup> The parish church of St. Botolph, Boston, Lincolnshire, measures 283 feet by 99, and is one of the largest without transepts in England. The tower, which is nearly 290 feet high, is in the Perpendicular style of architecture, and terminates in an octagonal lantern which, originally devised as a lighthouse by land and by sea, still serves as a landmark for 40 miles, and is known as "The Stump." The first stone of the church was laid in 1309.

<sup>5</sup> Edward Jerningham published his "Fugitive Poetical Pieces" in 1778.

<sup>6</sup> The great Earl of Chatham died on May 11th, 1778, in his seventieth year.

<sup>7</sup> By the conquest of Canada and a large part of India.

<sup>8</sup> By the war with the American colonies, and by the intervention on the side of the colonies of France and Spain in 1778.

## 7

*To Edward Jerningham, at Lady Jerningham's, Grosvenor Square.*

Blundeston, Dec. 22nd, 1778.

If you imagine that I have been happy and forgot you, you do me wrong. My almost constant anxieties and agitation of mind have kept me in a state of incapacity for writing. Besides what could I write to you, when I was floating from one sentiment to another, and had nothing fixed about me except misery? The compendium of my history (since I am sure you have friendship enough for me to wish to know it) is that the recantation which pleased you was followed by a relapse, that by another recantation, then a sort of relapse again, and now once more a tranquil letter. Since I saw you I entirely (for no sufficient reason) quarrelled with my cousin. I am now reconciled to him. His last letter to me does him so much honour that I must at some time show it to you. He expostulates in it *gently and kindly* with me on my conduct towards the Oggetto, begs for her sake, for my own sake, &c., &c. that, if I mean nothing, I will not continue it, &c., &c. This *in some measure*, but, *more*, very serious reflection, and the insupportable torment of receiving such inconsistent letters from her, and perceiving (which it is impossible not to perceive) that either they have been written with a design of driving me to the point she wished, or from distraction of mind, or a mixture of both: all these considerations together determined me to

write last Saturday to her as kind a letter as I could write, assuring her of my affection, friendship, assistance (of which last I have given her a *very substantial proof* very lately), going back with tenderness to the beginning of our connection, and reminding her that then and thro' every step of it I always thought that what I owed to honour, to her and to myself obliged me to declare that it could never be pursued to the point we both might wish, that, let her affection for me be what it would, mine for her was certainly as ardent, and that there was no doubt therefore but I would have made myself happy if I could. After much more, I left it entirely to her to see or not to see me, to write or not to write, as she thinks fit. I am easier for what I have done. It was impossible to live as I did before. To my cousin I wrote another letter, professing my regard for her, confessing my imprudence in pursuing a connection which I knew could end in nothing, acknowledging it to be *madness*, but at the same time assuring him that the part I had acted, however imprudent, had been open and honourable, that I had never deceived her a single moment, that I had treated her with respect equal to my love, that, if it was necessary (as he hinted) for her reputation, but most of all, if it was necessary for her peace of mind, that this correspondence should finish, I would relinquish it.

When I have answers to these letters you shall hear again. I have not had spirits to ask Sir William to come here, nor have I been at Cossey; but I mean to go soon. You know you are my father confessor;<sup>1</sup> so you must be content to bear the ennui of your sacred function, as I do of mine. Adieu!

Yours ever,  
N. N.

Pray write to me. Respects to Lady Jerningham.

Lady Wodehouse<sup>2</sup> [is] still at Kimberley. I was at Langley<sup>3</sup> one day last week. Lady B.<sup>4</sup> knows Italian perfectly, and might be made something of in good hands. Don't spoil her in your abominable town! Your council of cooks, but above all the ostentatious meanness of your Spaniard,<sup>5</sup> entertained me exceedingly. I feel the kindness of the Chevalier's remembrance in proportion to my own negligence.

Don't imagine, because I have not spirits to-night to thank you as I ought, that I did not value properly your kind and entertaining letter. Indeed! I did.—Sir John Wodehouse and Preston<sup>6</sup> are at Yarmouth with their militia.

<sup>1</sup> The Rev. Percival Stockdale uses the same phrase in writing to Edward Jerningham, and the Countess of Jersey calls him "Father Edward."

<sup>2</sup> For Lady Wodehouse see note 8 to Edward Jerningham's 6th letter.

<sup>3</sup> Langley Park, the seat of Sir Thomas Beauchamp-Proctor, 2nd Baronet.

\* Lady Beauchamp-Proctor.

\* I cannot elucidate this reference.

\* Who this Preston is I cannot say. But the Prestons are a very old Norfolk family, who came originally from Suffolk, where they are found settled as gentlemen in the reign of King Edward III. The family seat is Beeston Hall. The present baronet is descended from Elizabeth, eldest daughter of Isaac Preston, who married on September 20th, 1766, Henry Hulton, of Andover, Hampshire, who died in February, 1790. His eldest son, Thomas Hulton, took the surname and arms of Preston, and was created a baronet on May 30th, 1815. In the middle eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries a branch of the Prestons of Beeston Hall was established at Stanfield Hall, Norfolk.

## 8

*To Edward Jerningham.*

Blundeston, February 14th, 1779.

To show my readiness in doing any thing you desire, I shall send you the extract relating to Rousseau by to-morrow's post.

You are very kind to my journal. As I do not propose to publish it, you will not suspect me of envy when I say that Mr. Coxe's book,<sup>1</sup> which I sent for and have read, appears to me not only dull, but writ in an ordinary pert stile. What is historical and political might have been collected from any traveller's guide, and all that attempts to be descriptive is nothing.

As for the guineas you talk of, where you get them I know not; but my springs are all dried up. So till somebody gives or leaves me some, here I am! nailed fast to Blundeston, tormented with phantoms of operas, concerts, &c., and with the strongest desire in the world of keeping my Jubilee<sup>2</sup> with you instead of my Lent here.

I am glad that Mason and you are beginning to mix. You always suited each other; but you are only now beginning to make the discovery. I had rather hear Pacchierotti than all the infant musical wonders and all the harpers (except you<sup>3</sup>) that ever existed.

It was you who told me of Mr. Walpole's defence of himself against Chatterton.<sup>4</sup> I never saw it, and wish very much for it. As I do for Sapho.<sup>5</sup> But why will not Mr. Mason publish the third book of his "Garden"?<sup>6</sup>

I have not been to Cossey, and shall now be prevented for some time. My Cousin and his sposina amabile are coming here, that is to her sister's, Mrs. Rix's, next Friday. My Oggetto goes to her sister's, between Norwich and Yarmouth; and I suppose it is settled that we are not to meet. She is, I learn with infinite pleasure (not from herself, for our correspondence has ceased), very well. I have still the satisfaction

left to me of preserving eternally the most tender friendship for her, and of doing her all the good offices in my power for her own sake. Nothing can be kinder or do more honour to the goodness of your sympathising heart than the part you have all along taken in an affair which has so thoroughly agitated mine. I begin now to grow calmer. A thousand thanks for the trouble you have taken in making enquiries at Jennings's—and at Lord Suffolk's.

I hope I am not totally in disgrace at Cossey: I mean to write to Sir William in a day or two. As for the Chevalier, it is certain I have not forgot him, and that I value him extremely; but I have never writ. Will you say something for me? And would you have me hammer out another dull letter myself? You see Temple's "Essays" advertised.<sup>7</sup>

What have I done that you should be so good to me? Offer me bed, board, &c., &c. in a town where there is no such animal to be found, not even at Brookes's, as a friend. I am pressed to come to town by my cousin, Mr. Floyer<sup>8</sup> (the elder brother of him you saw), who is among the newcomers from India, and who offers me his house in Berners Street. But here I am! and here I must remain. So you may, if you please, extend your accustomed charity to me by writing now and then. Nothing gives me so much pleasure as your letters, except the implicit faith with which I believe your attachment to me as sincere as that with which I am most faithfully and affectionately

Yours,  
N. N.

Best respects to Lady Jerningham.

My mother's cats purr a trio in return for your civilities to them. And she herself (not having an ear for musick) says, instead of singing, her acknowledgments to the harmony of their accompaniment.

<sup>1</sup> William Coxe (1747-1823), the future archdeacon and historian, was the son of Dr. William Coxe, physician to the King's household. Having been educated at Eton and at King's College, Cambridge, and taken orders, he spent many years between 1771 and 1794 as "bear-leader" to the sons of various Whig noblemen, securing in consequence not only valuable preferments in the Church, but material for many travel-works. The one referred to by Norton Nicholls is "Sketches of the Natural, Political, and Civil State of Switzerland," published in 1779. Coxe's best known historical works are his "History of the House of Austria," 1807, and his "Memoirs of John, Duke of Marlborough," 1818 and 1819. He became Archdeacon of Wiltshire in 1804.

<sup>2</sup> I cannot understand what "Jubilee" is alluded to.

<sup>3</sup> Edward Jerningham used to sing and to accompany himself on his harp.

<sup>4</sup> Writing to the Rev. William Cole on January 15th, 1779, Horace Walpole

says, "I am actually printing my justification about Chatterton, but only two hundred copies to give away; for I hate calling in the whole town to a fray, of which otherwise probably not one thousand persons would ever hear. You shall have a copy as soon as ever it is finished, which my printer says will be in three weeks. You know my printer is my secretary too: do not imagine I am giving myself airs of a numerous household of officers."

\* "Sappho" was an opera or lyrical drama in three acts which Mason wrote in 1778, to be set to music by Giardini. An Italian translation of the opera made by Mathias was published at Naples in 1809.

† The first book of Mason's poem, "The English Garden," was published in 1772, the second in 1777, the third in 1779, and the fourth in 1782. Nicholls's question was probably one of mere politeness, intended to be transmitted to Mason. In his "Biographia Borealis" Hartley Coleridge speaks as follows of "The English Garden": "As this poem . . . had every advantage of delay and revision, and treats of a topic apparently capable of much descriptive embellishment, with which the author was familiarly and practically acquainted, it is hard to suppose it wholly destitute of beauties, especially as it consists of 2423 lines of blank verse. We will not, therefore, say that it is the dullest poem we ever read; but it is assuredly one of the dullest we ever attempted to read."

‡ The Rev. W. J. Temple's "Moral and Historical Memoirs," including the essay "Of Unrestrained Power," were published anonymously in 1779. These so-called "Memoirs" are really moral and political essays, quite readable in their way, and distinguished among the writings of their time by a marked bias towards Liberal and anti-Absolutist principles, but marred sadly by their classical allusions and analogies, which are paraded in a spirit approaching very closely to pedantry.

\* I can discover nothing about this Mr. Floyer.

## 9

*To Edward Jerningham.*

Cullen House, February 18th, 1780.

I feel certain pinches of conscience which I can no longer resist; therefore, though I shall not write many lines, I am determined just to say that Lord and Lady Findlater<sup>1</sup> and the Duchess of Gordon<sup>2</sup> have long since desired me to thank you for your goodness in sending them your "Wake."<sup>3</sup>

I have lately passed a fortnight at Gordon Castle. The Duchess is really very agreeable, and has wit as well as beauty. If she had not been afraid of yours (your wit I mean) you would have had thanks from her own fair hand before now. I have not seen Dr. Beattie;<sup>4</sup> but he is very much pleased with your poem. Lord Fife<sup>5</sup> says you are to write to me immediately: I am waiting with impatience.

I pass my time very well, walking very much, eating and drinking very well, talking, playing, singing, reading a little.

You perhaps do not know that the cousin, whom you

thought no ornamental part of my equipage in town two years ago, and who married the adorable Miss Luson,<sup>6</sup> has lost her and in six weeks renewed the bonds of matrimony with— (I blush to write it) *my Oggetto*. She always despised him thoroughly. *That*, added to the indecent haste, and to the abruptness of taking such a step without giving me the least intimation of her intention, has entirely cured me of her. I felt some pangs for a short time; but they are now over, and I am only mortified at having been so much deceived in a character which I thought all perfection, and which certainly wants delicacy at least. On the whole, I believe I should look on this event as fortunate for me.

I have writ ten times more than I intended, and the post is on the wing. Adio!

Ever yours,  
N. N.

Best respects to Lady Jerningham.

Be so good [as] to let the enclosed letter be put in the post by some safe hand.

<sup>1</sup> John Ogilvy, 7th Earl of Findlater, succeeded his father, James Ogilvy, 6th Earl, on November 3rd, 1770. He married Christina Teresa, daughter of Joseph, Count Murray, and died without issue on October 5th, 1811, when the earldom of Findlater became extinct. The Earl accompanied Norton Nicholls on his Italian tour, or at least the two men met and travelled together to Naples.

<sup>2</sup> Alexander Gordon, 4th Duke of Gordon, was born on June 18th, 1748, and died on June 17th, 1827. His first wife, whom he married on October 28th, 1767, was Jane, daughter of Sir William Maxwell of Monreith, 3rd Baronet. She died in 1812.

<sup>3</sup> Edward Jerningham published "The Ancient English Wake, a Poem," in 1779.

<sup>4</sup> James Beattie (1735-1803), the Scotch poet, author of "The Minstrel," and a friend of Gray's.

<sup>5</sup> James Duff, 2nd Earl of Fife (1729-1809), succeeded his father in September, 1768. From 1754 to 1784 he was M.P. for Banff, and at the election of 1784 was elected for Elgin. He contributed largely to the improvement of plantation, agriculture, and cattle-breeding in Scotland, and for the excellence of his plantations was twice awarded the Gold Medal of the Society for the Encouragement of Arts and Manufactures. In the years 1782 and 1783, when the crops failed, he proved himself a generous landlord. He was a friend of James Boswell's, and corresponded with Edward Jerningham.

<sup>6</sup> I cannot discover the identity of this lady.

*To Edward Jerningham.*Iceland,<sup>1</sup> February 14th, 1784.

It does not require a season so congenial to Northern poetry to make one relish yours. Do not imagine that I sympathise with the season, and am grown cold to you or your muse. I did not receive the favour of your valuable present till yesterday; tho' Sir William's letter, which accompanied it, was dated February 6th. You have chosen a subject on which imagination may pour forth all her treasures, and have displayed the splendour of those which yours possess.<sup>2</sup> Oh! that one of those powers whom you command would convey me by "The bridge of the Gods" to "The City of Asgard!" I take for granted there reigns there a perpetual spring; tho' you have left us in the dark as to the interesting circumstance of climate. However, if it should not be agreeable to me when I get there, I must beg of you to have a tame Gryphon ready saddled and bridled to carry me to Italy or the South of France. Or, if you think I should not be too heavy for that most delightful ship which glides with its freight of fairies along the moon-beams, I should prefer that conveyance.

There is no comparison, I think, in point of nobility of origin between the heroes of Thebes and the gods of Asgard. And, as when Gods and Heroes are making, there is, I suppose, very little difference in the difficulty and trouble, whether they are formed from "broken rays of lightning" or the teeth of a serpent, I am surprised that the former mode of creation did not occur to Apollo (who, I think, managed that matter) as preferable. Considering too that he had plenty of rays of some kind always at hand. The Ash, I imagine, is the orthodox tree for Asgard's Gods; tho', at the same time I think they would have showed better taste in chusing a giant Oak.

I prostrate myself before your Virgins. Did Skulda (for you know) mean Fox and Pitt? Did Dante suggest to you the inscription on the gate of Odin's hall? Whether he did or not, it is very happily imagined, and expressed. Those "Valkeries" are dreadful females; and the more so as they kill, contrary to the custom of females, unseen. I shall never see a raven again without thinking of that most dreadful of banners. The power of poetry certainly was never better expressed than in that verse:—

"Disturb, exalt, enchant the human soul."

"The bursting organ" and the two lines that follow are excellent; as is likewise:—

"A bleeding Deity—a world forgiven."



Grace was never more amiable! Nor can there be a finer picture than:—

“Thus the full host of stars in cloudless night  
Gaze on the earth from their ethereal height.”

The part of Conscience is perfectly well done. I am glad you have introduced that scene of the death of Cardinal Beaufort, which I never read without shivering, and which is surely! the perfection of dramatic horror!

“The moon now launching on the expanse of night”

and what follows I like very much. The Witches are very respectably hideous in themselves and their attendants.

“Where caverned deep in conclave dim they dwell”

is equal to one of Dryden's best lines.

I could not write on any other subject, till I had hastened (in all senses) to tell you my opinion of your poem. After which you must give me leave to thank you too for your very entertaining and kind prose. Perhaps, if you really knew how agreeable to me it is to receive such a letter from you, you might be induced not to give it a merit which it does not want, rarity.

Without being prone to despond, I confess I see scarce a glimmering of hope in the present confusion of public affairs. Sir William writes me that, if I am not for Fox,<sup>3</sup> in case of a civil war, he must fight against me. The truth is that I am not quite satisfied with either party. But, if it were necessary to make a choice, mine would be different from his. There was, surely! less reason [for turning] out Lord Shelburne's Ministry for making a peace<sup>4</sup> for the nation in the moment when Salvation [offered] her last parting look, than there was for forcing out Fox, Lord North, and his pack on account of the India Bill,<sup>5</sup> which for no sufficient reason deprived by a stroke of a pen the King of the rights of his prerogative, and the India Company of those of their charter. I believe myself that this country can not govern India *by any means*. And I am convinced that, if it could, it must be in India, and not at the distance of a six months' voyage. I have a high opinion of Pitt in all respects, of Fox in point of abilities, and a sovereign contempt for Lord North. If it were possible to make the two great luminaries shine together, something might still be done. I am not satisfied with Pitt's manner of coming in, nor entirely with that of his staying in; and yet, if he were out, Mr. Fox would be our absolute sovereign. I tremble to think on what a slippery verge we stand! and what a gulph is open beyond!

You did not say a word to me about Lady Jerningham and her health, in which I really am interested. As I am in you and

all that belongs to you, being very affectionately and faithfully yours,

N. N.

My mother's best compliments.

<sup>1</sup> The address seems to be a joke.

<sup>2</sup> The piece which Nicholls is praising is "The Rise and Progress of Scandinavian Poetry," based on "The Scandinavian Poetics, the Edda," and published in 1784. Horace Walpole, to whom, as Earl of Orford, the work was dedicated in Edward Jerningham's collected verse, regarded this "poem in two parts" as "far superior to Jerningham's other works."

<sup>3</sup> Sir William Jerningham was a Whig and a supporter of Fox, largely, I take it, because the Whigs were pledged to the abolition of Catholic disabilities. But, like the representatives of a good many Norfolk families, he was probably a Whig on principle; and of course he was a friend of the Walpoles. Most of Edward Jerningham's correspondents were Whigs, at least until the outbreak of the French Revolution.

<sup>4</sup> The peace with the American colonies, and with France and Spain. See the notes to Miss Harland's letters.

<sup>5</sup> The India Bill infringed the vested rights of the Honourable East India Company, and gave the power of appointing the Indian governors to ministers, thus diminishing the Royal prerogative. But, needless to say, it was not opposed on its merits. It was thrown out in the Lords through the lack of candour of King George III., who, having never informed his ministers that he disapproved of it, gave Lord Temple a note in his own handwriting announcing that "his Majesty would deem those who voted for the Bill not only not his friends, but his enemies."

XI

THE REV. W. J. TEMPLE

SOME PARTICULARS OF THE LIFE OF THE REV.  
W. J. TEMPLE (1739-1796)

WILLIAM JOHNSTONE TEMPLE was born at Berwick-on-Tweed on December 6th, 1739, the son of William Temple, of Allerdean, near Berwickshire, and his wife, Miss Stow, of Northumberland. His father had some post in the Customs, and was Mayor of Allerdean in 1750 and in 1754, and his mother came of a good family and possessed a small estate of her own. His father being a Presbyterian, he received his early education at the University of Edinburgh, where he was a fellow-student with James Boswell and with Henry Dundas, the 1st Viscount Melville, the younger Pitt's colleague and boon companion. In the class of Robert Hunter, the Professor of Greek, Boswell and he contracted an intimate friendship which lasted, without interruption, all their lives; though the one was a Tory and a wine-bibber and the other a Whig and a water-drinker. Their correspondence, or rather "The Letters of James Boswell addressed to the Rev. W. J. Temple," was published in 1857, and is the main authority for Temple's life. Though it is broken by no less than fourteen gaps, which cover in all a period of nearly twenty-eight years, it ends a few days only before Boswell's death in 1795, beginning on July 29th, 1758, by which time Temple had left Edinburgh. On May 22nd of that year he was admitted pensioner at Trinity Hall, Cambridge, and on February 5th, 1759, he became a scholar on the foundation. On November 20th, 1761, he took his name off the books of the Hall and made his way to London, where the two friends met as law students at the end of 1762. For the next ten years his father's embarrassed circumstances involved Temple in continual financial worries; and he seems to have borrowed as freely from Boswell as Boswell borrowed from him. Towards the end of 1763 Temple, senior, became bankrupt, and lost his position in the Customs, and his son relieved his distresses at the expense of nearly half the proceeds of the estate which he had inherited from his mother, who had died when he was a boy of seven or eight. Compelled, therefore, to gain an income for himself, he resolved to take orders; and with a view to obtaining the necessary qualification he returned to Trinity Hall, where he was admitted

fellow-commoner on June 22nd, 1763, and took the degree of LL.B. on June 28th, 1765, finally removing his name from the books on June 13th, 1766. Liberal in his opinions, fond of literature and so amiable in disposition at this time that Boswell's uncle, Dr. Boswell, thought him "a kind of Parson-Adams," Temple, while at Cambridge, entered into a close intimacy with Gray, whose interests in history and in antiquities he shared; while in the course of a visit which he made to London, in February, 1766, Boswell introduced him, at the Mitre Tavern, in Fleet Street, to Dr. Johnson. His association with these three men gives him his title to fame, a title which is strengthened by the circumstance of his having been the grandfather of Frederick Temple, late Archbishop of Canterbury. On Sunday, September 14th, 1766, as William Johnson Temple, he was ordained deacon at a particular ordination held in the chapel of the palace at Exeter by Frederick Keppel, the Bishop of that diocese; and on the following Sunday, at a general ordination held in the cathedral, he was ordained priest by Keppel. Next day, on the presentation of his friend and first cousin once removed, Wilmot Vaughan, 4th Viscount Lisburne, he was instituted to the rectory of Mamhead, adjoining Starcross, and distant about ten miles from Exeter. On August 6th, 1767, he was married at Berwick to Ann Stow, daughter of William Stow, of Berwick, a lady possessed of an estate and of a fortune of £1300, who was presumably a kinswoman of his mother's. The marriage, however, though the result of a long attachment, appears to have been a mistake; for Mrs. Temple seems to have landed her husband in difficulties with Lord Lisburne, heartily disliked Boswell, and was certainly unpopular both with Gray and with Norton Nicholls, Temple's contemporary and friend at Trinity Hall. In the following year, "by the bankruptcy of Mr. Fenwick Stow," one of his wife's relations, and through the payment of an annuity to his father, Temple was again plunged into financial embarrassments and consequent dejection of spirits; but he managed to correct Boswell's "Account of Corsica," and secured his friend as godfather to his eldest son. In May, 1770, he contemplated separating from his wife and changing his profession, and by the following November he had sold part of his remaining estate. This latter business involved him in a journey to Northumberland, in the course of which he visited Boswell at Chessel's Buildings, Canongate, Edinburgh (September, 1770). Six months later his "pious imprudence," to adopt Gray's description of Temple's solicitude on his father's behalf, had involved him in fresh distresses and difficulties; and about this time, judged by a letter which Gray wrote to Norton Nicholls on May 20th, 1771, the latter was hoping to

obtain for Temple financial assistance from Lord Lisburne, while the former was thinking of trying to get him either a vacant chaplaincy at Leghorn or some living in Ireland in the gift of the Earl of Bristol, the notorious Bishop of Derry.

A short time after the poet's death (July 30th, 1771) a character of Gray was conveyed by Temple in a letter to Boswell, who, though he asked his friend for an introduction to Gray, never seems to have obtained one. This character Boswell published, without authority, in *The London Magazine* in 1772, a periodical of which he was part proprietor; and it was subsequently incorporated in Mason's "Life of Gray." Johnson, too, who thought it unnecessary to take the trouble of reading or re-reading the authors whose biographies he was writing, was content to annex the "character" to the memoir of Gray which he included in the "Lives of the English Poets" (1782). During a visit paid to London in May, 1773, Temple dined at the house of the brothers Dilly, the publishers, in the Poultry, meeting Johnson, Goldsmith, Bennet Langton, Dr. Mayo, Boswell and others (see the annexed extracts from Boswell's "Life of Johnson"). In April, 1775, Boswell visited him at Mamhead. In the meantime, *i.e.* in 1774, his not very amusing "Essay on the Clergy, their Studies, Recreations, Decline of Influence," had disclosed to his diocesan his literary abilities and his professional ardour. Bishop Keppel accordingly made him his chaplain; and in October, 1775, promised to give him "the best living in the diocese of Exeter, and the present incumbent eighty-six!" This was the vicarage of St. Gluvias with the chapelry of Budock, near the Cornish towns of Penryn and Falmouth, to which Temple was collated, on the Bishop's nomination, on September 9th, 1776.

As Vicar of Gluvias, possessed of an income from professional and private sources amounting to over £500 a year (so Boswell reckoned it in one of his letters), Temple passed his remaining years. In the autumn of 1780 he travelled through part of England, revisiting Cambridge and enjoying "two agreeable interviews" with Dr. Hurd, Bishop of Lichfield at this time. Boswell and his two eldest daughters, Veronica and Euphemia, aged respectively ten and nine, were his guests at Gluvias in September, 1783. In 1788 and 1789 he was worried about making provision for his nephew and niece, and was seeking Boswell's assistance to get the one admitted into Christ's Hospital and to obtain for the other some situation as companion or governess. In May of 1790 he and his daughter came to town and saw Boswell and Jerningham. In 1792 Boswell, a widower since July, 1789, came again to Gluvias. On March 14th, 1793, Temple lost his wife in

her forty-seventh year. In September and October of 1793 he was in town again, saw Boswell, and succeeded in having an interview with Dundas, at which he secured promotion in the Navy for his son Frank. On May 19th, 1795, he lost his greatest friend, Boswell, who left him a mourning-ring, and was commemorated by him in a vindictory letter published in *The Gentleman's Magazine* for August, 1795, and written under the signature of "Biographicus." In this letter Temple vigorously denounced the current depreciations of "Jemmy's" character and the distortion of his virtues into failings, and promised to give a true account of his friend, a promise which, having delayed too long to perform, he was at length unfortunately prevented from redeeming by death. He survived Boswell fifteen months only, dying at Gluvias on August 13th, 1796. A monument was erected in the churchyard to the memory of their parents by "the seven remaining children"; and on this monument Temple's second name is given as "Johnstone."

The Temples had eleven children in all. Of Francis and of John James Temple particulars are given in the notes to Temple's letters. Anne Temple, her father's daughter and companion, married in 1796, after an engagement to him lasting six years, the Rev. Charles Powlett, who was born in 1765 and died in 1834. Boswell says of her to Temple: "She is indeed a charming girl and was much admired here even by the critic Malone," and again, "She is . . . a most valuable young woman"; while Sir Egerton Brydges describes her husband as an interesting man but very deaf in his later days. Powlett seems to have been the grandson of the Duke of Bolton and of the Duke's mistress, Lavinia Fenton, the famous Polly Peachum of Gay's "Beggars Opera." He spent most of his last years near Boulogne, and he thought so little of Boswell's letters, which had come to him, of course, from his father-in-law, that he sold them, or left them to persons who let them be sold as waste-paper to an itinerant French pedlar, from whom the surviving correspondence, including Norton Nicholls's letters to Temple, was recovered by the merest chance in 1850.

Despite Dr. Boswell, I cannot help thinking that Robert Potter was much nearer of kin to "Parson Adams" than was William Temple, who, judged by his letters, and gifted though he was with a shrewd discrimination of character and with a mordant tongue for describing it, must be pronounced a man more negative than positive, reserved, highly strung, subject unduly to fits of depression, and singularly devoid of that flow of animal spirits which gave James Boswell his wonderful buoyancy and resilience of temperament. Crippled in his finances by the bankruptcy of his father and of Fenwick Stow, married to a

wife who disliked and was disliked by his best friends, burdened by the necessity of having to make provision for a large family, bored as a Whig, as a non-drinker, and as an opponent of the game laws, by the only society he could generally command, that of the country gentlemen of his neighbourhood, a failure in the Church, where he never was promoted even to a canonry, a failure in literature, where he made no sort of mark whatever, Temple was a disappointed man, who knew long before he died that he would never emerge from obscurity. Small wonder if one so incapable of reconciling aspirations and actualities became dissatisfied and rather soured. Readers will gather from one or two references to Johnson that Temple thought little of him as an author and was not particularly drawn to him as a man. To say that he was not blind to Boswell's fault is to give inadequate expression to Temple's very candid estimate of his bosom friend's character. Here it is, taken from the Vicar of Gluvias's unpublished diary and duly entered there under date of May 25th, 1782 :—

"Boswell. Irregular in conduct and manners; selfish, indelicate, thoughtless; no sensibility or feeling for others, who have not his [own] coarse and rustick strength and spirits."

It is a true verdict, of course; but, coming from Temple, it is a rather ungenerous verdict, and it looks like the verdict of an undervitalized man on a full-blooded one. But then, who can say how exasperated a serious-minded clergyman like Temple may occasionally have become at "Jemmy's" garrulous and unblushing confidences? The latter's two weaknesses, his addictions to wine and to women, his two passions, the "culte de moi" (to use Maurice Barrès' phrase) and the cult of Johnson, the two former frankly confessed, the two latter prosecuted with an amused and amusing shamelessness that has few parallels in life or in literature, may well have moved Temple, the moral and decent man, to wrath and reprobation, and Temple, the human and speculative man, Temple *isolé* and stowed away in Cornwall,\* to a sort of reluctant envy, moral indignation being often the ready tribute which inchoate or unsatisfied longing is so eager to pay to vice. Perhaps I had better leave the matter at that; though it is only fair to add that, to any man who could not laugh at it and delight in it, Boswell's parade of bumptious patronage, a parade often made for the benefit of Temple, must have proved intolerably galling. For if humour be, as many of us suspect it to be, the feeling emerging from an amused recognition of the disparity between

\* Of the six Anglican clergymen who were Edward Jerningham's frequent correspondents, Nicholls, Potter, Boucher, Stockdale, Beville, Temple, the three last mentioned seem consistently to have regarded living in the country as boredom and absence from London as exile.



our aims and our achievements, our desires and our deserts, our pretences and our prepossessions, our principles and our practice, then I am afraid William Johnstone Temple had little sense of it.

### TEMPLE'S "CHARACTER" OF GRAY, INCLUDED IN JOHNSON'S LIFE OF GRAY

"His character I am willing to adopt, as Mr. Mason has done, from a Letter written to my friend Mr. Boswell by the Rev. Mr. Temple, rector of St. Gluvias in Cornwall; and am as willing as his warmest well-wishers to believe it true.

'Perhaps he was the most learned man in Europe. He was equally acquainted with the elegant and profound parts of science, and that not superficially but thoroughly. He knew every branch of history, both natural and civil; had read all the original historians of England, France, and Italy; and was a great antiquarian. Criticisms, metaphysics, morals, politics, made a principal part of his study; voyages and travels of all sorts were his favourite amusements: and he had a fine taste in painting, prints, architecture, and gardening. With such a fund of knowledge, his conversation must have been equally instructing and entertaining; but he was also a good man, a man of virtue and humanity. There is no character without some speck, some imperfection; and I think the greatest defect in his was an affectation in delicacy, or rather effeminacy, and a visible fastidiousness, or contempt and disdain of his inferiors in science. He also had, in some degree, that weakness which disgusted Voltaire so much in Mr. Congreve; though he seemed to value others chiefly according to the progress that they had made in knowledge, yet he could not bear to be considered himself merely as a man of letters. And though without birth, or fortune, or station, his desire was to be looked upon as a private independent gentleman, who read for his amusement. Perhaps it may be said, "What signifies so much knowledge, when it produced so little? Is it worth taking so much pains to leave no memorial but a few poems?" But let it be considered that Mr. Gray was, to others, at least innocently employed; to himself certainly beneficially. His time passed agreeably; he was every day making some new acquisition in science; his mind was enlarged, his heart softened, his virtue strengthened; the world and mankind were shown to him without a mask; and he was taught to consider every thing as trifling, and unworthy of the attention of a wise man, except the pursuit

of knowledge and practice of virtue, in that state wherein God hath placed us."—From "Gray," in "The Lives of the English Poets."

MENTION OF THE REV. W. J. TEMPLE IN BOSWELL'S  
"LIFE OF JOHNSON"

1763. *July 18th.*—"Mr. Temple, now Vicar of St. Gluvias, Cornwall, who had been my intimate friend for many years, had at this time chambers in Farrar's Buildings, at the bottom of Inner Temple Lane, which he kindly lent me upon quitting my lodgings. I found them particularly convenient for me, as they were so near Dr. Johnson's."

Dr. Johnson at this time lived on the first floor of No. 1, Inner Temple Lane.

1766. *February 15th.*—"Our next meeting at the Mitre was on Saturday, the 15th of February, when I presented to him [*i.e.* Dr. Johnson] my old and most intimate friend, the Reverend Mr. Temple, then of Cambridge."

At this meeting Johnson talked of Rousseau, of subordination, and of the consolation to be derived from thinking of those who are in a worse situation than our own.

1773. *May 7th.*—"I dined with him [*i.e.* Dr. Johnson] this day at the house of my friends, Messieurs Edward and Charles Dilly, booksellers, in the Poultry: there were present their elder brother, Mr. Dilly of Bedfordshire, Dr. Goldsmith, Mr. Langton, Mr. Claxton, the Rev. Dr. Mayo, a Dissenting Minister, the Rev. Mr. Toplady, and my friend the Reverend Mr. Temple."

At this dinner Johnson talked of Hawkesworth's compilation of the "Voyages of the South Seas," of Mr. Daines Barrington's "Essay against the Migration of Birds," of the people of Otaheite and the bread-tree, and of the Roman Catholic doctrine of the invocation of Saints: He spoke of the "unnatural state of the Irish," and rebuked Goldsmith and Langton. On Friday, April 30th, of this year, Boswell had been elected a member of "The Club."

1775. *March 21st.*—"Against the common weapons of literary warfare he was hardened; but there were two instances of animadversion which I communicated to him. And from what I could judge, both from his silence and his looks, [they] appeared to me to impress him much. . . . The other instance was a paragraph of a letter to me from my old friend, the Reverend Mr. Temple, who wrote the character of Gray, which has had the honour to be adopted both by Mr. Mason and Dr.

Johnson in their accounts of that poet. The words were:—  
‘How can your great, I will not say your *pious*, but your *moral* friend, support the barbarous measures of administration, which they have not the face to ask even their infidel pensioner, Hume, to defend?’”

Temple in his letter is alluding to Dr. Johnson's pamphlet on the quarrel with the American colonies, "Taxation no Tyranny: an Answer to the Resolutions and Address of the American Congress," published this year. Boswell repeated the extract from Temple's letter at a dinner at Lord Kames on June 18th, 1775, at which Kames and David Hume combined in attacking Johnson. Boswell, writing to Temple, remarks:—"In short, Davy was finely punished for his treatment of my revered friend; and he deserved it richly, both for his petulance to so great a character, and for his talking so before me."

1775. *April 18th.*—"Having set out next day on a visit to the Earl of Pembroke, at Wilton, and to my friend, Mr. Temple, at Mamhead, in Devonshire, and not having returned to town till the second of May, I did not see Dr. Johnson for a considerable time." [Only from April 19th to May 6th.]

1782. *Aug. 24th.*—Letter of Johnson to Boswell:—"My 'Lives' are reprinting, and I have forgotten the author of Gray's character.<sup>1</sup> Write immediately, and it may be perhaps yet inserted."

<sup>1</sup> The Reverend Mr. Temple, Vicar of St. Gluvias, Cornwall.

## LETTERS FROM THE REV. W. J. TEMPLE

### 1

I received too much pleasure from Mr. Jerningham's conversation at Mamhead and Mount Edgcombe not to wish to assert my claim to his remembrance in town. I have been at Cambridge, and am here for two or three days on my return to the West. I have generally lodged with the good woman of this house; but, her first floor being taken, I am obliged to go higher. I will therefore not desire you to come hither; but, if you are disengaged to-morrow, I will wait upon you some time in the forenoon, and pass the day with you. I intend first to call at the Bishop of Exeter's in Dean Street,<sup>1</sup> and then to proceed to Conduit Street. I long much to have the pleasure of talking with you.

W. J. TEMPLE.

Jermyn Street, Mrs. Alden's, No. 15.

Saturday, 9 in the evening.

To Mr. Jerningham, Conduit Street.

<sup>1</sup> The Bishop of Exeter was Frederick Keppel, son of the 2nd Earl of Albemarle and brother of Augustus Keppel, the Admiral, who subsequently

became First Lord of the Admiralty and Viscount Keppel. He was born in 1729, and died at the Deanery, Windsor, in 1777, having been Dean and Registrar of the Order of the Garter since 1765. He promoted good men, making Jonathan Toup, the philologist and editor of Longinus, Prebendary of Exeter and Vicar of St. Merryn, and appointing Temple his chaplain and Vicar of Gluvias. He married Laura, eldest of the three natural daughters of Sir Edward Walpole, K.B., by his mistress, Maria Clements. Maria, the second of these daughters, married, first, James, 2nd Earl Waldegrave, thus becoming the mother of the three famous Ladies Waldegrave, whom Sir Joshua Reynolds immortalised, and, secondly, Prince William Henry, Duke of Gloucester and brother to King George III. Charlotte, the third daughter, married Lionel Talmache, 4th Earl of Dysart.

2

DEAR SIR,

I wrote a card to you last night, thinking you were still in Conduit Street. The people where you lodged formerly were so stupid as to take it. This morning I called both there and at Lady Jerningham's; but you were not at home. I go out of town on Tuesday, and am engaged to-morrow; but, as I dine at Harley Street at the Dean of Exeter's, if you are to be at home in the evening, I will wait on you about 7 or 8. I should be sorry to leave town without having had the pleasure of seeing Mr. Jerningham.

I am, Sir,  
Your most obedient servant,  
W. J. TEMPLE.

Jermyn Street, 3 o'clock.

Mr. Jerningham, at Lady Jerningham's,  
South Audley Street, Grosvenor Square.

3

Mamhead, Dec. 3rd, 1775.

DEAR SIR,

I beg you will accept my best acknowledgments for your obliging letter and entertaining present. They were the more agreeable to me, as they were a proof of my not being entirely indifferent to one of whom I had conceived a very favourable idea. Assure yourself that if such a miracle were possible as you are so polite as to wish, it would be a most agreeable surprise both to myself and the companion of my solitude.

The merit of your little volume is so well established that it is needless for me to add my tribute of praise. "The Magdalen" and "The Nun" will always be read with pleasure by all who can feel and think. Allow me to add there is also another merit in the latter: it is superior to the prejudices

of education.<sup>2</sup> My wife is proud to find the rights of nature asserted, and a sanction given to her practice by the charms of your pathetick and plaintive muse.<sup>3</sup> I was much pleased with a great part of your present publication. I recollected the episode of Janellan and Venzula<sup>4</sup> with admiration of their valour, and sorrow for their unhappy fate. I likewise dwelt with much satisfaction on the humanity, good sense and imagery of the conversation between Las Casas and Talipo, particularly from 560 to 580,<sup>5</sup> which though not orthodox, is highly poetical. The concluding simile of the glow-worm is new, and most happily both conceived and expressed. As to *dislike* I leave that to those who read poetry with more phlegm, and have not the happiness of Mr. Jerningham's acquaintance. The families of Mamhead<sup>6</sup> and Ugbrooke<sup>7</sup> partook in my entertainment, and return you their compliments.

In your literary news I wish you had given us some hopes of the completion of the design<sup>8</sup> you mentioned at Mount Edgcumbe. Why not pursue it? Would it not diversify your occupations, and make you return with new rapture to your beloved muse? And is Bishop Hurd so afraid of losing by the press that he will not trust us with his notes on Mr. Addison?<sup>9</sup> Is this consistent with his warm admiration of the Stanza in Cowley,

"To me the sun is more delightful far!"

Our instruction and entertainment ought to be sufficient motive to one of so generous, disinterested sentiments.

Perhaps I can tell you something in this way which you have not heard. The Mr. Gibbons<sup>10</sup> you mention is the author of the just announced "History of the Decline, &c., of the Roman Empire." And can such a man find leisure and inclination to write on the English Law? With regard to my own views, I pursue them unequally, as the opportunity of books and weather and the current of my spirits permit me. The subject<sup>11</sup> you propose is curious, and I wish I could believe myself equal to it; but don't you think it would succeed better in the hands of one who lived more in Society? I imagine I can tell you how could treat it as it merits.

Concerning America, every new measure taken by the Minister seems an aggravated instance of ignorance, inhumanity and dangerous views. Indeed, I do not think any good man, or good Englishman, can wish us success in this injudicious and sanguinary attempt. Your obliging offer of Mr. Burke's speech<sup>12</sup> will be very acceptable. It may be directed under covers to Lord Lisburne here, although his Lordship were in London. A line from you now and then

will be great charity. I find people are disappointed in Gabrielli.<sup>12</sup> I congratulate with you on your recovery from the general sickness. Hitherto we have been so fortunate as to escape it.

Very sincerely yours,  
W. J. TEMPLE.

My wife again desires her best compliments, and particularly for "Il Latte."

<sup>1</sup> I cannot explain this allusion.

<sup>2</sup> "The Nun" is a poem written as a protest against the conventual system.

<sup>3</sup> An illusion to "Il Latte," a poem written as a protest against the fashionable craze of handing over infants to be suckled by foster-nurses.

<sup>4</sup> The heroes of a poem called "The Mexican Friends."

<sup>5</sup> I cannot elucidate this reference: No poem of Edward Jerningham's, save "The Rise and Progress of Scandinavian Poetry," runs to anything like 500 lines. "Las Casas" figures in a short poem written on a Mexican theme; but, though I have looked through several editions of Jerningham's collected verse, I cannot discover any poem relating to "Talipo."

<sup>6</sup> Mamhead became the seat of Wilmot Vaughan, 4th Viscount Lisburne (succeeded January 19th, 1776) and 1st Earl of Lisburne (created July 18th, 1776), by his marriage on July 8rd, 1754, to Elisabeth Nightingale.

<sup>7</sup> Ugbrooke Park, Chudleigh, Devonshire, was the seat of Lord Clifford.

<sup>8</sup> "I can explain neither "the design" nor "the subject."

<sup>9</sup> Bishop Hurd's annotated edition of Addison was published in 1811, three years after the Bishop's death.

<sup>10</sup> Edward Gibbon.

<sup>11</sup> A speech on American affairs apparently. I cannot discover when it was delivered.

<sup>12</sup> Francesca Gabrielli was an Italian singer who made her *début* at the Opera in 1776. On this occasion "Dr. Burney said he was prodigiously let down; that she was not within ten degrees of Agajari." So reports Fanny Burney in her "Early Diary."

Horace Walpole is very frank about this lady's imperfections. In a letter written from Arlington Street to Sir Horace Mann, on December 8th, 1775, he says:—"Tell me truly, is or has the Gabrielli been a great singer? She has, at least, not honoured us but with a most slender low voice. Her action is just, but colder than a vestal's. However, as you know, she carries the resemblance no further, and consequently is kept by a Mr. Riars, a very rich gentleman of Yorkshire, who is so profuse to her, that I suppose she will be more capricious than ever. We import superannuated sirens, and spoil them more than the Italians can afford to do, who at least enjoy them young."

## 4

MY DEAR SIR,

I have been long in expectation of the pleasure of hearing from you. I am also disappointed in not receiving a copy of the poem<sup>1</sup> you mentioned to me in town, and which you lately gave to the public. Till one comes "From the

Author" I am determined to deny myself the satisfaction of reading it. If sent to Mr. Boswell's banker<sup>2</sup> in Thanet Place, Temple Bar, it will be forwarded to me.

Perhaps you may remember that, when you visited us at Mamhead, we had two sons. The eldest<sup>3</sup> is now sixteen, and very desirous of going to India in the Company's service. As I have reason to believe you would assist me in any thing in your power, would you be so friendly as to mention my son to some of your great acquaintance? I know your intimacy with Lord Camelford<sup>4</sup> and with Lord and Lady Mount Edgcombe. The former must have great influence with his nephew,<sup>5</sup> and the latter with the Minister upon account of his boroughs. I have some kind of claim on Lord M. E.; as I am at this very time suffering a sort of persecution for having appointed a churchwarden in his Lordship's interests, agreeably to a former wish of your own and his Lordship's.

When did you see or hear of Nicholls?<sup>6</sup> The treatise<sup>7</sup> you wished to see completed goes on very slowly; and, unless I can contrive to pass a whole winter in town, I despair of its further progress. My wife begs to join in best compliments to yourself with,

Dear Sir,

Your affectionate and obliged humble servant,

W. J. TEMPLE.

Gluviza Vicarage,  
Penryn, Cornwall,  
19th July, 1784.

I desire to present my respects to Lady Jerningham. Last autumn I passed two or three days with Mr. Mason at Boconnoc in this county. Dare you not look Westward this summer? It is not far from Mount Edgcombe to Penryn.

<sup>1</sup> This poem of Edward Jerningham's was the "Rise and Progress of Scandinavian Poetry" (1784).

<sup>2</sup> I cannot identify this banker.

<sup>3</sup> This youth, whose name I cannot discover, eventually, as the correspondence will disclose, went into the army, and died at the age of eighteen.

<sup>4</sup> For Lord Camelford see the notes to Robert Potter's letters.

<sup>5</sup> The nephew is, of course, William Pitt the younger (1759-1806), who had been appointed Prime Minister in December, 1783.

<sup>6</sup> The Rev. Norton Nicholls, the friend and correspondent of Gray and of Edward Jerningham.

<sup>7</sup> The treatise is possibly Temple's unfinished history, "The Rise and Decline of Modern Rome."

Gluvias Vicarage, Penryn,  
14th April, 1785.

MY DEAR SIR,

I owe you my acknowledgments for two very obliging and entertaining letters. My not thanking you sooner you must impute to the hopes you gave me of your admirable poem,<sup>1</sup> which did not reach me till last week. Mr. Boswell detained it to send with some French [books] which he expected for me from Paris. I have read it two or three times with increasing pleasure, and am not surprised it should be so much liked by the Bishop of Dromore<sup>2</sup> and those who are judges. The subject is well adapted to the higher poetry, wild and romantick. You have done it justice, and shown by this and your "Magdalen" &c. that you know how to treat both the sublime and the pathetick. When you succeed so well, no wonder your predilection for the Muses increases with your years.

So Dr. Johnson is at last gone!<sup>3</sup> Perhaps his reputation exceeded his merit, and will not gain by time. His learning was not extensive, and his observation confined to common life and manners. I fear my friend Boswell will make him a Divinity,<sup>4</sup> and disgust those who are well enough inclined to allow him the praise he deserves. I can show you a character of him that I believe you will allow to be a true likeness; but Boswell must not see it, nor know who drew it.

Your recommendation induced me to send for Mr. Nairne's (?) book<sup>5</sup>; which is certainly curious. But has he not fallen into some mistakes respecting pronunciation? I think I could point out several, and should suspect him to be a *Northern* man. Is it a new volume of Apthorpe<sup>6</sup> you mean, or that Mr. Gibbon affected to laugh at? The account Mably<sup>7</sup> gives of M. Necker's book<sup>8</sup> makes me impatient to see it. I am charmed to find a great Minister have so much virtue and humanity: it keeps men *who are not of the world* in countenance, and agreeably whispers to them that they are not such simpletons as some would fain represent them.

Whatever relates to such an empire as China must be interesting; and I trust that the Comte de Gibelin's papers<sup>9</sup> will soon appear. Are not our islanders in general very in-curious about foreign literature? Our own party squabbles and domestic history seem to engross us intirely. Robertson<sup>10</sup> was the first of our writers who crossed the Mediterranean, and turned our attention to the Continent. Gibbon has shown that it is worth while to know something of *later Rome*; but it will be a bold attempt to tread in his steps. As to the



work you encourage me to, it will be in vain to think of proceeding in it, till I can fix myself for two or three winters near the Museum. Finding the restraining Act<sup>11</sup> made it needness [needless?] to think of sending my son to India, and General Vaughan<sup>12</sup> acquainting me there was a vacancy in his regiment, I bought him an ensigncy, and he is now in Ireland.

I have just got "L'Evesque,"<sup>13</sup> Winkelman, and Warton's "Milton,"<sup>14</sup> and shall enjoy myself while they last. While you continue in town I hope you will sometimes have the charity to remember an hermit who has no variety or amusement but a ride or a walk.

Probably Nicholls is now with you. I heard from him lately, and will write to him soon. I beg my best respects to your excellent old lady.<sup>15</sup> My wife joins in those to you with,

Dear Sir,

Yours with great esteem,

W. J. TEMPLE.

If Mr. Mason is in town, pray inform me how to direct to him. Which Paris review is the best? I take in the *Journal Encyclopedique*. Who writes the lively supplement to Mably's "Maniere,"<sup>16</sup> etc.?

<sup>1</sup> This poem is apparently "The Rise and Progress of Scandinavian Poetry." (1784).

<sup>2</sup> The Bishop of Dromore is better known as Dr. Thomas Percy (1729-1811), editor of the "Reliques of Ancient English Poetry" (1765). He was a member of Dr. Johnson's set and a correspondent of Edward Jerningham's.

<sup>3</sup> Dr. Johnson died Dec. 18th, 1784.

<sup>4</sup> A curious prognostication, Boswell having had all along the very contrary intention.

<sup>5</sup> I cannot identify this person. If I am right in deciphering his name as Nairne, he may possibly be an Edward Nairne (1742-1799), supervisor of customs at Sandwich, who published a volume of "Humorous Poems" in 1791. But dates and references are both against this identification.

<sup>6</sup> No "Apthorpe" is included in "The Dictionary of National Biography"; but I have found in the catalogue of the British Museum an East Apthorpe, seemingly a clergyman, who wrote "Letters on the prevalence of Christianity before its civil establishment; with observations on a late History of the Decline of the Roman Empire," in 1778.

<sup>7</sup> The Abbé de Mably was a well-known French author, who wrote on political, moral, and historical subjects; and, at one time, under Cardinal Richelieu, was engaged in diplomacy. He was a brother of the Abbé Cordillac, and was generally numbered among "the philosophers." Gabriel Bonnot, Abbé de Mably, was born 1709 and died in 1785.

<sup>8</sup> Probably "De l'Administration des finances de la France" (3 vols., 1784). Jacques Necker (1732-1804) was Director-General of the French Finances from 1776 to 1781, and from 1788 to 1790.

<sup>9</sup> I find in the "Biographie Nouvelle des Contemporains" (Paris, 1822) two Gibelins, one a painter and the other a doctor; but neither seems to be

the Comte de Gibelin. And I can find no mention of the Count in the article on China in the "Britannica."

<sup>10</sup> William Robertson, the Scotch historian. Born in 1721, he died in 1798.

<sup>11, 12</sup> I cannot elucidate these references.

<sup>13</sup> General Sir John Vaughan was a brother of the Wilmot Vaughan, 4th Viscount Lisburne, who had presented Temple to the Rectory of Mamhead. He served in the war against the American colonists, under Cornwallis and Clinton, from 1776 to 1779, and in 1780 was made Governor of Berwick. In 1782 he was associated with Rodney in the capture of the island of St. Eustatius. He was made a Knight of the Bath in 1792. Born in 1728, he died in 1795.

<sup>14</sup> Thomas Warton (1728-1790), Professor of Poetry at Oxford, edited Milton's early poems in 1785.

<sup>15</sup> The Dowager Lady Jerningham, *née* Plowden, who lived with her son Edward in Grosvenor Square, and died a few months later.

<sup>16</sup> The Abbé de Mably's "De la manière d'écrire histoire" (2 vols., 1784).

## 6

Glouias Vicarage,  
October 3rd, 1785.

DEAR SIR,

I am sorry to find by the News Papers that your venerable old lady is at last taken from you. This affecting event seemed to me not quite so near by your last letter. It must distress you not a little; for, notwithstanding her great age, life was far from unpleasant to her, and you had the satisfaction of enjoying the society and conversation of a sensible, affectionate parent. You had been long accustomed to her company, to eat your meals, to sit and converse with her. To be deprived of this endearing intercourse all at once must touch you very sensibly; Yet fortunate those who can be thus affected: I lost my mother<sup>1</sup> when I was but seven or eight years old.

You think very favourably of your new acquaintance.<sup>2</sup> He tells you he is restless and unhappy: poor man! he will always be so. I have seen only some extracts from the great Doctor's "Devotions"<sup>3</sup> in the News Papers: they are of the strain you censure,<sup>4</sup> and give one no very high idea of the good sense of his piety. If the rest of his MS. resemble these, his friends would do well to suppress them. They may throw further light on his private character; but little of it was worthy of imitation.

So Boswell's "Tour"<sup>5</sup> is at last announced to the public. Mr. Malone corrected it,<sup>6</sup> and says, if it has not very great success, he never was so much disappointed. It is wonderful that so much should be written about a man who cannot be said to have *invented* in any thing, and all whose writings turn upon

popular and common subjects. The noise that was and is made concerning him may be imputed in great measure to the singularity of his figure and manner rather than to any transcendent merit.

The Cardinal of Rohan!<sup>7</sup> That a person of his station and fortune should so debase himself! But neither rank nor fortune are any restraints on men without principle.

Mably induced me to think more favourably of the French Academicians. I thought Brechigny,<sup>8</sup> Villoison,<sup>9</sup> Heralis,<sup>10</sup> Muinet,<sup>11</sup> Nivernois,<sup>12</sup> &c. had merit. Is it worth while to take the "Memoires" of the Academy as they come out? Have you seen the impudent "Letters of Literature" of a man who calls himself Heron,<sup>13</sup> a fictitious name, he being a Scots man? It seems he spares nobody, neither Virgil, nor the King. It is amusing to hear a Scots man recommending the purity and elegance of Burnet's "History," and preferring it to Hume's.

I am just returned from passing ten days at Mamhead. It is greatly improved since you saw it, both the house and the grounds. My humble parsonage is converted into a palace. The Lady Vaughans<sup>14</sup> are sensible, unaffected, charming girls. I did not see the new family at Ugbrooke.

I suppose you have heard of the Grande Fête that was given at M. Edcombe, on the *Sola Spes*<sup>15</sup> coming of age. The delicate youth was so agitated as to be obliged to retire to bed for a couple of hours; but appeared again blooming as Hebe. All the Western World were there. Three tables in the house, and three out at Dock, &c.

My better half offers you her sincere condolence. Believe me, Dear Sir, with true esteem, faithfully yours,

W. J. T.

I shall be anxious to know how you dispose of yourself now in your widower estate.

<sup>1</sup> Temple's mother was a Miss Stowe [or Stow] of Northumberland, connected with the family of Sir Francis Blake, of Twizel Castle, near Norham, Northumberland, through Blake's aunt Anne, who married William Stowe, of Berwick.

<sup>2</sup> Boswell, I imagine.

<sup>3</sup> These were "Prayers and Meditations," composed by Samuel Johnson, LL.D., and published from his manuscripts in 1785 by George Strahan, D.D., Prebendary of Rochester and Vicar of Islington, in Middlesex.

<sup>4</sup> Possibly in one of Jerningham's theological pamphlets.

<sup>5</sup> Boswell's "Journal of a Tour to the Hebrides" was published in 1786. It had been revised by Edmond Malone, to whom it was dedicated.

<sup>6</sup> Edmond Malone (1741-1812) was a member of Johnson's Literary Club, knowing Johnson, Reynolds, Bishop Percy, Burke, and Boswell. He edited Shakespeare in 1790, and collected the materials for the new edition of

Shakespeare which James Boswell the younger brought out, in 21 volumes, in 1821, and which is known as "the third variorum edition."

<sup>7</sup> An allusion to the mysterious "affair of the diamond necklace," in which the Cardinal was associated with the Comtesse de Lamotte and Cagliostro in 1784-86. Louis René Edouard Cardinal de Rohan had an income of 2½ millions of livres.

<sup>8, 10, 11</sup> Of these French Academicians I can discover nothing.

<sup>9</sup> Jean Baptiste Gaspard D'Ansse de Villoison (1750 (or 1752)-1805) was a famous French classical scholar. In 1781, in the State library of St. Mark's at Venice, he discovered a 10th-century MS. of the Iliad with ancient scholia and marginal notes. His edition of this work he published in 1788 (see Chalmers' "Biographical Dictionary," 1816).

<sup>12</sup> Louis-Jules Mancini, Duc de Nivernois (1716-98), served in the army, and was then successively ambassador at Rome, Berlin, and St. James's. A poem called "Délie" secured his admission to the French Academy. His "Fables" are his best work. He knew English literature well; and several of his unpublished letters are included in the Edward Jerningham Correspondence.

<sup>13</sup> The "Letters of Literature," which recommended a new method of orthography and depreciated classical literature, were the work of John Pinkerton (1753-1826), who published them under the pseudonym of Robert Heron. Pinkerton also edited old Scottish ballads, wrote an "Essay on Medals," and corresponded with Horace Walpole.

<sup>14</sup> The daughters of Temple's patron, the Earl of Lisburne, by his second wife, Dorothy Shafto, of Whitworth, Durham, whom he married on April 19th, 1769. They were Lady Dorothy Elizabeth and Lady Malet.

<sup>15</sup> The Earl's heir and eldest son, who at this time was known as the Hon. Richard Edgcumbe. Three years later, on his father's being made an Earl, he took the second family title of Viscount Valletort by courtesy. He was subsequently the 2nd Earl of Mount Edgcumbe.

## 7

Some months ago I troubled you with a request from my wife on a very melancholy occasion to us, the loss of our eldest son, a very promising youth, at eighteen.<sup>1</sup> She consoled herself with the hope that your pathetic muse would not have grudged her a few never-fading flowers to strew over the tomb of one she justly held so dear, and whose youth and beauty and parts were not unworthy of the elegiac strain.<sup>2</sup> As I do not think you could refuse her, I trouble you with this only to say that I imagine my letter never came to your hands, and to put you in mind of one who always thinks of you with pleasure. I fully intended passing a month or two in town this spring; but the loss I still and must long lament disqualified me from pursuing either study or amusement with any degree of satisfaction. The lenient hand of time is gradually restoring me to myself, and is a better comforter than either reason or philosophy. Indeed, when we are really afflicted, the

suggestions of those unfeeling preceptors rather irritate than soothe.

Believe me, with great regard,  
Most sincerely yours,  
W. J. TEMPLE.

Penryn, Cornwall,  
May 5th, 1787.

<sup>1</sup> This was the son to whom Boswell acted as godfather, but whom, strangely enough, he never saw, though he visited the Temples at Mamhead in 1776, when the boy was only six or seven. Boswell's comment on Temple's loss is an admirable illustration of the great truth that "other persons' affairs are tedious." It runs:—

"I received this morning, before I got out of bed, your last very affecting letter. Business called me into the City, and I returned with intention to write to you. But Sir Joshua Reynolds has, I find, invited me to dine at his house at four, with the Laureate, who is just come to town, and I cannot resist; so I can only assure you of my sincerest sympathy and prayers, ineffectual as I may fear they are. I have regretted that I was not acquainted with my amiable godson. Perhaps I should now be thankful; yet, when my mind is firm, as it is at present, I feel a solid confidence in the Divine wisdom, with a humble waiting 'for the great teacher Death.' You shall hear from me soon again. . . . Be comforted, my old and most intimate friend, with pious hope, and be assured of the unceasing and warm regard of your truly affectionate JAMES BOSWELL." (London, January 5th, 1787.)

<sup>2</sup> Whether Edward Jerningham responded to this somewhat embarrassing appeal I cannot discover; but in such editions of the poet's verse as I have consulted I have come across no elegy to young Temple's memory.

## 8

I am glad to find that neither distance nor the lapse of some years have put me quite out of your remembrance. Were there no other reasons, the entertainment you from time to time afford the public would not permit any one to forget Mr. Jerningham. I have read with pleasure those fine verses, you were so kind as to send me, and which you so modestly call *lines*, and join the town in giving them the plaudit they so well deserve.<sup>1</sup> Praise and encomium conveyed in such elegant poetry must give peculiar satisfaction to the object of it, our modern Apelles. Every admirer of genius and virtue must rejoice at his having resumed the station he honours by accepting.

For some time past I have not been accustomed to pay much respect to Mr. Burke's opinions. I can be entertained with the copiousness of his declamation and the brilliancy of his fancy; but can place no confidence in his principles or judgment. Nothing he can allege respecting the commotions in France will have any weight with me. That fine country has been too long cruelly degraded and oppressed; and I cannot help wishing success to the assertors of the unalienable rights

of nations. They may be seditious, they may be self-interested; but the cause they are engaged in is the cause of freedom.

The end of next month I have thought of coming to town with my daughter. I hope then to have the pleasure of waiting on you, and of answering your friendly inquiries. My wife desires to join in best wishes and compliments to you with your affectionate humble servant,

W. J. TEMPLE.

St. Gluvias,  
March 25th, 1790.

<sup>1</sup> The allusion is to Jerningham's "Lines on a Late Resignation at the Royal Academy" (1790). The Royal Academy having refused to elect Joseph Bonomi to full membership, Sir Joshua Reynolds resigned his Presidency and Membership on February 28rd, 1790, but resumed them, at the request of the Academy, on March 16th.

9

[May, 1790.<sup>1</sup>]

DEAR SIR,

Upon my return home my daughter finds herself so indifferent that I am afraid to venture to the opera to-night: this is a great mortification both to her and to me. On Tuesday we go into Surrey for a few days, and should be glad to be favoured with tickets for Strawberry Hill any day in the week after next that may be agreeable to you. In the meanwhile, what hours you can spare me will be gratefully acknowledged by

Dear Sir,

Your most obliged humble servant,

W. J. TEMPLE.

Queen Anne Street,<sup>a</sup>  
4 o'clock.

Mr. Jerningham, No. 26, Green Street, Grosvenor Square.<sup>b</sup>

<sup>1</sup> I give the letter this date because we know that Temple was thinking of coming up to town with his daughter at the end of April, 1790.

<sup>a</sup> In January, 1789, Boswell took a small house "in Queen Anne Street, West, Cavendish Square." This may be the house at which the Temples stopped during their visit to town, a visit, it will be observed, on which Temple was unaccompanied by his wife who, we are told in the "Memoirs of Archbishop Temple," heartily disliked Boswell. When Temple went to Scotland in the autumn of 1770, Mrs. Temple had previously refrained from "favouring the Boswells with her company," a circumstance which "Jemmy" doubtless failed not to notice. Mrs. Temple, a woman who antagonised Gray and Nicholls and hated Boswell, Temple's greatest friend, must have proved a mighty uncomfortable wife to live with, however "well read" she may have been. Boswell, who took her to see Sir Joshua Reynolds in his studio and to hear Warren Hastings's trial at Westminster Hall, probably amused Miss Temple, who was at this time not quite eighteen, having been born,

her father's eldest daughter, on July 7th, 1772. She was amanuensis to Temple in his literary work, and in September of this year she became engaged to the Rev. Charles Powlett.

<sup>2</sup> Edward Jerningham set up his residence at 26, Green Street after his mother's death.

10

[May, 1790.]

DEAR SIR,

On my return home from calling at your door yesterday, I had the favour of your obliging note. As the friend we are going to visit is a most amiable and worthy man, we shall not be able to leave him and his family till Friday or Saturday. Any day next week that may be convenient to Mr. Walpole and agreeable to you will be so to us. Your partiality would make me and my daughter vain, did it not rather excite us to do better. I trust we shall yet have an opportunity of being entertained with the gay as well as the serious strains of Otorace.<sup>1</sup>

Yours with great enthusiasm and regard,

W. J. TEMPLE.

Queen Ann Street,  
Tuesday, Morn.

Mr. Jerningham, No. 26, Green Street, Grosvenor Square.

<sup>1</sup> I cannot elucidate this reference.

11

[May, 1790.]

DEAR SIR,

We were so late in setting out for the Abbey that we could not possibly reach Green Street till you would be gone. This greatly vexed the daughters of harmony, and the more so, as not hearing from Mr. Boswell, we set out for the West after tea to-day. Be assured we shall often think of Mr. Jerningham with affectionate gratitude, and look forward with no small degree of pleasure to the hopes he gives of a visit at Gluvias. I shall be happy to be favoured with a letter from you when you have a leisure half-hour, and have the honour to be, with much esteem and affection,

Dear Sir,

Your greatly obliged humble servant,

W. J. TEMPLE.

Tuesday, 6 o'clock.

Edward Jerningham, Esq<sup>r</sup>,  
Green Street,  
with Sacontala.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> I cannot elucidate this reference. Probably this was the name of some book belonging to Edward Jerningham which Temple was returning.

Penryn, Cornwall, November 29th, 1790.

We often recollect with peculiar complacence your polite and friendly attention to us when in town; indeed, what claim had we to such amiable proofs of good-will and regard? But the truly benevolent always exceed in the instances of their kindness. Our journey back by Exeter and Plymouth was pleasant enough, but not so various as in coming up.

How have you passed the summer? In viewing landscape and scenery? Or have you ventured to Paris at this period of agitation and expectancy? Do not you think the leaders of the National Assembly proceed too rapidly; and would it not be politically wise to retain some part of the old Constitution? All sudden and violent changes are to be suspected: and neither nations nor individuals so easily get rid of old habits and prejudices. After the first fermentation, things may run as violently back again into their old channels; and perhaps it is necessary to be enured gradually even to freedom. I hear that M. de Calonne<sup>1</sup> and Mr. Burke have alleged many strong things in defence of the Ancient Establishment; and it is probable that the opulent, the noble, and the learned, ever enemies to innovation, will never acquiesce under the usurped authority of adventurers, hypocrites, or enthusiasts.

I was much mortified lately at hearing [that] the Goddess of Statuary (Mrs. Damer) passed by my door without my having an opportunity of paying my respects to her. You know my admiration of talents so extraordinary, and how greatly I longed when in town to adore her in her works of creation and beauty. It seems she has gone to Lisbon for her health. When she returns, could you give us a line of introduction to her; that we may have it in our power to say [that] we have entertained under our roof the most extraordinary genius of modern times, and to whom antiquity would have erected statues, temples, and altars! You remember how greatly we were enchanted with what we saw of her works at Strawberry Hill.

Does Apollo sound the elegiac or the epic strain? And what did the fine season dictate to you in your sequestered roving?

So Mr. Pitt has triumphed at last, and we are to have no war! This will disappoint the Navy people, &c. We have a son there,<sup>2</sup> about whom my wife is naturally very anxious. He was three years at the Royal Academy at Portsmouth, three years in the *Thisbe* at Nova Scotia, and is just returned in the *Salisbury* from Newfoundland. It seems a pretty general promotion of midshipmen is to take place. Could you do us



the favour to mention our son Francis to some of your friends; that we may have the satisfaction of seeing him a Lieutenant's Promotion in the Navy is hardly attainable in time of peace; and, if he miss the present opportunity, there is little probability that another may present itself, at least in our time. Having solicited several of our friends, Lady Lisburne, Mr. Dundas,<sup>1</sup> etc., etc., my wife also reckoned on your good wishes.

My daughter and I have read several of Metastasio's dramas, and are going to begin "Deninas Rex d'Ital." We join in, allow me to say, affectionate compliments to you. Believe me, Dear Sir, with great regard and esteem,

Your much obliged humble servant,  
W. J. Temple.

<sup>1</sup> M. Charles Alexandre de Calonne (1734-1802) was Minister of the French Finances from Nov. 8th, 1783, to April 8th, 1787. Subsequently he entered into a polemical correspondence with his rival Necker, and eventually joined the Emigré party.

<sup>2</sup> This was Francis Temple, who became a Vice-Admiral, and died January 19th, 1868.

<sup>3</sup> Pitt's friend and colleague, who later was made Viscount Melville, impeached for malversation, and acquitted.

## 13

St. Gluvias, Penryn, Cornwall,  
August 23rd, 1791.

DEAR SIR,

I should have thanked you sooner for your charming poem;<sup>1</sup> but received it very lately with a parcel of books. I have read it more than once with particular pleasure. The scenes are selected with great taste and judgment, are coloured with the poet's own pencil, and may be highly useful to those painters who shall have the good sense to be directed by them. Continue to delight us with such divine strains!

But where are you? Surely not in the furnace and dust of London? Perhaps you are nearer me than I imagine, and now meditating your rural minstrelsy in the thick embowering groves and woods of Mount Edgcombe? The idea gives me particular satisfaction; as it flatters me with the hope of receiving you here under this most humble roof. For you cannot have forgot your promise; and none of this house will release you from it.

Degraded France still continues in the same state of anarchy, her sovereigns captives to the base and frantic vulgar. Mr. Burke pursues his theme; but his business in his second piece<sup>2</sup> seems to be rather with our divine Rousseau than with any of his living antagonists. Indeed they hardly deserve his

notice, not even the impudent, turbulent Payne.<sup>3</sup> I am vext I have done the fellow the honour to buy his factious ribaldry.

I am reading Wheeler's "Voyage de Greece,"<sup>4</sup> &c., which does not answer my expectations. Though more of those precious ruins were remaining in his time (1676), yet he is not near so particular and correct as Stuart<sup>5</sup> and other late observers. Can there be a greater encomium on good, and a severer satyr on bad, government than the present deplorable state of that fine country? Under a free constitution the seat of arts, commerce, and literature; under a despotic one the abode of poverty, ignorance, and misery.

I trust you will not suffer the Goddess of Sculpture to pass my door without receiving my prostrations. What a beautiful picture she draws to you of Seville! The course of the sun must have driven her some months since from that Winter Paradise.

Pray favour me speedily with a letter, and let us know we may expect the happiness of your company. We join in best remembrances.

Yours, with great regard and esteem,

W. J. TEMPLE.

<sup>1</sup> "The Shakespeare Gallery: a Poem" (1791). It was suggested by Alderman Boydell's collection of pictures, and proposed to artists new subjects taken from Shakespeare.

<sup>2</sup> "Letter to a Member of the National Assembly" (1791).

<sup>3</sup> The well-known author of "The Age of Reason" and of the "Rights of Man," the latter a reply to Burke's "Reflections." It is interesting to note that Canning's famous phrase about "calling the New World into existence to redress the balance of the Old" was probably suggested by a sentence contained in the dedication of the first part of the "Rights of Man" to General Washington, wherein Paine prays that Washington "may enjoy the happiness of seeing the New World regenerate the Old." It is indeed distinctly quaint to find the leading spirit of "The Anti-Jacobin" indebted in this way to the demolisher of Burke's "Reflections."

<sup>4</sup> Sir George Wheeler's (1650-1723) account of his travels in Greece and the Levant in 1675 and 1676 was published in 1682 under the title of "A Journey into Greece."

<sup>5</sup> James Stuart (1713-1786), painter and architect, author, with Nicholas Revett, of "The Antiquities of Athens" (1763). Hence his name of "Athenian" Stuart.

[Part only of a letter, the half-sheet having been torn off.]

He is also engaged in a military history of the Romans in Britain, and in an account of Annabal's passage over the Alps; and will convince us that vinegar was used, though Polybius says nothing about it.

I need not say what satisfaction a letter from you now and

then would afford me. My situation here is very solitary and very dispiriting. There is literally no conversation; and I must find all my amusements in my family and among my books. I am reading Anquetil's "L'Esprit de la Ligue,"<sup>1</sup> &c., with your young friend.<sup>2</sup> She hopes in summer to hear the tones of your harp echo among the groves and along the banks of St. Gluvias. We all unite in pleasing remembrances of you.

Ever dear Sir,  
 With great regard and esteem,  
 Your sincere and most obliged servant,  
 W. J. TEMPLE.

St. Gluvias, Penryn, Cornwall.  
 March 29th, 1792.

<sup>1</sup> Louis Pierre Anquetil (1723-1803), French historian, political writer and theological professor, wrote a "Universal History," a "History of Rheims," and the history of France in the 16th and 17th centuries, which he called "The Spirit of the League," 1767.

<sup>2</sup> Miss Temple.

## 15

I believe it will give you concern to learn that a person who admired your conversation and writings was on Thursday last taken from her afflicted husband and children. The blow is the more severe, being in a manner quite unexpected. She had been ill about three weeks; and her physician gave us no reason to be alarmed till the morning of her decease. As a mother, as a wife, as a friend, myself and children shall ever have reason to lament and bewail her early death: she was but forty-six.<sup>1</sup> I thought this calamity, affecting those for whom you had expressed great kindness both by words and actions, would not be quite indifferent to you.

W. J. TEMPLE.

St. Gluvias, March 16th, 1793.

<sup>1</sup> Mrs. Temple, married to her husband in 1767, died March 14th, 1793.

## 16

MY DEAR SIR,

A friend of mine in town has written highly to me of your "Siege of Berwick." I will not now relinquish my prescribed claims of a copy "From the Author." My son from Eton<sup>1</sup> is now passing the Christmas holydays at Mr. Boswell's, No. 27, Great Portland Street. If you will send it to him, he will forward it to me in covers. Will you do me the kindness to notice him a little? He is sixteen, and in the fifth form, a very well-disposed, a very studious, and a very ingenious boy.

Several months ago I sent you a small treatise respecting French equality and anarchy.<sup>1</sup> I was in town for about a month in September and October, and left my name at your door. The purpose of my journey was to forward my son's promotion in the Navy; which I happily effected by means of early intimacy with Mr. Dundas, now so great a man. He, Boswell, and I studied together at Edinburgh,<sup>2</sup> previous to my going to Cambridge.

My daughter, still mindful and grateful for your goodness, begs to join me in affectionate remembrances.

Truly yours,  
W. J. TEMPLE.

St. Gluvias, Penryn, Cornwall.  
December 22nd, 1798.

When you are disposed to favour me with a few lines, please to send your letter to Mr. Boswell,<sup>4</sup> who will forward it free.

<sup>1</sup> This boy was John James Temple, who afterwards went into the army, and died in India in 1800 in his twenty-ninth year. In a letter, written to Temple, and dated June 21st, 1793, Boswell says:—"I will do what I can as to John James and Octavius. I have good interest at Eton, and shall be there soon." In a letter, written to Temple on October 14th, 1793, he says, "My brother has had a letter from John James,—much better reconciled to Eton: be not then uneasy about him." Boswell's eldest son, Alexander, had been or was still at Eton. Writing to Temple on March 31st, 1789, "Jemmy" confesses "I leave my sons in the house here with the old house-keeper and my footman. I must send the eldest from home; for he begins to oppose me, and no wonder." James Boswell, Junior, was at Westminster. Both Alexander (created a baronet) and James (the editor of a "Variorum" Shakespeare) died suddenly in April, 1823, the former being killed in a duel.

<sup>2</sup> Boswell writes to Temple on May 31st, 1794: "You have taken great pains in reading and transcribing such a number of illustrations, which are truly strong warnings against the horrible proceedings in France. But Mr. Dilly would not risk printing even the sermon; and the illustrations would occasion double or treble the expense."

<sup>3</sup> Henry Dundas was Treasurer of the Navy from 1782 to 1783, and from 1784 to 1800.

<sup>4</sup> As will be seen from the annexed extracts from Boswell's letters to Temple, "Jemmy" did his best to obtain a lieutenantancy for Frank Temple. So that the quaint situation arose of Temple urging this suit on Dundas, of Temple pressing Boswell and Jerningham to urge it on Dundas, and of Boswell pressing Jerningham to urge it on Dundas. Quaintest of all is it to find that these united applications came to naught, and that Temple eventually obtained his suit, after four years' importunity, through a personal interview with the Treasurer of the Navy. Here are the extracts from Boswell's letters.

(1) "I wish you joy of your young sailor's return. What a feeling it must have been to see him again after a three years' absence! You must be somewhat in the situation of a hen who has hatched ducks. A sea-life must

seem very unnatural to you; I am sure it does so to me." (London, November 28th, 1789.)

(2) "Miss Palmer [Sir Joshua Reynolds's niece], who has, I really believe, a sincere regard for you, applied to Lord Elliot, but all in vain. I believe I mentioned to you having been told that several of the young men appointed by Lord Chatham had not served their time, and therefore were to be struck off; so that I thought this might afford an opening. But what are we to do, when variety of interests draw so strong? I met Jerningham last night, at Lord Lucan's, and complimented him on his new poem ['The Shakspeare Gallery,'] of which I have read a part. I spoke to him about your son; but, though I believe, well inclined, he did not seem to think he could do much. I protest, I hope most from Dundas. If you will allow me, I will try him in my way, requesting he may do a kindness of much consequence to an old friend, unconnected with politics; *and let me have it to tell*. You should certainly write to him again, either for a vacancy now, or for the Newfoundland Station afterwards. It was a mistake to suppose that Hawkins [Sir Christopher Hawkins, Bart., of Trewithan, not Sir John Hawkins, Kt., the biographer of Johnson, who had died in 1789. Sir Christopher was a Cornish M.P., and was godfather to Temple's son Octavius, the father of the Archbishop] would write to Mr. Pitt: he never said he would, and he assures me he would not, were his own brother in the case. It is agreeable to think that your son is a fine manly fellow, and does not seem to be discouraged, though his promotion should be delayed." (London, February 7th, 1791.)

(3) "I made an excursion to Portsmouth, and viewed the Grand Fleet; and there I was assured that the most difficult step in the Navy is from midshipman to lieutenant. My first letter to Dundas concerning your son was repeating my words to you, that I was afraid he did not like me (or something to that effect), but that I believed him to be a generous fellow, and therefore advised you to apply to him. I mentioned to you how cordially he expressed himself towards your son when I saw him, and that he was to make a memorandum. I transmitted to him, from the circuit, your last letter in one from myself, and I cannot doubt of his sincerity and zeal, when an occasion offers. What a life have midshipmen! Yet all our Admirals have passed through it." (London, August 22nd, 1791.)

(4) "I have imagined that I was quite unable to write a letter. I was glad to find that there was warmth enough remaining about my heart to animate me to answer, in two posts, an anxious letter which I received from your son, on his return from Newfoundland. Poor fellow! I sincerely feel for his situation, of which (as I mentioned to him) I have a stronger impression since passing a day and a night on board of Captain MacBride's ship in the Grand Fleet last summer. I have assured your son that I shall not fail to remind Mr. Dundas of his kind promise. What more can be done?" (London, November 22nd, 1791.)

(5) "I do not wonder at Franky's impatience and piteous letters; but I find that lieutenants are made only as they are wanted for particular ships. I trust that, after what Dundas said to you, your son cannot fail to be nominated soon, and that before he sails." (London, October 14th, 1793.)

XII

THE REV. ROBERT POTTER

AN ACCOUNT OF THE REV. ROBERT POTTER  
(1721-1804)

ROBERT POTTER, translator of the Greek tragedians, was born in 1721; but nothing seems to be known of his family or of his place of birth. He was educated at the Free School of Scarning, Norfolk, and at Emmanuel College, Cambridge. He graduated B.A. in 1741; but he deferred proceeding to the degree of M.A. till 1788, when he was made Canon of Norwich. For some years he was curate of Reymarston, Norfolk; from 1754 to 1758 he (or at any rate a Robert Potter) was rector of Crostwick in that county; and on June 1st, 1761, he was appointed to succeed his old master, the Rev. Joseph Brett, as curate of Scarning and master of the Free School there, a preferment in the gift of the Warner family. "When he went to take possession of the School House, he was opposed by a tumultuous assembly of the inhabitants, who were unwilling that Coe [a master who had been conducting the school for some time] should be removed; and it was not till a magistrate, Sir Armine Wodehouse, had read the Riot Act that Mr. Potter could enter into the premises" (Carthew's "Hundred of Launditch"). The acquaintance thus formed with the Wodehouses developed into an intimate friendship, which was only broken by Potter's death. The new curate followed Brett's example of keeping a good boarding-house, where he educated many pupils; but "he taught the village children by deputy," and, strangely enough, the parish clerk in his time was also a Robert Potter. At Scarning Potter remained for twenty-eight and a half years; visiting town occasionally to see his friends the Bacons and the Wodehouses, and to pay his respects to his somewhat forgetful patroness, Mrs. Montagu; meeting in London Dr. Johnson, who, all the circumstances considered, seems to have treated him very boorishly; and occupying his spare time in translating the tragedies of Æschylus, Euripides and Sophocles. "He had been a schoolfellow of Lord Thurlow (says the author of the obituary notice of Potter contributed to *The Gentleman's Magazine* for August, 1804); and had constantly sent his publications to that great man, without ever soliciting a single favour from him. On receiving a copy of the Sophocles, however, his lordship wrote a short note to Mr.

Potter, acknowledging the receipt of his books from time to time, and the pleasure they had afforded him, and requesting Mr. Potter's acceptance of a prebendal stall in the cathedral of Norwich." (Thurlow said "he did not like to promote him earlier for fear of making him indolent.") This second canonical stall Potter, needless to say, gladly accepted, and held till his death. But, if we are to believe the "Recollections" of "The Sexagenarian" (the Rev. William Beloe), the Lord Chancellor spoiled his kindness to Potter by a strange display of surly ungraciousness.

"Mr. Potter, on receiving notice of the favour intended for him, immediately came to town, to make personal acknowledgement of his gratitude. He called several times at Thurlow's house, but could never obtain admission. At length he appealed to his friend and neighbour, Sir John, afterwards Lord, Wodehouse, and begged of him to see the Chancellor in the House of Peers, and to ask when he might have the honour of waiting on his lordship, as he had been some days in town, and was anxious to return. Sir John accordingly did this, when the only answer he received was—'Let him go home again; I want none of his Norfolk bows.'"

In the next year, on June 26th, 1789, Potter received from the Bishop of Norwich (Dr. Bagot) the unexpected and unapplied-for preferment to the vicarage of Lowestoft and to the rectory of Kessingland. He thereupon resigned the curacy of Scarning, finally removing from the village on November 30th, 1789. At Lowestoft and at Norwich he spent the remainder of his days. He was found dead in his bed at the former town on August 9th, 1804, having reached the goodly age of eighty-three. Potter married Elizabeth Colman, daughter of J. Colman, of Hardingham, by Elizabeth Howes. She died at Scarning in July, 1786, having given her husband a large family. Romney painted Potter in 1779, and gave him the portrait. As stated in Note 6 to Letter 28, he also painted Potter's son; but he delayed completing the portrait until ten months after the son's death. A strange case that of Potter! Introduced to Johnson, who snubbed him; patronised by Mrs. Montagu, who neglected him; given a prebend by Thurlow, who scorned his thanks; and painted by Romney, who wounded him by callous indifference. And the man, obviously, most likeable; simple in his manners, warm and steadfast in his friendships, unaffected in his piety, ardent in his attachment to classical studies, and gifted with a very merry and mellow sense of humour. No fool either, for all his piety, humour, and good humour.

The first edition of Potter's translation of *Æschylus* appeared in 1777; and in 1778 the translator printed and



presented to the subscribers some notes on the tragedies, which were suggested by Mrs. Montagu and inscribed to her. The first volume of his Euripides came out in 1781, with a dedication to the Dowager Duchess of Beaufort, and the second in 1783. His translation of Sophocles, inscribed to Georgiana, Dowager Countess Spencer, was published in 1788.

Potter was introduced to Dr. Johnson by Mrs. Montagu, his great literary patroness, and the following account is given of the meeting in Edmund Henry Barker's "Literary Anecdotes and Contemporary Reminiscences":—

"April 24th, 1814. Potter, the translator of *Æschylus*, Sophocles, and Euripides, who was a tall man about 6 feet high, very handsome, with an aquiline nose, went up to London, and was introduced by Mrs. Montagu of Shakespearean celebrity to a party of blue-stockings. At length Dr. Johnson's name was announced. Mrs. Montagu, with all due form, took Mr. Potter by the hand, and introduced him to Dr. Johnson by saying, 'Dr. Johnson, Mr. Potter.' Dr. J. muttered out something like, 'Well, well.' Mrs. M. thought that Dr. J. did not hear, and again said, 'Mr. Potter, Dr. Johnson,' Dr. Johnson in the same sort of tone repeated his mutterings. Mrs. M. was irritated at Dr. J.'s apparent neglect of what she said, and still supposing that he did not hear the name of Potter mentioned, again said, 'Dr. Johnson, Mr. Potter, the translator of *Æschylus*.' Dr. J. then said, 'Well, Madam, and what then?' Dr. Parr thought that Dr. J. had, on the first entrance of Mr. Potter, seen something in his manner which he did not like. When Potter saw Dr. Parr after this circumstance, he, in the simplicity of his heart, said to him, 'Well, I have seen your friend, Dr. Johnson.' He described him as a very cold-hearted man, of heartless manners, and then himself told the story, and seemed quite unconscious of Dr. J.'s secret contempt for him. Dr. Parr said that by the *Æschylus* Potter established his fame and lost some of it by the Euripides. Potter once told the Doctor that, as he had begun, he should finish the three tragedians. The Doctor replied that it was not very likely that one man should succeed in turning into English three poets of such opposite characters; and he reminded him how carelessly he had done the Euripides. When a part of the Sophocles was shown to him, Dr. Parr, who had nothing to say in its praise, adroitly and wittily turned the conversation, by saying that he liked no translation but from one bishopric to another; as he once did, when he was pestered by a silly prattler about the suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act. 'Come,' said he, 'Qui suspenderit suspendantur.'"

I am afraid that this anecdote is somewhat of a cock-and-bull story. In the first place it is *primâ facie* suspect, as

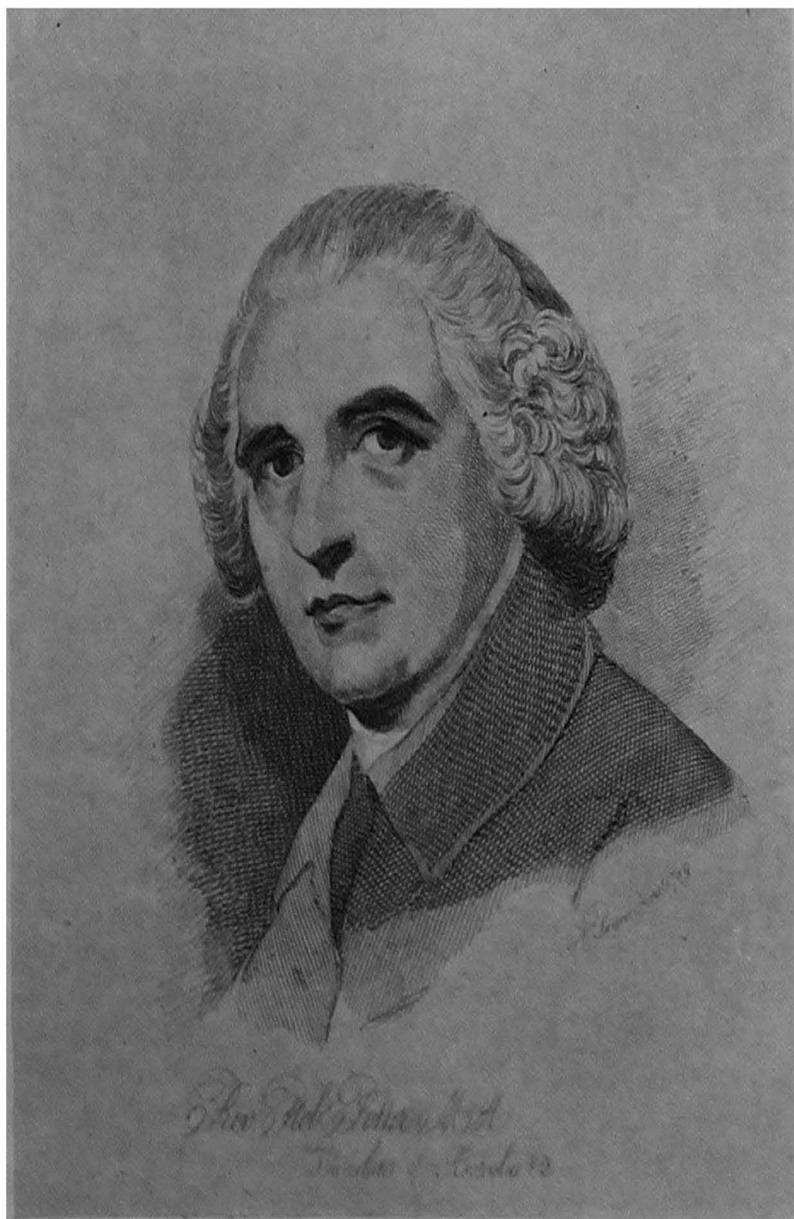
having been communicated thirty years after Johnson's death, and coming from Dr. Parr, who was a gossip \* and no friend to Johnson. Secondly, it tells half only of the story of the altercation, leaving the *dénouement* to the reader's imagination. And thirdly, it represents Johnson not only as intolerably rude at a first introduction, rude, too, with no kind of provocation, but risking a quarrel with Mrs. Montagu on account of a man whom he had met at her house for the first time. Now Johnson, though he seems to have had more than a suspicion of her learning and rather to have disliked her personally, always wished to keep on good terms with Mrs. Montagu, on account of her position and assemblies. It was only after he attacked her friend Lyttelton in his "Lives of the English Poets," that he rather ruefully wondered whether she would invite him to her new house in Portman Square. For these reasons then I take Barker's anecdote with more than the proverbial grain of salt; though I don't for one moment doubt that a mutual repulsion prevented Johnson and Potter from becoming friends.

Potter is mentioned once only in Boswell's "Life of Johnson."

"On Thursday, April 9th [1778], I dined with him [*i.e.* Johnson] at Sir Joshua Reynolds's, with the Bishop of St. Asaph (Dr. Shipley), Mr. Allan Ramsay, Mr. Gibbon, Mr. Cambridge, and Mr. Langton. . . . When we went to the drawing-room there was a rich assemblage. Besides the company who had been at dinner, there was Mr. Garrick, Mr. Harris of Salisbury, Dr. Percy, Dr. Burney, Honourable Mrs. Cholmondeley, † Miss Hannah Moore, &c., &c. After wandering about in a kind of pleasing distraction for some time, I got into a corner with Johnson, Garrick, and Harris. GARRICK (to Harris): 'Pray, Sir, have you read Potter's *Æschylus*?' HARRIS: 'Yes; and think it pretty.' GARRICK (to Johnson): 'And what think you, Sir, of it?' JOHNSON: 'I thought what I read of it verbiage; but upon Mr. Harris's recommendation I will read a play. (To Mr. Harris)—Don't prescribe two.' Mr. Harris suggested one, I do not remember which. JOHNSON: 'We must try its effect as an English poem; that is the way to judge of the merit of a translation. Translations are, in general, for people who cannot read the original.'"

\* See De Quincey's scathing essay on Parr.

† Mrs. Cholmondeley was originally Mary Woffington, a sister of the famous Peg Woffington. She married Captain (afterwards the Reverend) Robert Cholmondeley, second son of the 3rd Earl Cholmondeley, and nephew to Horace Walpole, who writing to Sir Horace Mann, on December 5th, 1746, says, "I have been unfortunate in my own family; my nephew, Captain Cholmondeley, has married a player's sister." Captain Cholmondeley was uncle to the 1st Marquess of Cholmondeley.



**The Rev. ROBERT POTTER**

I may remark that a recommendation given by Mr. Harris was scarcely one which was likely to be favourably received, or at least acted upon, by Johnson. The Doctor had but a poor opinion of the author of "Hermes, or a Philosophical Inquiry concerning Universal Grammar." He called him "a coxcomb," and "a prig and a bad prig." On the other hand, Mrs. Harris seems to have held both Johnson and Boswell in little regard. Writing from Twickenham on April 20th, 1775, to her son, the future Earl of Malmesbury, at Berlin, she says:—

"Tuesday, Dr. Johnson, his fellow-traveller through the Scotch Western Isles, Mr. Boswell, and Sir Joshua Reynolds dined here. I have long wished to be in company with this said Johnson. His conversation is the same as his writing; but [he has] a dreadful voice and manner. He is certainly amusing as a novelty; but [he] seems not possessed of any benevolence, is beyond all description awkward, and more beastly in his dress and person than anything I ever beheld. He feeds nastily and ferociously, and eats quantities most unthankfully." As to Boswell, he appears a low-bred kind of thing."

Now many persons may have thought that in her "Anecdotes of Johnson," Mrs. Piozzi distinguished her former friend overmuch by his intolerable table-manners. This extract from Mrs. Harris's letter, strangely neglected by modern Johnsonians, shows, however, that the Doctor was "by merit raised to that bad eminence." The author of "The Rambler" was in fact as dirty an eater as the author of "Travels through France and Italy" was squeamish. And as the latter depicted anything offensive to the sight or to the smell with a gusto born of keen distress, it seems a pity that he never recorded his impressions of meeting the former at dinner. A sketch of Dr. Johnson feeding, drawn from the life by Dr. Smollett, would have made very piquant reading.

But to get back to Robert Potter and his version of *Æschylus*, which Mr. Harris thought pretty, surely the strangest of eulogistic epithets to apply to a translation of so sublime a tragedian! Apparently Johnson was not impressed by the single play he read; for Susan, writing to Fanny Burney, on August 1st, 1779, says:—

"We arrived at Streatham at a very little past eleven. As a *place*, it surpassed all my expectations. . . . It is a little Paradise, I think. . . . I followed my father into the library. . . . There sat Mrs. Thrale and Dr. Johnson, the latter finishing his breakfast upon peaches. . . . Dr. Johnson interrupted Mrs. Thrale by telling my father Mrs. Thrale had desired Mr. Potter to translate some verses for him, which he (Dr. J.) had before undertaken to do. 'How so?' said my father. 'Why, Mr.

Potter?' 'Nay, Sir, I don't know. It was Mrs. Thrale's fancy.' Mrs. Thrale said she would go and fetch them. . . . Then came back Mrs. Thrale with the *verses*, which she had been copying out. I rose, and took a seat next Miss Thrale. However, she [*i.e.* Mrs. Thrale] made me return to that next Dr. Johnson, that *he might hear what I had to say*. 'But if I have *nothing* to say, Ma'am?' said I. 'Oh, never fear,' said she, laughing, 'I'll warrant you'll find something to talk about.' The verses were then given to my father. After he had read the first stanza, 'Why these are none of Potter's!' said he, 'these are *worse* than Potter. They beat him at his own weapons.' Dr. Johnson and Mrs. Thrale laughed very much, and the verses proved to be the *former's*, and were composed, in a comical humour, the evening before, in derision of Potter. They are admirable. You will see them at Streatham, and perhaps procure a copy, which my father could not do. Dr. Johnson is afraid of having them spread about, as some other verses were he wrote in the same way to ridicule poor Dr. Percy; but Mrs. Thrale advised my father to make you attack Dr. Johnson about them, 'for she can do what she pleases with him.' ("The Early Diary of Frances Burney.")

Potter lacked Christian meekness sufficiently to enable him to take Johnson's treatment of him lying down. Admiring Gray, and friendly with Beattie, he resented, too, Johnson's very cavalier treatment of the former poet. And in 1783, he published "An Inquiry into Some Passages in Dr. Johnson's 'Lives of the Most Eminent English poets,' particularly his observations on Lyric Poetry and the Odes of Gray." Horace Walpole, who in 1778 had told Mason that Potter was "a good poet" and had "taste," and that he (Walpole) was "delighted" with his rendering of the "Prometheus," was rather dubious in his opinion of this manifesto. Writing to Mason on June 9th, 1783, he says:—

"The . . . piece is a professed defence of Gray against Johnson, by Potter, the translator of *Æschylus*. It is sensibly written, is civil to Johnson, and yet severe; but, though this is the declared intention, I have heard that the true object was to revenge [*i.e.* avenge] the attack on Lord Lyttelton at the instigation of Mrs. Montagu, who has her full share of incense, and who, with insipid Bishop Hurd, is pronounced the two best critics of this or any age. Were I Johnson, I had rather be criticised than flattered so fulsomely."

Potter returned to the attack in 1789, five years after Johnson's death, when he brought out "The Art of Criticism, as exemplified in Dr. Johnson's 'Lives of the Most Eminent English Poets.'"

In addition to his translations of the Greek tragedians, and

to his polemics on behalf of Gray, Potter published collections of his occasional verse. I have read few of his poems: what I have read seemed to me about as good as Hayley's or as Mason's, and far below the level of his translations of the lyrical or odic passages of the Greek tragedians.

#### A NOTE ON SECKAR'S SCHOOL, SCARNING, AND ON THE INCUMBENTS OF SCARNING

Scarning School was founded by William Seckar, a yeoman of Scarning, who left to his wife, who was three times a widow, certain property for her life, which, after her death, went to trustees to maintain a Free School there. From 1638 to 1850 the Masters of the School, who were sometimes also Curates of Scarning, were as follows:—

- |                                |                               |
|--------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| 1. Samuel Harrys (1638-1643).  | 6. Joseph Brett (1733-1750).  |
| 2. Robert Bretton (1643-1653). | 7. Robert Potter (1761-1789). |
| 3. John Burton (1653-1677).    | 8. St. John Priest            |
| 4. Thomas Brett (1677-1692).   | (1790-1819).                  |
| 5. Benjamin Lane (died 1732).  | 9. Levi Walton (1819-1850).   |

Robert Bretton was Vicar of Scarning from 1668 to 1690. Before his appointment to Scarning School, John Burton had been Master of the Cathedral School, Ely; he left Scarning to become Master of the Free School, Norwich, of which he wrote a history in Latin. He was an M.A., but was not in orders. He kept two ushers, Thomas Brett, who succeeded him as Master, and an assistant called Clarke. He had usually about 50 boys in the school, 20 of whom he boarded. The Rev. Benjamin Lane, M.A., was brother to the Rev. John Lane, Rector of Scarning. Joseph Brett, M.A., was in orders, and was also Curate of Scarning. He was 4th Wrangler, and before he came to Scarning he had been Master of Wymondham School. About 1750, after which date followed the interregnum in which Coe managed the school, he was either dismissed or made to resign from Scarning on account of his ill-treatment of the parish children. It is said that when Thurlow, afterwards Lord Chancellor, was a pupil at the school, Brett one day hit a boy on the head with a slate so severely that he fell down senseless, that Brett became so alarmed as to run out for water to help to recover him, and that, when the other boys were lifting their schoolfellow up, Thurlow exclaimed: "Let him be! Let him lie! He'll die, if you leave him alone, and then Brett will be hanged!"

Potter's successor at the school was the Rev. St. John

Priest, M.A., who died in 1819. In 1780 he was Senior Wrangler, and he was also author of a Greek Delectus. The old school was demolished in 1850 and rebuilt; and it was enlarged in 1885. It is now managed under a new scheme.

For ecclesiastical purposes Scarning was in two medieties a rectory and a vicarage, which were consolidated in 1789. Richard Tappes, who was appointed in 1741, held both. John Beevor, who was appointed in 1789, held both consolidated. Philip Du Val Aufrere was Incumbent from 1808 to 1848. Parson Beevor seems to have been no credit to his cloth. Aufrere belonged to a Huguenot family settled in Norfolk and married a Miss Beevor.

Some of these particulars of Scarning School, and of the incumbents of Scarning, including the anecdote of Thurlow, I owe, through Sir Henry Jerningham, to the kindness of Mr. Frederick Johnson, the well-known antiquary and archivist of Norwich. Others I have taken from Mr. George A. Carthew's "The Hundred of Launditch."

## LETTERS FROM THE REV. ROBERT POTTER

### 1

SIR,

A thousand thanks to you for your very obliging and friendly letter. You think now that I thank you for engaging to set the affair right with Lord Petre.<sup>1</sup> Indeed I do; but that is not the greatest part of my obligation to you, and it is my wish that his Lordship may not be double-taxed, unless it be his own voluntary offer. I am thankful for the honour of his name *une seule fois*. Lord Dacre's name<sup>2</sup> has not yet been sent me, it may have been given to some friend whose list has not yet come to me; from what you say I shall at all hazards take the liberty of inserting it. Many persons, who at the solicitation of a friend subscribe to a book, consider themselves as giving their money in charity; therefore it comes from them with reluctance. This, to be sure, is mortification enough to an author; but he will do well to make a Christian improvement of it, and to let it read a lecture to his vanity.

What I most particularly thank you for is your advice not to commit myself with the French nation; and to show you that I deserve to have advice given me, I have profited by it. I should be sorry to give offence to any single person, much more to a whole people. My plan requires me to give an account of the "Médée" of Corneille. Truth and good criticism compell me to censure it. But I have referred the reader to

the examen of Père Brumoy,<sup>3</sup> and [I] speak of the great poet in terms of the highest respect and honour. So with regard to the "Hippolyte" of Racine, which is less faulty than the "Médée": I have in few words pointed out its faults, and apologised for them, and allowed the author every merit. So that I flatter my self, if those two great dramatic writers were now alive, so far from being offended, they would consider me as one of their warmest admirers. You have raised my vanity and curiosity by telling me that the translation of Æschylus is mentioned with applause by a French writer.<sup>4</sup> I long to see this book; could you send it me? I would endeavour to find a niche for the writer in the preface to Euripides, which is preparing. I have a running account with Mess<sup>rs</sup> Dodsley, Payne, and Cadell, if the book may be had of either of those worthies. If it be sent to "The Plough" in Princes Street, Soho, on a Sunday evening for the Norwich coach, directed to me here by the Lynn coach from Norwich, I shall receive it on the Tuesday morning. I mention "The Plough" as a short walk to your servant.

I am now sallying forth upon a visit to Miss Bacon,<sup>5</sup> who sets out for London in a few days. I shall take the MSS. Euripides with me, which that lady will convey to Mr. Dodsley. This letter will attend the English Grecian.<sup>6</sup> I am, with the greatest esteem,

Sir,

Your obliged and most obedient servant,

R. POTTER.

Scarning, November 30th, 1780.

<sup>1</sup> This Lord Petre was Robert Edward, 9th Baron, who succeeded his father on July 2nd, 1742, and married, first, on April 19th, 1762, Anne Howard, niece of Edward, 9th Duke of Norfolk. He was born in 1742 and died on July 2nd, 1801. Intimate with Edward and with Sir William Jerningham, he was a great friend to the two well-known priests, Father Joseph Berington and Dr. Alexander Geddes, the Modernist Catholics of their time. He received the latter into close intimacy, gave him an annual salary of £200 a year, and bought him the books required for his labour of translating the Bible for the benefit of Scotch Catholics. He was also of a general philanthropic disposition, and is said regularly to have given away £5000 a year. In the last week of October, 1778, on the occasion of His Majesty holding a review on Warley Common (where, by the way, Bennet Langton was in camp), he entertained King George III. and Queen Charlotte at Thorndon Hall. His hospitality on this occasion cost him about £15,000; and he is said to have spent 2000 guineas on the purchase of a state bed, which, however, the Royal couple never used, preferring their own field-bed. This visit caused no little excitement and discussion at the time; for Lord Petre was the first Catholic peer to be honoured in this fashion since the accession of the House of Hanover, and came of a family which had given King James II., in the person of Father Petre, one of his most fanatical advisers. Gillray, who was a violent and consistent opponent of Catholic Emancipation and treated all



its supporters with reckless injustice, representing Burke as a Jesuit, and Lord Grenville as a Cardinal or a Pope, depicts this Royal visit in a caricature styled, "Grace before Meat, or a Peep at Lord Petre's." The King and Queen, Lord and Lady Petre, Lord Amherst and Lady Effingham are shown seated at the dinner table with folded hands, while a monk of unprepossessing appearance is invoking a blessing on the meal. Five months earlier in the year, on May 14th, 1778, Sir George Savile had introduced into the House of Commons, and carried through both Houses without a division, a Bill relieving Roman Catholics from sundry obsolete penalties and disabilities. Passed into law at a time when two great Catholic powers like France and Spain had thrown in their lot with the insurgent American Colonists, this Bill had made something of a Protestant of a man so devoid of the religious sense as Horace Walpole. Writing to the Rev. William Cole on May 21st, 1778, he says: "May not I, should not I, wish you joy on the restoration of Popery? I expect soon to see Capucins tramping about the streets, and Jesuits in high places. We are relapsing fast to our pristine state, and [soon shall] have nothing but our island and our old religion."

<sup>2</sup> This was Thomas Barrett Lennard, 17th Baron Dacre, who succeeded his mother Anne, Baroness Dacre, on June 26th, 1755. He married Anne Maria, daughter of Sir John Pratt, Lord Chief Justice of the King's Bench, and sister of Charles, Earl Camden, the Lord Chancellor, and died on January 12th, 1786, without surviving issue. It was Henry Bouverie William Brand, 23rd Baron Dacre, who revived the old Hampden Viscounty that had been in his family and became the first Viscount Hampden of the new creation. As Henry (afterwards Sir Henry) Brand he had been Speaker of the House of Commons from 1872 to 1884. He was created Viscount Hampden on March 4th, 1884, and succeeded his brother as 23rd Baron Dacre in 1890.

<sup>3</sup> Pierre Brumoy, who was born at Rouen in 1688 and died at Paris on April 16th, 1742, was a learned Jesuit who published his "Théâtre des Grecs" in 1730. This is a volume containing translations of seven entire plays and analyses of the others. The examen alluded to is probably "Sur le parallèle du théâtre ancien et du moderne."

<sup>4</sup> I cannot identify this author.

<sup>5</sup> I cannot identify this Miss Bacon. Mary Bacon, aunt to Sir Edmund Bacon, 8th and 9th Baronet, married Philip Bedingfeld.

<sup>6</sup> Whether "the English Grecian" means an inn of that name or an eminent Greek scholar I cannot determine.

## 2

SIR,

Last week I was wise enough to make a visit at Cossey, and on Friday evening had the pleasure of forming an acquaintance with "Honoris,"<sup>1</sup> &c. On my return home yesterday I found that excellent lady and her pleasing suit here; this morning's post brought me the favour of your letter. For all this accept my warmest thanks. I am highly flattered by the honour you do me in remembering me, and very particularly on such an occasion. "Honoris" is throughout excellent poetry, and, what is better than poetry, is liberal and candid. I wish myself the author of the ten lines, p. 3, beginning "Yet why despond?" If I was Archevêque Cantuar, I would thank

you for them with my mitre on ; the Curé however thanks you bare-headed. There is great elegance in all these little pieces ; that "To the Memory of a Young Lady" is the best monumental inscription I ever saw : the two last lines are wonderfully tender and delicate. Once more accept my most grateful thanks.

It gives me much pleasure to hear that the "Fair Circassian"<sup>2</sup> has been so well received ; as I have received many civilities from the author.

I am very impatient to see Mr. Bryant's proof of the authenticity of Rowlie's poems,<sup>3</sup> and shall not wonder if he demonstrates them to be descended from two of the unclean beasts that coupled in the Ark.

I should have been happy to have met you at Cossey ; but, had you sent for me, my health would have deprived me of the pleasure of waiting on you. I have now a little spurt of rejuvenescence, which is agreeable enough. You will not be displeased to hear that Euripides advances. I am, Sir, with great respect,

Your most obliged and obedient humble servant,

R. POTTER.

Scarning, December 9th, 1781.

<sup>1</sup> Edward Jerningham's poem "Honoris, or the Day of All Souls" was published anonymously towards the end of 1781.

<sup>2</sup> "The Fair Circassian," a tragedy in five acts and in verse, written by Samuel Jackson Pratt, and founded on Hawkesworth's novel "Almorán and Hamet," achieved great success at Drury Lane, where it was produced on November 27th, 1781, with Elizabeth Farren in the title rôle. In book form the tragedy ran through three editions in 1781. Pratt (1749-1814) was the son of a brewer, and, after adopting in turn the callings of parson, actor, and bookseller, commenced author under the pseudonym of "Courtney Melmoth." He corresponded with Edward Jerningham, and was one of the most intimate friends of Potter, who, towards the end of 1781, published a set of verses in his honour in *The Gentleman's Magazine*.

<sup>3</sup> Jacob Bryant (1715-1804), the antiquary, published in 1781 "Observations on the Poems of Thomas Rowley, in which the Authenticity of those Poems is ascertained."

3

DEAR SIR,

On Monday morning Sir William Jernegan's<sup>1</sup> servant brought me the pamphlets you were so obliging as to send me : they were very acceptable to me. I had not heard of the publication of them ; accept my thanks for them, and for your attention to the Country man.

Did Mrs. Bacon tell you that I had been deep in Dr. Milles<sup>2</sup> and Mr. Bryant ? I had, from the first publication of these

poems, declared them to be Chatterton's. I think the word forgery too harsh for the occasion. My opinion was founded upon the language, which is such as never was in use; upon the stanza, and harmony of the verse, unknown till Spenser's days; and upon the many instances of coincidence of expression with modern poets. Mr. Bryant, with all his learning, will hardly induce us to believe that lines which we find in Addison's "Cato" were written by a priest in the 14th century.<sup>5</sup> Mr. Warton's arguments<sup>5a</sup> must be decisive.

I thank you for the honourable mention you make of the English Euripides, and have the pleasure of telling you that all the tragedies are done. There remains a satyric piece,<sup>6</sup> Anglice a farce, which I have now under consideration whether it shall be translated or not. As this is the only piece of this ludicrous species of composition which has escaped the wreck of time, I wish to give it the English reader; but, if there be any offensive and indecent ribaldry in it, of which I have some imperfect recollection (I have not read it many years), I shall make no mention of it.

You have seen, and doubtless with great indignation, the violent attack of the "Critical Reviewers"<sup>6</sup> on me; they have shown as much ignorance and want of taste as want of candour. With such persons I shall enter into no contest, it is not pro dignitate; but I shrewdly suspect, from internal evidence, that this malignity proceeds from Berners Street.<sup>6</sup> Is it impossible to ascertain this? Can you put me upon any method to trace it? Could I fix the affront on that learned person, I should be tempted to make an appeal to the public. See also what a portion of fame authors are to expect in the new "Biographia Dramatica."<sup>7</sup> As I find it cited in *The Gentleman's Magazine* for February, I make this figure, "Potter, R. is of Wales, where he has a small living, but is a schoolmaster at Scarning in Norfolk (not Suffolk) where he resides." Here is the history of my birth, connexions, and situation comprized in three circumstances, two of which are false.

Mrs. Montagu<sup>8</sup> always does me honour. I know her goodwill towards me; what power she has to serve me I know not. I should be happy to make her a visit in her new house;<sup>8</sup> but [I] do not expect a call to town this year.

The House of Lambeth—What of that? Perhaps it has been read there that I have a living in Wales; and it may be thought sufficient for a Welch man. Well then, let it suffice. I am not rich; but I am not therefore unhappy. Nay, even the horrid rheumatism, which has excruciated me for a fortnight, does not depress my mind. Let me, as a man and as a writer, be honoured with the approbation of the good and the wise; I know on whom to depend for a further recompense.

As I am beginning to write en prêtre, it may be as well to say no more, but that I am, with great respect, dear Sir,

Your most obliged humble servant,

R. POTTER.

Scarning, April 4th, 1782.

P.S.—I shall be happy to be introduced to more of the family of Honoria.

<sup>1</sup> "Jernegan" is the old spelling of the name "Jerningham."

<sup>2</sup> Jeremiah Milles (1714–1784), antiquary, was educated at Eton and at Corpus Christi College, Oxford, and entered the Church. From 1738 to 1737 he made the Grand Tour with his cousin, Richard Pococke, afterwards Bishop of Meath. Through his uncle, Dr. Thomas Milles, Bishop of Waterford and Lismore, he obtained many valuable preferments in the Irish Church and a considerable fortune; and through his marriage, on May 29th, 1745, to Edith, daughter of John Potter, Archbishop of Canterbury, he had an equally successful career in the English Church. On April 28th, 1762, he was elected Dean of Exeter. Always interested in archæology, he was elected F.S.A. in 1741, F.R.S. in 1742, and P.S.A. in 1768. In 1782 he made his contribution to the discussion of the Rowley poems in a work entitled "Poems supposed to have been written at Bristol in the Fifteenth Century by Thomas Rowley, Priest. With a Commentary." In this work he strongly maintained the antiquity and authenticity of the poems.

<sup>3</sup> The Rowley Poems also contain lines taken from Dryden and from Gray.

<sup>4</sup> Thomas Warton's "arguments" were set forth in "An Enquiry into the Authenticity of the poems attributed to Thomas Rowley, in which the arguments of the Dean of Exeter and Mr. Bryant are examined." This treatise was published in 1782.

<sup>5</sup> The "Cyclops," which Potter left untranslated. Shelley translated it.

<sup>6</sup> \* *The Critical Review; or Annals of Literature*, was founded by Archibald Hamilton, an Edinburgh printer, and by Dr. Tobias Smollett, the famous novelist, who was its first editor. It was started as a rival to Ralph Griffiths's *The Monthly Review*, the review for which Oliver Goldsmith and William Kenrick worked, and to which, many years later, Richard Porson, the great classical scholar and textual critic, contributed; and as that periodical was run on Whig and Nonconformist lines, *The Critical Review*, the first number of which appeared in February, 1756, became a champion of the Tory party, and of the Established Church. Smollett was succeeded as editor by William Guthrie, and Guthrie by Percival Stockdale; but, though I have searched many likely sources, I cannot discover who was editor in 1782. *The Critical Review* expired in 1817, whereas *The Monthly Review* lasted until 1845. Among the *Critical's* contributors during its early years are to be numbered Dr. Johnson, William Robertson, and David Hume, the historians (Scotchmen both!), and Dr. Franklin, the translator of Sophocles. The notice which Potter complains of appeared in the January and March numbers of 1782, and dealt with the first volume of Potter's translation of Euripides. So far from being ignorant and wanting taste and candour, the reviewer shows knowledge and good sense, and justifies every stricture he makes by abundant citations. The worst fault of Potter as a translator of Euripides and Sophocles alike is his slavish devotion to his own rigid notion of a literal rendering, which lands him again and again in obscurities, inelegancies, and violations of English idiom. In the translation of passages of single-line dialogue he

generally succeeds in being singularly wooden and cryptic. From the notice in *The Critical Review*, which describes Potter's translation as "upon the whole a very indifferent performance," and condemns the absence of notes, I shall make two extracts:—

(1) "From our author's insufficiency in the indispensable requisites of elegance and perspicacity arise our principal objections to this work, which is neither chaste, poetical, classical, nor harmonious."

(This extract is taken from the portion of the notice appearing in the January number of the review.)

(2) "For want of a proper knowledge of that tongue which he is translating into Mr. Potter seems to be fallen into inaccuracy, inelegance and obscurity; of which we have indisputable proofs in almost every page."

(This extract is made from the concluding portion of the notice which, appearing in the March number, lays an undue stress on what it is pleased to call Mr. Potter's "vulgarisms.")

I cannot understand the allusion to "Berners Street"; but I think it possible that Potter may have considered the review to be the work of Thomas Francklin (see note 2 to Letter 14), who had brought out a translation of the tragedies of Sophocles in 1759, and died in 1784, four years before Potter published his own version of Sophocles. Potter, however, is quite unfair in saying that the review bears "internal evidence of malignity." As a matter of fact, slashing as it is, it is quite just and candid, giving Potter decent praise, where praise is his due. Francklin died in Great Queen Street; whether he was living in Berners Street in 1782 I cannot discover.

<sup>1</sup> Isaac Reed (1742–1807), the editor of the first "Variorum" Shakespeare, brought out in 1782 his "Biographia Dramatica," a work of reference based on and supplementing Baker's "Companion to the Playhouse."

<sup>2</sup> \* Mrs. Montagu (1720–1800) was, before her marriage, Miss Elizabeth Robinson. She was born at York, and was the eldest daughter of Matthew Robinson, of West Layton, Yorkshire, by Elizabeth, daughter of Robert Drake, Recorder of Cambridge. Both her father and mother were wealthy and well-connected. She passed many of her early years at Coveney, Cambridgeshire, an estate belonging to her mother; and at Cambridge she was frequently entertained by Dr. Conyers Middleton, who, having become the second husband of her maternal grandmother, Mrs. Drake, stimulated her precocious interest in literature. On August 5th, 1742, she married Edward Montagu, son of Charles Montagu, fifth son of the 1st Earl of Sandwich. His wife's senior by many years and the owner of coal-mines at Denton, Northumberland, and of estates in Yorkshire and Berkshire, he was a wealthy man, and from 1734 to 1768 was Whig M.P. for Huntingdon. Early in 1744 Mrs. Montagu gave birth to a son, her only child, who died in the following September. Her mother died in 1746, and her second brother, Thomas Robinson, a barrister, in 1747. Three years later she gave relief to her restlessness and scope to her energies and ambition by starting her famous salon in Hill Street, Mayfair. She commenced by giving literary breakfast-parties; but she soon launched out into evening assemblies, at which card-playing was prohibited, the guests being expected to discuss literary topics. She was challenged as hostess of "the blue-stockings" by such rivals as Mrs. Vesey, Mrs. Greville, Mrs. Boscawen, and her friend and lifelong correspondent, the Duchess of Portland; but for nearly half a century she maintained her supremacy, numbering among her regular visitors between 1750 and 1780 such well-known persons as Lord Lyttelton, Horace Walpole, Dr. Johnson, Burke, Garrick, Reynolds, Beattie, and the Earl of Bath.

welcoming in later years men like Wilberforce and Samuel Rogers, and including among her female acquaintance such learned ladies as Elizabeth Carter, Mrs. Chapon, Fanny Burney, Hannah More, and Mrs. Thrale. In 1760 she contributed three dialogues to her friend Lyttelton's "Dialogues of the Dead." In 1769, indignant at Voltaire's contemptuous references to Shakespeare, she published anonymously "An Essay on the Writings and Genius of Shakespear compared with the Greek and French Dramatic Poets, with some remarks upon the Misrepresentations of Mons. de Voltaire." Reynolds, Lyttelton, Lord Grenville, and Cowper admired the essay, which certainly established Mrs. Montagu's fame as an author; but Johnson, Boswell, and Mrs. Thrale failed to see in it any evidence of real critical ability. On May 12th, 1775, Edward Montagu died, leaving his widow an annual income of £7000. In 1781, in her sixty-first year, she started house-building, the results of which were seen in a fine country seat, erected at Sandiford from plans by Wyatt, and in a new London residence, standing at the north-west corner of Portman Square, designed by James ("Athenian") Stuart, and styled Montagu House. The latter mansion was opened by a house-warming on Easter Day, 1782; and for more than ten years longer, to the no small amusement of some of her friends, the veteran hostess continued to play the part of the Madame du Deffand of the English capital, giving breakfasts, dinner-parties, and evening receptions. In June, 1791, she entertained the King and Queen. In 1798 she was very feeble and almost blind. She died on August 25th, 1800, when she was within six weeks of attaining her eightieth birthday. She left her property to her nephew, Matthew Montagu, who had taken her name, and who succeeded his brother, Morris Robinson, as 4th Lord Rokeby in 1829. In the Edward Jerningham Correspondence there are several letters from Mrs. Montagu. For a view of the relations of Mrs. Montagu with Dr. Johnson the reader should consult Boswell's "Life of Johnson" and the "Diary and Letters" of Madams D'Arblay, who declared that the great "blue-stocking" had not a particle of wit.

## 4

DEAR SIR,

I have the pleasure of telling you that the second volume of Euripides is printed, and will be published immediately. You will pardon me for troubling you with receipts for such gentlemen as did me the honour to subscribe at your request. I know not how many may be wanted. Lord Dacre sent his name to Mr. Payne. I hope soon to pay my respects to you in Grosvenor Square, and, if you can honour me with your attention for half an hour, to consult you on more poetry which I have been guilty of since Euripides was sent to the press.

Give me leave to charge you with a packet for Mrs. Townshend.<sup>1</sup> I have not been at Cossey for half a century: a severe penance! I am, with the greatest esteem, Sir,

Your faithful and obedient servant,

R. POTTER.

Scarning, March 3rd, 1798.

<sup>1</sup> I cannot discover the identity of Mrs. Townshend.

DEAR SIR,

On Monday last I was honoured with your letter; the Poem<sup>1</sup> did not arrive till yesterday. I thank you for the elegant entertainment it gave me; is not the second part much altered since you favoured me with a sight of it at Cossey? The first part will, to many readers, be obscure; but I suppose you did not like to deform your page with notes. I see much to applaud, nothing to censure but one line. It is inconceivable how so untuneable a note stole in among such fine melody. I will not now point out the line to you. I wish you joy of this fresh sprig of laurel woven round your Apollinian crown.

I wrote to Mrs. Bacon<sup>2</sup> on Thursday last. Mrs. Montagu has forsaken me: I have not been honoured with a line from her since June last. She does not know how much this mortifies me; but I am happy to hear she is well.—My last letter from Dr. Beattie is of the 27th November. He says in a P.S. "I beg my best respects to Mr. Jerningham." He sent me a little head of Gray<sup>3</sup> sketched by him in a Scotch inn with a bad pen and on bad paper in September, 1765. His health, I fear, is very bad.<sup>4</sup> I want to write to him; it will be a good deed of you to send me a little tight frank, folded the size of this letter, to Dr. B., Aberdeen, Scotland.

You ask me three obliging questions in a breath. My health is very good. I am doing nothing. I know not when I shall go to town. I am indeed very innocent of political matters; yet I am involved in their changes and chances. Mr. Fr. Montagu<sup>5</sup> had done all you say, and engaged Lord J. Cavendish<sup>6</sup> to support his interest in my favour. The third day comes a frost, a nipping frost, &c., &c., &c. When Mr. Milles<sup>7</sup> gets to town I shall receive information from him which will direct my motions. I am deeply sensible of the honour Lord Harcourt does me.<sup>8</sup> *Fata viam invenient*; or, in more Christian language, I am resigned to the will of heaven.

You do not mention Lady Jerningham: why that omission? I have been studying Lord Mountbodo's philosophy;<sup>9</sup> but [I] am not convinced that I am, or ever was, a savage.

I feel myself interested in every thing that relates to her welfare, and yours, and am with great respect,

Dear Sir,

Your most obliged humble servant,

R. POTTER.

Scarning, February 3rd, 1784.

<sup>1</sup> "The Rise and Progress of Scandinavian Poetry," published in 1784.

<sup>2</sup> Mrs. Bacon may be Sir Edmund Bacon's sister-in-law, his brother Dashwood Bacon's wife.

<sup>3</sup> In 1765 Gray made a tour in Scotland, visiting Killiecrankie and Blair Athol. He stayed for some time with the Earl of Strathmore at Glamis Castle, where Beattie, having paved the way by a letter to him couched in terms of "extravagant flattery," met him, the result being that a lasting friendship sprang up between the two poets.

<sup>4</sup> Beattie's health at this time was injuriously affected by the insanity of his wife Mary Dunn, daughter of the Rector of the Grammar School, Aberdeen. He married her on June 28th, 1767.

<sup>5</sup> Frederick Montagu (1738-1800) was a well-known member of Society, and of Parliament, where he represented, in the Whig interest, Northamptonshire from 1767 to 1767, and Higham Ferrers from 1768 to 1790. He was not related to Mrs. Elizabeth Montagu; but he was a son of Mrs. Delany's friend, Mrs. Montagu, of Hanover Square, his father being Charles Montagu, a nephew of George Montagu, Earl of Halifax of the second creation. He was educated at Eton and at Trinity College, Cambridge. At Cambridge he made the acquaintance of the poets Gray and Mason; and it was through his influence that Mason obtained a canonry at York in 1762. He held office in the Marquis of Rockingham's second administration and again in the Fox-North-Portland Coalition Ministry. In 1787 he was appointed a member of the committee which prepared the articles of impeachment against Warren Hastings.

<sup>6</sup> Lord John Cavendish (1782-1796) was the fourth son of William, 3rd Duke of Devonshire and the uncle of William, 5th Duke. When the Marquis of Rockingham formed his second administration Lord John became Chancellor of the Exchequer, on March 27th, 1782. He occupied the same post in the Coalition Ministry of Fox and North under the premiership of the 3rd Duke of Portland, who had married his (Cavendish's) niece, Lady Dorothy Cavendish, only daughter of William, 4th Duke of Devonshire. He died unmarried.

<sup>7</sup> I cannot identify this person.

<sup>8</sup> I cannot explain this allusion.

<sup>9</sup> James Burnett (1714-1799), styled Lord Monboddo as a Scotch Lord of Session, was educated at Marischal College, Aberdeen, and was called to the Scottish Bar in 1737. He first became prominent as counsel for Mr. Douglas in the celebrated Douglas case. In 1767 he was raised to the bench by the title of Lord Monboddo. His best-known work, "Of the Origin and Progress of Language" (1773-1792), anticipates, by its evolution theory and its assertion of man's kinship with the apes, the much more elaborate and scientific doctrines of Darwin.

## 6

DEAR SIR,

Forgive me this trouble. From Mrs. Bacon's long silence my mind foreboded evil things. Yesterday I received information that Mrs. T. Wodehouse<sup>1</sup> is ill and attended by two physicians. In such a state of distress it would be improper to apply to the house in Park Street for intelligence; and, as I am anxious for its welfare, you will excuse me that I request the favour of you to give me an account of this lady and of Mrs. Bacon. Sic tibi faveat Apollo.

I have taken the liberty to build upon the hint you gave



me of Lord Harcourt's kind intention, and found Mrs. Montagu very ready to forward the good design. You know this; therefore it is unnecessary to give you any account of it. If any super-structure be raised upon this, I shall remember that you laid the foundation.

I am not well. One evening of the last week a sudden shower of rain fell as I was standing at the grave burying a corpse.<sup>2</sup> I was bare-headed and obliged "to bide the pelting of the pitiless storm."<sup>3</sup> The consequence is a cold in my head, an inflammation in my eyes, and a violent cough; but I think this an easy commutation for a severe fit of the rheumatism, which I expected.

I flatter my self with the hopes of taking my Bohea with you en haut before the end of May, and am, with great esteem,

Dear Sir,  
Your much obliged and faithful humble servant,

R. POTTER.

Scarning, April 27th, 1784.

<sup>1</sup> Thomas Wodehouse, third son of Sir Armine Wodehouse, 5th Baronet, was a barrister. Born on February 1st, 1747, he married on September 12th, 1782, Sarah, daughter of Pryce Campbell, of Stackpole Court, and sister of John Campbell, 1st Lord Cawdor.

<sup>2</sup> A strange phrase for a clergyman to use in describing the most solemn of his professional duties.

<sup>3</sup> "King Lear," Act iii., Scene 4.

7

DEAR SIR,

While the angel is troubling the water, will no charitable hand assist in putting me into the Pool? The report of the day is that Durham<sup>1</sup> is soon to be translated to heaven, if his friends are in place above. This will make a remove or two. The Dean of Norwich<sup>2</sup> is to have the vacant see. Dr. Smyth<sup>3</sup> and Mr. Wodehouse<sup>4</sup> are to run a hard heat for the Deanry: the betts are in favour of D. D. on account of blood. Whichever wins vacates a prebend. Why will you not get this for me? Pray do; though, to tell you the truth, I do not believe you will. Nor am I ambitious of the stall; but I want the manger, give me the provinder, I would be content to eat it in any crib. I am told that I ought to ask for something particular. General and indeterminate expectations are like a gun charged with powder only: they make a noise and a smoke, and do no execution. You said you would write to me; here is a fine subject for you to descant upon.

Have you seen Dr. Beattie? How is he? Did you put him in mind of me? No; but I will.

How does this hot weather agree with Grosvenor Square?

It thundered here at least four hours last night: nothing but thunder, thunder: Lady Jerningham's head aches.

I was certainly guilty of a great sin in bringing away that effigy; <sup>5</sup> for I coveted my neighbour's goods, and, what is worse, my neighbour's wife. Nay, I am advancing far towards image-worship; and am so obdurate that I cannot repent. I am certainly in a damnable state. Pray to the Lord for me, any Lord that has interest enough at Court to deliver me from the Devil; for poverty is the Devil. Notwithstanding this, I am with great respect,

Sir,

Your most obliged and obedient humble servant,

Scarning, July 8th, 1784.

R. POTTER.

<sup>1</sup> The report was premature. John Egerton, Bishop of Durham, lived till January 18th, 1787, and died at his house in Grosvenor Square. He was the son of the Hon. Henry Egerton, Bishop of Hereford, by Lady Elizabeth Adriana Bentinck, daughter of the 1st Earl of Portland, and was born on November 30th, 1721. Educated at Eton and at Oriol College, Oxford, he took orders in 1745, and was made Dean of Hereford in 1750. In 1756 he was made Bishop of Bangor, and in 1768 he was translated to the see of Lichfield and Coventry. On July 8th, 1771, he succeeded Dr. Trevor as Bishop of Durham.

<sup>2</sup> I can identify neither of these persons.

<sup>3</sup> Presumably the Rev. Philip Wodehouse, born on May 1st, 1745. He was the second son of Sir Armine Wodehouse, 5th Baronet. He died on February 14th, 1811.

<sup>4</sup> I cannot elucidate this reference.

8

DEAR SIR,

I have long been in use (an elegant Scotticism) to make enquiries after you at Cossey. I am now obliged to send my inquiries after them to you; pray give me the best information you are able, particularly when I may expect them in Norfolk. As I have nothing to do, at least I do nothing, at home, and have a fine horse, and ride like any thing, and am as young as ever I can or shall be, I have of late made frequent excursions among my friends; and now look forward with regret to the end of a very few weeks, when your great town will call all these families away from me. I should not look upon myself as in a state of desolation if Sir W. and Lady J. would return to Cossey. Give me all the comfort you can with regard to them; then talk of your self abundantly. Tell me how you do, what you do, and what Muse you are now courting. Each of them has her charms, and her graces, and a Parnassian douane. Alas, what pity that their rents are not paid in current coin!

The poor Curate of Wendling, contrary to the lore which he

often inculcates, continues in one stay, and is now precisely in the same place where he was last year, and the former, and the former years, fixed to a spot to rot just where he grows. He has heard something of the vanity and instability of the promises of the Great; but he believes nothing of that. He rather looks upon them as stable and permanent as the Everlasting Mountains. The soil indeed is rather barren; but they yield many a pleasant prospect. The misfortune is, the night of old age is coming upon him, and all these things will soon be hid from his eyes. The mountains will remain from generation to generation; and others will be led to their summits with the same prospects before them, and the same success behind them.

If Mrs. Montagu be in town, you will be so kind as at favourable times to mention my name to her, be it only as an enquirer after her health. If you have any advice to give me, be assured that I shall hold it in reverence. I am,

Sir,

Your most obedient humble servant,

Scarning, January 8rd, 1785.

R. POTTER.

9

DEAR SIR,

Had not the Kimberly family left Norfolk sooner than was intended, on account of Mrs. Berkeley's illness<sup>1</sup> (Is she yet living?) I should have procured another cover to you; I must now tax your purse for my impertinence. No matter; your attention demands my thanks.

I have heard nothing further of the Cossey family; but [I] intend to write in a few days, inquiring whether they are at home, and hospitably disposed.

With regard to my little affairs, in which you so kindly interest your self, I must take the liberty to be very explicit with you, and to declare that I have no expectations from the good Bishop you mention.<sup>2</sup> I reverence his learning and his virtues; qu'il ne manque à tout cela qu'une âme. His behaviour to me is decent and civil (two words engendered under the arctic pole); but he never gave me reason to think that he intended to do any thing for me himself. I have therefore no pretensions to write to him; I cannot, I will not write to him.

You may, if you please, make my most grateful acknowledgments to Mrs. Delaney<sup>3</sup> for the honour she does me. Say nothing to hinder her application; but I am certain it will be ineffectual. I wish this friendly lady was as much acquainted with the Chancellor<sup>4</sup>; he is not ill-disposed towards me. The Angel of preferment is always moving in his Bethesda; but I have no man to put me into the pool.

All this is idle talk; my sole dependence is on Mrs. Montagu. Last spring I pointed out to her how probably I might be served. She entered into my plan with zeal, and moved Lord Harcourt; she was also to move Lord Camelford.<sup>5</sup> How far this was carried I know not; but if she drops the Earl and takes up the Bishop, good night to all my hopes. I wish you could find an opportunity to hint this to her. She is a most excellent woman;<sup>6</sup> but, I fear, sometimes wants a remembrancer. I am not so ungenerous as to suppose that this arises from insensibility: it is the natural and necessary effect of greatness, which moves in so high a sphere, that it often loses sight of the little concerns of little men so far below. I feel no indignant reluctance about me with regard to her; I shall write to her, but not at present, not till I have the pleasure of hearing from you again.

You once mentioned the friendly disposition of the Marquis of Carmarthen<sup>7</sup> towards me. Is that melted into air? Engage me with Gentlemen as much as you please, and as little as you please with Bishops. A Right Honourable may at some time think of his honour, and be generous: a Right Reverend never thinks of his reverence, but when he comes forth in power and great glory to visit his diocese and to lecture better men than himself. Do not for this think me a Presbyterian or an Independent: I am a sound Churchman.

At all events I think of making you a visit in town about the middle of April. Should any thing arise in the mean time you will give me your instructions.

Will you at your next visit carry my respects to Park Street, and tell Mrs. Bacon that, while Mr. and Mrs. Wodehouse were at Senham, I had often the satisfaction of hearing of her. But now, if she does not sometimes favour me with a line, I shall be kept in anxious uncertainty with regard to her welfare and that of her family. With every good wish to Grosvenor Square, and with great respect I am,

Dear Sir,

Your most faithful and obliged humble serv<sup>t</sup>,

R. POTTER.

Scarning, January 19th, 1785.

<sup>5</sup> Sir John Wodehouse, 6th Baronet and 1st Baron, born April 4th, 1741, married, on March 30th, 1769, Sophia, only child of the Hon. Charles Berkeley, of Bruton Abbey, Somerset, and niece of John, last Lord Berkeley. Mrs. Berkeley was Lady Wodehouse's mother.

<sup>6</sup> I cannot identify this Bishop.

<sup>7</sup> For an account of Mrs. Delany see the notes to the Countess of Mount Edgcumbe's letters. The nature of the "honour" which Mrs. Delany had done Potter is explained by an unpublished letter written by the Bishop of Worcester to Edward Jerningham on April 30th, 1785.<sup>8</sup> In this note the Bishop announces that, having received Jerningham's letter about Mr. Potter,

and a letter on the same subject from Mrs. Delany, he has written to Lord Salisbury, presumably with a view to obtaining some preferment for the translator of *Æschylus*.

Lord Thurlow, who, though he was very courtly to ladies, was not a great favourite with them, a circumstance due to his formidable and forbidding manner. Early in life he was attached to a Miss Gooch, who came of a respectable family in Norfolk; "but she would not have me (said the Lord Chancellor); for she was positively afraid of me." This early disappointment in love seems to have made Thurlow disinclined to matrimony; for he subsequently kept a mistress, Mrs. Hervey, to whom he was very much attached, and with whom he lived quite openly. Of this union there were four children, one son, who died at Cambridge when he was at the beginning of a brilliant career, and three daughters, all of whom were received into good society, and two of whom made excellent marriages. Into the details of the political career of Lord Thurlow (or, indeed, into those of his legal career) I do not propose to enter. Lecky happily calls him "the Moloch of his profession." Suffice it to say that his tergiversations may be explained by the fact that, much in the same spirit in which a member of the House of Cavendish thought that the appointment of Prime Minister ought to be vested for all time in the Dukes of Devonshire, Lord Thurlow reckoned that he had a prescriptive and inalienable claim to the Lord Chancellor's office. Edward Thurlow, 1st Baron Thurlow (1781-1806), was born at Bracon Ash, Norfolk, the eldest son of the Rev. Thomas Thurlow, a clergyman who held various East Anglian livings, and traced his descent back to the times of King Henry VIII. Having proved difficult to manage, young Thurlow was at an early age entrusted to the care of the Rev. Joseph Brett, master of Seckar's School, Scarning, and curate of Scarning, a rigid disciplinarian of the type of which Dr. Parr was to prove so distinguished a later example. With Brett, who was Robert Potter's predecessor at Scarning, Thurlow remained for four years; and it says much for that freedom from cant and for that capacity for hatred which he shared with Dr. Johnson, as he shared also Johnson's indomitable courage, that he neither forgave nor forgot Brett's brutality. He loathed his old schoolmaster; and when this professional bully claimed his acquaintance in later life in a Norwich bookseller's shop, Thurlow, then Attorney-General, protested, "I am not bound to recollect every scoundrel who chooses to recollect me." From Scarning Thurlow went to King School, Canterbury, where he found a kindly head master in Mr. Talbot, and subsequently proceeded to Gonville and Caius College, Cambridge. But he turned out so idle and insubordinate at the University that he had to remove his name from the books and to go down without taking his degree. He was then articled to a solicitor in Ely Place called Chapman, where he became intimate with a fellow-pupil, William Cowper, the future poet, at whose uncle's, Ashley Cowper's house, in Southampton Row, he spent a good deal of his time. He became a member of the Inner Temple at the beginning of 1752, was called to the Bar in 1754, and got his first professional chance in the famous Douglas Case. Stout Tory though he was, Thurlow will probably go down to posterity as the Lord Chancellor who championed the Burnsian creed of "a man's a man for a' that." In June, 1779, soon after he was made Keeper of the King's Conscience, the Duke of Grafton thought fit to twit him with his comparatively humble origin. (A clergyman, it should be understood, was deemed of little account in those days, unless he came of aristocratic stock.) The black-browed Lord Chancellor descended from the Woolpack to the Duke's bench,

fixed Grafton with his eye, and gave him such a knock-out blow as he had not received since the days of "Junius." All Thurlow said was that he was as proud of having, through his own abilities, obtained the office of Lord Chancellor as his Grace doubtless was of being "the accident of an accident," a pointed and contemptuous allusion to the Duke's descent from King Charles II. and his mistress, the Duchess of Cleveland, which mightily tickled the fancy of the House of Lords. No more crushing retort to ducal insolence was ever uttered until Burke, attacked by the democratic Duke of Bedford for having accepted a pension, reminded that descendant of the Russells, a family which had waxed fat on the spoliation of the monasteries, that he, who had done the State no service whatever, was the Leviathan among the creatures of the Crown, a subject wallowing in the sea of Royal bounty. On Thurlow's patronage of Romney and on his proficiency in the arts of profane swearing, hard drinking, and pregnant conversation, I lack space to dilate. But I ought to say that his influence made his younger brother Thomas, Bishop of Durham; and that this brother's son, Edward, who wrote sonnets that Charles Lamb admired, inherited one of his uncle's baronies. Perhaps I should add that, despite his connection with Mrs. Hervey, Lord Thurlow had no reason to complain of the absence from his levées of Anglican parsons: they positively swarmed on these occasions. And neither Potter, Stockdale, Cowper, nor Johnson, the two former aspirant clergymen of Edward Jerningham's acquaintance, seems to have thought that the Lord Chancellor's private life was any concern of his. King George III., a model of propriety in his uxorial relations, never troubled in the least about the sexual immorality of his ministers. Provided that he registered the Royal decrees a Duke of Grafton, an Earl of Sandwich, or a Lord Thurlow was as acceptable to him as his mother's friend, the Earl of Bute. Apparently, however, Lord Thurlow was guilty of a breach of professional etiquette in continuing his relations with Mrs. Hervey after he became a law officer; for I learn from John, Lord Campbell (author of "The Lives of the Lord Chancellors") that barristers on becoming servants of the Crown were expected either to marry their mistresses or to put them away. Charles James Fox said that no man was so wise as Thurlow looked. Which reminds me of a rather amusing story told by Michael Kelly in his "Reminiscences." "About this period [1809] Mr. Sheridan took me to dine with his Grace the Duke of Norfolk, who had a happy knack of telling a story. One, I remember, he told us with great *saavets*. Among his Grace's owls at Arundel Castle was one which was named by its keeper, 'Lord Thurlow,' from an imaginary likeness between the bird and his lordship. One morning when the Duke was closeted with his solicitor, with whom he was in deep consultation over some electioneering business, the old owl-keeper knocked at the library door, and said, 'My Lord, I have great news to give your Grace.' 'Well,' said the Duke, 'what is it?' 'Why, my Lord,' said the man, 'Lord Thurlow has laid an egg this morning.' Not recollecting at the moment that the owl had been nick-named 'Lord Thurlow,' the Duke was not a little astonished; and, until the keeper explained, the solicitor was dreadfully scandalised by such an audacious calumny upon a noble lord who had long given up all his 'sitting'—upon the Woolsock." Samuel Rogers, in his "Table-Talk," retails the following couple of anecdotes of the Lord Chancellor who feared neither God, man, nor the Devil. "When Erskine had a house at Hampstead, he entertained the very best company. I have dined there with the Prince of Wales, the only time I ever had any conversation with his Royal Highness. On that occasion the Prince was

very agreeable and familiar. Among other anecdotes which he told us of Lord Thurlow I remember these two. The first was: Thurlow once said to the Prince, 'Sir, your father will continue to be a popular King as long as he continues to go to Church every Sunday and to be faithful to that ugly woman, your mother. But you, Sir, will never be popular.' The other was this: While his servants were carrying Thurlow upstairs to his bedroom, just before his death, they happened to let his legs strike against the bannisters, upon which he uttered *the last words he ever spoke*, a frightful imprecation on 'all their souls.'"

Apropos of this lack of beauty on the part of Queen Charlotte, her own Chamberlain congratulated her a few years after her marriage on the fact that "the bloom of your Majesty's ugliness is going off!" In Gillray's caricatures, however, this bloom never went off: see the "Anti-Saccharites" of March 27th, 1792. In this cartoon, which comes home very forcibly to sugar-lovers of to-day, the King and Queen, at whose mean economies Gillray was never weary of poking fun, are trying to persuade the disgusted Princess to confess that tea taken without sugar is delicious. The Queen, a hideous, nearly toothless, old hag, provided with fingers hooked to resemble spiders' legs, is portrayed with triumphant gusto and geniality. On June 9th of the same year she figures as Sin, with Pitt as Death, and with Thurlow as Satan, in that amazing Miltonic satire, "Sin, Death, and the Devil." I cannot, however, think that Queen Charlotte was, in any real sense, responsible for Thurlow's fall, which was brought about by his own singular obtusity in matching himself against and in underestimating Pitt. We know from Lord Hervey's "Memoirs" that Sir Robert Walpole maintained his position as Prime Minister, through his intimacy with Prince Frederick's mother; but Queen Charlotte was a woman of the narrowest intelligence, who never meddled in politics. To imagine that she exercised anything of that influence in Church and State which George II.'s consort wielded is almost impossible; but it is, of course, possible to assume that Lord Thurlow, no respecter of persons, may have had the misfortune to offend her Majesty.

\* Thomas Pitt (1739-1795), nephew of William Pitt, the great Earl of Chatham, and first cousin of William Pitt the younger, was raised to the peerage as Baron Camelford in 1784. He opposed the administration of Lord North (1770-1782) and the Coalition Ministry of Fox and North. From 1762 onwards he lived at Twickenham, where his neighbour Horace Walpole recognised his taste in Gothic architecture. His eldest son and successor, the 2nd Lord Camelford, entered the Navy, and is best known for the duels into which he forced his superior officers. In one of these he was killed by his opponent, Captain Best.

\* Mrs. Montagu reciprocated Potter's regard. Writing from Sandlesford to Dr. Beattie, on July 20th, 1779, she describes the Curate of Scarning as "a man of great merit, small preferment, and large family." See Sir William Forbes's "Account of the Life and Writings of James Beattie."

\* Third son of the 4th Duke of Leeds. He succeeded his father in 1799. From 1788 to 1791 he was Foreign Secretary under Pitt the younger. His first wife, Lady Amelia D'Arcy, only child of the last Earl of Holderness, and Baroness Conyers in her own right, eloped with Captain John Byron in 1778, married him in 1779, and died in 1784, leaving her second husband one surviving child, the Hon. Augusta Byron, who subsequently married her first cousin, Colonel George Leigh, the son of General Charles Leigh, by Frances, daughter of Admiral the Hon. John Byron. Mrs. Leigh was

half-sister to Lord Byron, the poet, and half-sister to the Countess of Ochochester and to the 8th Duke of Leeds. She was brought up by her grandmother, the Countess of Holderness, and subsequently spent a good deal of time with her kinsman, Frederick, 5th Earl of Carlisle, and with General (the 3rd Earl) Harcourt.

## 10

“What can this strange man mean by pestering me with his letters? He will not be advised; he will not come to town to solicit his own interest; he will not apply to those who have it in their power to serve him. Is it laziness? Is it his awkward pride? Can I——.” Pardon me, my dear Sir, for interrupting your ejaculation; indeed I do intend to be in town between Easter and Whitsuntide, the time you recommended.

I have lately written to Mrs. Montagu; a paragraph in the Norwich paper of this day induces me to write to you. Mr. Richard Chase, by being preferred in the Kingdom of Heaven, has vacated the rectory of St. John's Ilkeshall in Suffolk, in the gift of the Crown. I know not the value of it; but [I] believe it is no trifling thing. Could you induce Mrs. Montagu to recollect her connexion with those who have connexion with the Lord Chancellor, and to use her interest in my favour? Even though the application should not be successful, it would be putting matters in a train, and might have good consequences. But perhaps the application may be successful, and this affair may be managed so as to make me happy! I leave it with you. I am not apt to form sanguine expectations; but I know that I shall have to thank you for your friendly endeavour.

What will you say to me? I have not been at Cossey. Who could venture out in such a winter? I have now a cold and a sore throat; no matter. I am meditating great things: who cares for that? I hope Lady Jerningham has passed through this severe weather unhurt. I hope you are well. Will you forgive me the trouble I wish to give you in the assurance that I am, with great respect,

Dear Sir,

Your faithful humble servant,

Scarning, March 26th, 1785.

R. POTTER.

## 11

DEAR SIR,

At my return from Cossey yesterday I found your letter on my table. It ought to have been here a week sooner; but it chose to make the tour of Norfolk, and came to me from Rougham. I am this moment informed that Mr. Fenn<sup>1</sup> sets out for London to-morrow morning, by whom I hope to send you this, just to thank you for your very kind and friendly



attempt. I have since my last to you written freely to Mrs. Montagu on the subject. I am fully persuaded that nothing will ever be done; but I will at this time make as strong an effort as I can, and upon the failure of any good success retire in peace and honest poverty, and bid Hope and Fortune an eternal farewell. I propose to be in town either the last week of this month, or the first week in May. You will give me leave to see you often; perhaps I may trouble you with a commission before I see you. You will not perhaps be much aggrieved at hearing that I have just written to Dodsley, giving him the offer of a little poem, a very fine one you may be sure; but, as I do not intend to *give* him the copy, I suppose he will refuse it on my terms. In that case I shall take the liberty of applying to you, if I do not make you a visit next week. Indeed I do wish to have it published before I go to town; as my principal design is to revive my dormant name. Do you blame me? I spent four happy days at Cossey last week; Sir W. and Lady J. quite well. I have no more time.

Your most obliged and faithful humble servant,

Sunday evening, April 17th, 1785.

R. POTTER.

<sup>1</sup> John Fenn (1759-1794), antiquary, was born at Norwich and educated at Gonville and Caius College, Cambridge. Interested all his life in antiquities and an F.S.A., he is famous as the discoverer and editor of "The Paston Letters," which he published in five volumes as "Original Letters written during the reigns of Henry VI., Edward IV., Richard III. and Henry VII., by various persons of rank and consequence, and by members of the Paston family." Volumes 1 and 2 appeared in 1787, volumes 3 and 4 in 1789, and volume 5 after Fenn's death, edited by his wife's nephew, Sergeant Frere. Fenn obtained the letters from Thomas Worth, a chemist at Diss, who had bought them from the library of Thomas Martin, who had married the widow of Peter Le Neve, the antiquary, who had bought them from William Paston, 2nd and last Earl of Yarmouth. Fenn presented the three volumes of MS. containing the material of the two first printed volumes to George III., and the King, in return for this present, which was very richly bound, knighted Fenn on May 23rd, 1787. Sir John, who was High Sheriff of Norfolk in 1791, married, on January 1st, 1766, Eleanor, daughter of Sheppard Frere, of Roydon, Suffolk. She wrote educational books for the young under the names of Mrs. Teachwell and of Mrs. Lovechild; but despite these pen-names she had no children of her own.

12

Scarning, August 14th, 1785.

DEAR SIR,

You are the only person in the world that concerns himself about such an animalcule as the Curate of Scarning. I thank you for your attention: it does me honour and gives me pleasure; but I must advise you to give it up, for fear it should lower you in the estimation of the polite assemblies

with which you sometimes mix. I have not heard of Mrs. Montague since her strange letter to Lord Harcourt,<sup>1</sup> which hurt me so much that I have not had the courage to address her since. Indeed I have heard nothing of any person or any thing since I left town; where I had full conviction that no good is intended to me by those who have it in their power to do me good. They know that "True glory guides no echoing car"; and so, for fear I should grow vain and 'put my trust in chariots and in horses, they leave me to walk on foot, and to remember the name of the Lord. Be it so then.

The Chancellor has offered St. John's Ilketchall to two or three gentlemen, who, upon our Bishop's regulation, could not take it; so that, as far as I know, it is not yet disposed of.

To your kind enquiry I can answer only that I am well. I made a long visit at Senham Lodge last week. Mrs. Bacon performed her journey admirably, and is well. Mrs. Wodehouse wants only a few plunges in the multitudinous sea to be perfectly well: a journey to Yarmouth for purpose is in meditation. But I fear it will not amount even to a "Tale of a Tub." I have long intended a visit to Cossey; you know what has kept me back for some weeks. I shall now wait for the additional happiness of meeting you there; you will therefore be so obliging as to inform me of your motions. I had not heard of the Prayers written by Johnson.<sup>2</sup> But I shall enquire for them, and [I shall] be sorry to find him made ridiculous and contemptible; for I hold him in high esteem, except as a critic. I am, with the greatest respect,

Your most obliged and faithful humble servant,

R. POTTER.

<sup>1</sup> I cannot elucidate this reference.

<sup>2</sup> Johnson's "Prayers and Meditations."

13

DEAR SIR,

Long have I wished to pay my respects to you since the melancholy event in Grosvenor Square;<sup>1</sup> but I was told that you had left that house, I did not know where to address you, and [I] have been for some weeks disabled by illness from getting out to procure information. On Monday evening I saw Sir J. W.,<sup>2</sup> of whom I made enquiries about you. We were in a place where pen and paper were not, at an Assembly. My memory grows sandy: the name of your new habitation is effaced. No matter; I will go to him for fresh information. He told me that you have a little house in a little street near the Square. It gives me some pleasure to know that your domicil is not far from my haunts when I am in town; though probably I shall never tread those streets again. I write this

with some share of indignant pride. London and I took an affectionate leave of each other in May last.

*Cara Augusta vale. Tu, care poeta, valet.*

To you, and your little house, I send my benediction, as efficacious perhaps as a Bishop's, certainly as sincere. I send you too an Inscription, a kind of Epitaphium Vivi Auctoris, to be placed over your door: *la voila*:—

Dear to each Muse, to Virtue, and to God,  
A poet nothing rich here makes abode.  
The pride of wealth his generous soul disdains:  
Well its small tenant this small house contains.

I beg your pardon for trifling thus with you; but even this will show that you are more than transiently in my thoughts. Despise not your poet: *nec te poeniteat Laris, divine poeta!*

I thank you for your advice with regard to sacred poetry; though, sooth to say, I never intended to address the nymphs of Solyma<sup>3</sup> again. Our fathers were enraptured with Pope's "Messiah." This age is unworthy of such sublime strains: nothing manly or rational is left among us: nothing pleases now but the sing-song of two or three mellifluous misses and [of] the sempertuous Mr. Hayley.<sup>4</sup> I am proud of having given my honest testimony against this degeneracy; but *canimus surdis*. Yet I sing on, and will sing on, contrasting the sublime and spirit-stirring strains of the more than mortal antients with the insipid lullabies of these ephemery warblers. I am now engaged in such an employment to very little purpose, I presage; but what I am doing shall be done well.

I have lately been honoured with a very flattering letter from Mrs. Montagu: pray tell me whether she be in town. I write to her, and continue to cultivate her acquaintance, though without any prospect of advantage.—Mrs. Bacon sets out for London on the fifth of the next month. I have not seen her lately; but [I] hear that she is well.—I have not been at Cossey; but, if I can hear that the family is less engaged than they have been this summer, I propose to spend great part of the week before Christmas with them, happy might I meet you there. Adieu. A servant from Kimberly is now here: I shall send this to Sir J. W. with all respect. I am, dear Sir,

Your faithful and most obedient servant,

R. POTTER.

Scarning, November 23rd, 1785.

<sup>1</sup> The death of Edward Jerningham's mother, Lady Jerningham.

<sup>2</sup> Sir John Wodehouse.

<sup>3</sup> Solyma is a high mountain near Phaselis in Lycia, mentioned by Strabo only. It is probably another name for Olympus. The highest point is now called Taghtala.

<sup>4</sup> William Hayley, known as a poet by various poetical "Essays" and by "The Triumphs of Temper," and better known as the friend and biographer of Romney and of Cowper.

14

DEAR SIR,

All persons that on earth do dwell, except the unthankful and the evil, will sooner or later acknowledge the favours of their friends. I have three of yours now before me, for which I most heartily thank you. Your little vols.<sup>1</sup> were brought me on Wednesday. I have read the first. Some of the poems were new to me; all of them delightful. You have a poet's eye, a poet's ear, a poet's taste, and 'a poet's feeling. There's for you now! I allow you four senses, which are two more than fall to the share of half mankind, I mean of authors. I thank you for a very rational and pleasing amusement. Go on, and fame be your meed!

After this civility, I want to rap your knuckles for your jibes and your jeers. You were one of the first to encourage me to give the public a translation of Sophocles. I will do it for all your voutings; what care I for Franklin's ghost,<sup>2</sup> unless you raise it in a ballad? And my wife will sleep in spite of the D——l. I wish however the Public may think with you, that my mind retains its whole vigour in the advance of life; though, by the by, what occasion have you to wipe the advance of life over my nose? It was not thought so in my Euripedes; because it had not the fire and fury of the Æschylus. Nor has Sophocles. Can I help that? I will do it well.

We have not been able to get "The Persian Heroine";<sup>3</sup> my particular respect for the learned author makes me wish to see it. I know what the wits say of it. I am avenged.

Read "The Task."<sup>4</sup> Some parts are tedious: some are ill-judged; yet it will please you. It is not in a manner that promises to catch the flame of Homer.<sup>5</sup>

Why will you abuse me for my praise of Mason? "Elfrida"<sup>6</sup> deserved it; "Caractacus"<sup>7</sup> demanded it. If the man will write himself out of all credit, the more fool he. He certainly should have died when Gray died. I thought he had been translating David's "Psalms."<sup>8</sup>

I knew Mr. Whitehead<sup>9</sup> in the younger part of our lives. He was well-bred, modest, and amiable; a good classic scholar, and had a fine taste. All this has fallen to the share of hundreds, who have lived and died unnoticed. He was a good man of tame genius.

I think very seriously of going to Cossey on Monday. I cannot bear the thought of being there when the weather will not allow me to straggle through the groves in those hours of

solitude, when Sir William is on horseback, and my Lady bidding her beads. This visit will not prevent me from attending you and your nightingales. I shall be happy to meet you there, and am with many thanks and much respect,

Dear Sir,

Your most obliged and faithful humble servant,

R. POTTER.

Scarning, April, 1786.

<sup>1</sup> Volumes of Edward Jerningham's poetry, probably a re-issue. Jerningham published no fresh poems in 1786.

<sup>2</sup> Thomas Francklin (1721-1784) was the son of the Richard Francklin, bookseller, near the Piazza in Covent Garden, who published "The Craftman" for Pulteney. That statesman advised that the boy should be educated for the Church, and promised him assistance which he never rendered. Young Francklin was educated at Westminster School and at Trinity College, Cambridge. From 1750 to 1759 he was Professor of Greek at Cambridge. From 1759 to 1777 he was Vicar of Ware in Hertfordshire, and in the latter year he was appointed Rector of Brasted, Kent. He was one of the contributors to Smollett's *Critical Review*, and through the influence of his friends, Dr. Johnson and Sir Joshua Reynolds, he was made successively chaplain and professor of ancient history to the Royal Academy. His translation of the tragedies of Sophocles appeared in 1759, and his rendering of "The Works of Lucian," which was dedicated to Dr. Johnson, in 1780. His best known tragedy, "The Earl of Warwick," a version of one of La Harpe's plays, was produced at Drury Lane on December 13th, 1766, and acted about twelve times, Mrs. Yates being "very great in Margaret," according to Genest, who says, however, that "Such gross contradictions to known facts as Dr. Franklin has chosen to introduce into this play are disgusting to the last degree," and that the play is "a poor tragedy both as to plot and language, with now and then a good speech." Francklin died in Great Queen Street, London, on March 15th, 1784. Fanny Burney knew him.

<sup>3</sup> Having consulted *The Critical Review* for June, 1786, I find that "The Persian Heroine" was a tragedy written by Richard Paul Jodrell, F.R.S., and founded on Herodotus. It had been refused both at Drury Lane and at Covent Garden. Not unnaturally; for the elucidatory notes are said to occupy nearly as much space as the text.

<sup>4</sup> Cowper's poem, "The Task," was written in the summer of 1783, and published, along with "John Gilpin" and "Tirocinium," in July, 1785.

<sup>5</sup> Cowper began his translation of Homer on November 12th, 1784, and published it in the summer of 1791.

<sup>6</sup> "Elfrida" was published in book form in the beginning of 1782. It was brought out at Covent Garden by Colman without Mason's consent on November 21st, 1772, and again, altered by the author, at the same theatre, on February 22nd, 1779. "Caractacus" was published in book form in 1759. Gray had carefully criticised it in manuscript. It was performed at Covent Garden on December 1st, 1776, and was reproduced there on October 22nd, 1778. Both plays, being "written on the model of the ancient Greek tragedy," contained a chorus.

<sup>7</sup> In 1783 was published a "Collection of the Psalms of David, under the direction of W. Mason, by whom is prefixed a Critical and Historical Essay on Cathedral Music." The "psalms" were those used as anthems in York

Minster, of which cathedral Mason had been appointed a canon on December 6th, 1756.

\* William Whitehead (1715-1785) was the son of a baker, and was educated at Winchester College and at Clare Hall, Cambridge. In 1745 he became tutor to Viscount Villiers, the future 4th Earl of Jersey, and from 1754 to 1756 he acted as "bear-leader" to Lord Villiers and to Lord Nuneham, the future 2nd Earl Harcourt, on the Grand Tour. On February 24th, 1750, his tragedy "The Roman Father," was brought out by Garrick at Drury Lane, where his second tragedy "Creusa, Queen of Athens," was produced on April 20th, 1754. When Colley Cibber died, in December, 1757, the post of poet-laureate, previously refused by Gray, was offered by the Duke of Devonshire, the Lord Chamberlain, to Whitehead, who accepted it, and produced for the next twenty-eight years the customary series of birthday odes. Whitehead was very intimate and often domesticated with the Jerseys and the Harcourts, and for many years acted as "reader" of plays to Garrick.

## 15

DEAR SIR,

Many thanks to you for your very kind and friendly letter. A long and melancholy confinement ever since the day after my return from Cossey has injured my health. I want air and exercise, and would very soon take the benefit of the mansion *I let stand*,<sup>1</sup> but that I have promised my first visit to Senham,<sup>2</sup> I should indeed be there to-day; but some domestic concerns prevent me, and I daily expect a friend, whose visit will not be a short one. Yet I flatter my self with the hopes of waiting on the family before the middle of the next month. I am sorry to hear that fevers and agues have been intruders at Cossey.

I thank you for "Leonora."<sup>3</sup> She figures at Scarning. The day I was honoured with your obliging present I received two of the same from Smith,<sup>4</sup> and a wonderful fine print from Sir Joshua's picture of the Duke of Orleans.

I have a letter from Mrs. Montagu of the 13th June. She mentions you in the kindest manner, and bids me make her best compliments to you. She speaks of the Metropolis as having every property of Purgatory, except that it does not purify the soul; and [she] descants on the morning hymn of the lark, the noon-day chorus of the songsters of the grove, and the vespers of the nightingale, with all the gay enthusiasm of youth. My mind has not of late been in accord with this rural melody; yet I hope it will soon recover its tone, and be in unison with the Attic Lyre. With my best respects and thanks to Sir W. and Lady Jerningham, I am, Dear Sir,

Your most obliged and faithful humble servant,

Scarning, July 17th, 1786.

R. POTTER.

<sup>1</sup> "Let stand" is the text, there is no doubt about that, Potter's writing being always elegant and remarkably clear; but I confess I don't understand what the words mean.

- <sup>2</sup> I cannot discover the locality of Senham.
- <sup>3</sup> Apparently the name of a print.
- <sup>4</sup> John Raphael Smith (1752-1813), the engraver in mezzotint. He engraved many plates after Reynolds, including the portrait of "Égalité."

16

DEAR SIR,

During my learned labours in the Athenian Theatre it has been usual with me on finishing a play to mount my horse, and to make a visit among my friends, bidding a short farewell to Greek iambicks and English blank verse. In this predicament I now stand; but, alas, my friends are at too great a distance, whirled in the vortex of Paris and London. In this case all I can do is to address them by letter. This reminds me of my obligations to you. Aye, you will say, why were not those discharged long ago? Remember, this is your own question; you will be so good as to help me to an answer. I hate apologies. You said indeed that, as you do not stand upon ceremony, I should hear from you again, at a decent distance. I have waited more than a decent time, and am now proceeding to tell you—in sooth just nothing at all. The World is with you, or you are with the World; I am out of the World, a solitary being. Not therefore unhappy, when my health is tolerable; that grows very precarious, and at present is not good.

I beg, and request, and entreat you never to mention a Lord to me more, and especially not a Lord Spiritual. They are animals of another species, and have nothing of the communis sensus about them. Talk to me of persons that feel the glow of humanity warm at their hearts. Of Lord Carlisle I know nothing, but that his Excellency did me the honour to subscribe to Euripedes; but he is among an hundred other Lords who have not done me the justice to take the second volume. But I have learnt to speak of this neglect a little distrustingly; as Dodsley's carelessness has led me into some scrapes. Farewell to Lords.

Let me turn my enquiries towards Mrs. Montagu. I have not been honoured with any notice from her since July last. Is she made a Bishop? I hope all is well with her and hers. Pray let her know that I am in a state of existence, and have a warm sense of her excellence.

Mr. Fenn has done me the honour to make me a present of his publication.<sup>1</sup> Though I do not profess Antiquarianism, these old letters afford me much amusement and information. There is one from John Jernyngham to his Ryght Wurchipfull Cosyn Marget Paston from Calais, giving an account of an engagement at sea, 29th May, 1458, under the Earl of Warwick.

He honestly says, "and for sothe we wer wele and trewly bette;" yet John was for "more scheppis to fythe agayne." What a valiant family!

I have not heard a syllable from Park Street since the family has been together. I beg you to present my respects to them; and tell Mrs. Bacon that it is no pleasure to me to be neglected.

"What, not a word of Sophocles?" I hope to have finished the translation before the end of the next month. What new garland of Parnassian flowers is your Muse braiding? Will you write to me soon? "I will." I thank you, and am,

Dear Sir,  
You faithful humble servant,  
R. POTTER.

Scarning, February 8th, 1787.

' "The Paston Letters."

17

Scarning, March 23rd, 1787.

DEAR SIR,

As I am arrived at another resting place in my Sophoclean career, you are (in the polite language of Green Street) to receive the pleasure, and to be made happy, with another address from me. I know not whether I ought to take a pleasure, I know not whether I do take a pleasure, in telling you that the translation is finished. There is some satisfaction in having concluded a great work; but it has amused me, and diverted many an uneasy thought. Even now the work is not done; it must be revised and transcribed. This is dull labour; but it is necessary, and shall be done con diligenza. My application to this task has perhaps been too close. My health is much hurt. A disorder in my stomach has lately brought me within a near expectation of the long black box. This close stowage seems at present to be postponed a little; but I continue to swallow many a draught not so delectable as Tokay, and am condemned to be on my horse an hour every morning. This I do with great punctuality; though I have no pleasure in it, and consider it as a most vile lounge. Nay, I have my scruples whether it be not an eighth deadly sin; it is literally riding for life, "et propter vitam vivendi perdere causas." On the whole however I am greatly relieved, and hope to have the pleasure of meeting you again, and much at leisure; for after I have sent Sophocles to the devil (of the press) I intend to defy the Devil and all his works.

I wish Mason had so much grace. Happy had it been for his fame had he died when Gray died. What can he make of the Life of Whitehead? I loved the man; but of the poet



this deponent saith not. Peace to thy gentle shade, and advise thy biographer to employ his talents in writing an elegy on a tom-tit!

I have not yet seen Gilpin's account of the Cumberland lakes, &c.<sup>2</sup> I much wish to see it; and probably it will soon fall in my way. But I have seen what surely no man ever wished to see, Sir John Hawkins' "Life of Johnson."<sup>3</sup> How I hate a dull, cold, fastidious friend, who writes with the blackest water of Styx, held in an ass's hoof! I wonder they do not make a Bishop of this fellow. Poor Johnson! Under the idea of praise, how is his honest fame degraded by the injudicious and injurious accounts given of him by his friends!

I am always happy to hear that Mrs. Montagu is well, and does me the honour to speak of me: I am confident they are always bona verba. But why will you be ever teizing me with Bishops? Know you not that this white-livered Lord of Exon,<sup>4</sup> who always affects to speak of me with respect as a scholar, and with particular esteem as a man, from peculiar circumstances casually known to him, who once boasted to me of his intimacy with the Chancellor, *refused* to recommend me to him for a small crown living, and in terms that wanted common civility?

You ask me for a commission, &c. Will you do me the favour to ask Mr. Dodsley<sup>5</sup> if he has any money in hand for me? If any, how much I may draw upon him for? I am always unwilling to write to him, because he never charges letters to account. This you will *not* do. Perhaps you will do me the favour to bear my respects to Park Street, and to tell Mrs. Bacon that I shall write to her very soon; I wait in expectation of giving her an account of an adventure.

I am, Dear Sir,

Your most obliged and faithful,

R. PORTER.

<sup>1</sup> A life of Whitehead, written by Mason, was prefixed to an edition of Whitehead's "Poems," published in 1788, in three volumes, at York.

<sup>2</sup> The Rev. William Gilpin (1724-1804), who kept a school at Cheam for many years, and was a Canon of Salisbury, used to employ his summer vacations in sketching tours over various parts of England. He subsequently published the results of these excursions under the clumsy title of "Observations relative chiefly to Picturesque Beauty made in . . ." The two volumes alluded to by Potter, dealing with "the Mountains and Lakes of Cumberland and Westmoreland," appeared in 1786, and were illustrated, as usual, with the author's own drawings.

<sup>3</sup> Sir John Hawkins (1718-1789) published "The Works of Samuel Johnson, together with his Life, and notes on his 'Lives of the Poets'" in 1787. In 1776 he had brought out "The General History of the Science and Practice of Music." But he achieved little fame either as a rival historian of music to Dr. Burney or as a rival biographer of Johnson to James Boswell. He was

an attorney, and gave up practice in 1759, his wife having come into a fortune. Johnson described him to Mrs. Thrale and Fanny Burney as a most "unclubbable man."

\* "Exon" is of course the Bishop of Exeter. John Ross (1719-1792) succeeded Frederik Kappel as Bishop of Exeter, having been consecrated on January 25th 1778. He was born at Ross, in Herefordshire, the son of an attorney, and educated at the Grammar School there and at St. John's College, Cambridge. Ross owed his preferment to the fact that the 3rd Viscount Weymouth, the well-known Secretary of State, had been one of his private pupils at St. John's. In 1749 he brought out an annotated edition of Cicero's letters *Ad familiares*.

\* This was James Doddsley (1724-1797), the younger brother of Robert Doddsley, poet, playwright and bookseller. He was taken into partnership by his brother and succeeded him as head of the firm in 1769.

18

DEAR SIR,

This week I am engaged at Kimberly; the next week I expect to be engaged with company at home. I vaticinate nothing that will deprive me of the pleasure of spending a day or two at Cossey, about the 20th. I diable it at this delay; as I most ardently wish to see the family. I have the honour to be,

Your most obedient servant,

R. POTTER.

Scarning, August 6th, 1787.

19

DEAR SIR,

Of the Lord of Senham this deponent saith not: I have not seen him, I have not heard of him, nor do I know the state of the house. You will probably meet him this week at Norwich, and settle matters with him. \*Only be advised that I shall not be able to stir from home before the Wednesday of any week in this month, my attendance each Tuesday being required at the House of Industry: this is only incidental.

I write to tell you that I have not been able to elicit any answer from Mr. Robinson,<sup>1</sup> and am determined to wait no longer for his fastidious insolence. I therefore request the favour of you to recommend me to Mr. Robson,<sup>2</sup> this moment by letter. I do not wish you to commit yourself: only put us together. It would be most eligible to me to sell the copy right through all possible editions; but I shall ask what he perhaps will think a great deal of money. If he cannot agree to my terms, I will without any hesitation publish at my own expence, and shall be glad to engage him as my bookseller. This is all: I hope I do not engage you in any unpleasant or indelicate task. You will be so obliging as to favour me with

a line; as I shall write to Mr. Robson as soon as I hear from you, and I wish that to be soon. Stet domus!

I am, Sir,

Your faithful humble servant,

R. POTTER.

Scarning, October 1st, 1787.

<sup>1</sup> George Robinson (1737-1801), publisher, was born at Dalston in Cumberland and came up to London about 1755. He was first employed by John Rivington, of St. Paul's Churchyard, and then by Johnstone, of Ludgate Hill. In 1764 he set up on his own account in Paternoster Row, his partner being John Herberts, who died about 1776. In 1784 he took his son George and his brother John into partnership. They were his successors. Robinson is said to have been very liberal and hospitable to his authors, and seems to have had "a great share of wit and vivacity," being quite famous for his bons mots. On November 26th, 1798, the firm was fined for selling copies of Thomas Paine's "Rights of Man."

<sup>2</sup> James Robson (1738-1806), publisher, was also a native of Cumberland, having been born at Sebergham. He came up to London in 1749, and entered the shop of his kinsman, J. Brindley, of New Bond Street, whom he succeeded in 1759. He considerably enhanced the reputation of the firm, and conducted its business for nearly forty years. His greatest professional achievement was his purchase and subsequent sale by auction of the famous Pinelli Library, an achievement which involved him in a journey to Venice. Like Robinson, Robson was a friend of Thomas Paine's.

20

DEAR SIR,

"Abs te tam diu nihil literarum?" said Tully once to Atticus. I have a great mind to leave you in this good company without saying another word. I have a great mind to write Greek to you. Must Green Street be in compact with Park Street to neglect, perhaps to forget, the poor Curate of Scarning? Why are these things thus?

I will answer for him. It is an honest affectionate creature; but he has some degree of pride about him, which is hurt at the idea of being slighted. So much for him. The translator of the Greek Drama now addresses you. Sophocles is nearly through the press, and will very soon be published. The new edition of Dr. Franklin's version hastens the publication. No offer was made by Mr. Robinson; so that the translator was under the necessity of bearing the whole expence, under the sanction of Dr. Poyntz.<sup>1</sup> Perhaps the iron door of durance vile is now opening to receive him for his presumption. To prevent which you, and all the friends of this hardy veteran, must exert yourselves to recommend his Sophocles to the Pelopidæ.<sup>2</sup> He is confident that you will do this.

This everlasting wet weather has occasioned much sickness in our world; it has not affected me, I hope that you have

escaped. My expectation is now on tiptoe. A little time will determine whether all my hopes will be answered, so that I may rest at Scarning while I live, the most contented animal in the world, or leave Norfolk for ever. Wonder not at this: I am not mad. May I hope for the favour of a line from you? I am

Dear Sir,  
Your faithful and most obedient servant,  
R. POTTER.

Scarning, February 22nd, 1788.

P.S.—A learned gentleman has this moment called upon me, requesting me to enquire whether you were born at Cossey and when. Will you favour me with an answer to those two plain-questions? He is compiling an account of all the illustrious personages born in Norfolk. There's for you now!

<sup>1</sup> I cannot identify Dr. Poynts.

<sup>2</sup> The Pelopidæ, the descendants of Pelops, were the subjects of tragedy—

(“Some time let gorgeous Tragedy,  
In sceptred pall come sweeping by,  
Presenting Thebes or Pelops' line,  
Or the tale of Troy divine.”

Milton's “*Il Penseroso*.”)

Potter, however, uses the word in the transferred sense of “Admirers of Tragedy.”

## 21

DEAR SIR,

Why did you forbid my writing to you? I will write to you, because I think you can be useful to me. Can a Jew have a more conscientious reason? Sophocles comes flying all abroad on Monday next, availing himself as much as he may of the intermission of this wicked business in Westminster Hall.<sup>1</sup> Mrs. Montagu has indeed written to me with great kindness and liberality; but I have no insidious designs upon the purses of my friends further than for the purchase of a book. My great object and great interest is to sell the impression, that I may dispose of the copy right to some advantage; therefore he serves me best, who assists me most in expediting the sale. I beg you to tell Sir John Wodehouse this, and that I request his recommendation at Christ Church.<sup>2</sup> I would write to him; but [I] hear that [he] is not now in town. Say the same to Mrs. Bacon: it will serve to garnish the dish. I will write to her, but not on this subject. My friends have not the unpleasant task of asking my Lord for his guinea. I know the friendly disposition of your family; but I have further demands on Lady Jerningham. Think not that I am to be satisfied with

insular fame; my ambition extends to the great kingdom of France, and, borne upon her Ladyship's plume (commonly called *a pen*), let me soar thither.<sup>3</sup> There is a tall gentleman (I think his name is Bennet Langton<sup>4</sup>) who has a lead in literary matters. I wish to have his countenance; and [I] believe that it would not be displeasing to him to be told that I request it of him. I shall be glad to hear that Sophocles is well received; and so [I] leave him to his fate.

It is a wonderful circumstance that people have been so ingenious as to find that Miss Jerningham is handsome;<sup>5</sup> with the same discriminating acumen they may possibly in another month discover that the sun is bright.

In my last I told you that I had thoughts of leaving Norfolk; it is now determined that I end my days (no hurry, neither) at Scarning. This is owing to a favourable circumstance, of which I hope one day to give you a pleasing account.<sup>6</sup>

My learned friend allows your Norfolk-ality; and you are to figure among Bishops, Chancellors, Judges, Admirals and Scholars. But can I believe that you were in being in the year 1738? Did your hand make a mistake? Do not be wanton on the occasion!

In the Johnsonian stile<sup>7</sup> I ought to give you a dismal account of my health, and the labels of vials, &c.; but I have no such account to send you. I do not growl, I do not fast, I do not lose blood, I do not take physic. My nights indeed are not as they have been; but I sleep very comfortably, tho' not without some turgescence. Do not tell tales. I am, with great respect,

Dear Sir,  
Your faithful humble servant,  
R. POTTER.

Scarning, March 28th, 1788.

<sup>1</sup> That is the trial of Warren Hastings before the House of Lords, which began on February 13th, 1788, and was continued for thirty-four subsequent days. It was resumed in April, 1789.

<sup>2</sup> Apparently Sir John had been educated at the House.

<sup>3</sup> That is, Potter wanted Lady Jerningham to use on behalf of his translation the influence in France which her brothers, Arthur and Henry Dillon, would have as Generals in the French service.

<sup>4</sup> A very tall man, one of the two young Oxford men, Topham Beauclerk was the other, with whom Dr. Johnson was so intimate.

<sup>5</sup> See her portraits given in "The Jerningham Letters."

<sup>6</sup> Probably this is an allusion to the letter received by Potter from Lord Chancellor Thurlow in 1768, offering him the second canonical stall in Norwich Cathedral.

<sup>7</sup> That is the style Dr. Johnson adopted in writing his later letters to Mrs. Thrale, which are concerned largely with the details of his illness, his being blind, his fasts, his insomnia, etc.

Norwich, June 15th, 1788.

DEAR SIR,

The date of your letter frights me ; as you speak of setting out for Paris in a fortnight. The time is elapsed. You may be on the sea, or the sea on you. *Dii meliora piis!* At all hazards I will address you. I will wish you safe and happy among your Parisian friends, and assure you that no man in the King of England's dominions will be more glad to see you in these his dominions than your humble servant.

I have been here sixteen days, so engaged in getting necessaries together, and receiving the compliments of my friends, that I have not had a quiet hour till this morning. Nor should I now, but that I am disabled by a severe cold from going out. I am obliged to leave my stall empty to-day, and to refuse a seat at the Mayor's table ; it is his last Gala day. This indisposition has long been breeding. I knew that it must make a violent concussion in my little world before it would leave me ; I hope its force is spent. I have a little house here, not unlike three nutshells hung one over another ; but it is very convenient. You will honour it, I hope, next June. Sir William J. called upon me last Friday morning.

I know nothing of Macklin<sup>1</sup> or his exhibition ; unless you mean the room of vile pictures from the English Poets near Temple Bar.<sup>2</sup> The best picture scene in Æschylus is the ghost of Darius rising from his tomb ; but the painter would probably make damned work of it. Sophocles sells very slowly. I am tired ; so I must, without more words, recommend you to God's holy protection, and remain,

Dear Sir,

Your faithful friend and servant,

R. POTTER.

<sup>1</sup> This Macklin was not *Charles Macklin*, the famous actor, dramatist, and centenarian, whose exhibition at Hart Street, Covent Garden (of himself as tavern-keeper and head-waiter, and as lecturer to the "British Inquisition"), was apparently not resumed after the autumn of 1754 ; but *Thomas Macklin*, an entrepreneur and publisher, who in 1788, started a picture show in Fleet Street and then in Pall Mall, in opposition to Alderman Boydell's famous (or notorious) "Shakespeare Gallery." At this show, called "Poets' Gallery," or "Gallery of Poets," Macklin exhibited pictures suggested by the poets and by the Bible, and painted by Reynolds, Gainsborough, Cosway, Opie, Fusell, Hamilton, Angelica Kauffman, Barry, Silvester Harding, and Benjamin West. And he subsequently had prints engraved from these pictures by Bartolozzi, Sharpe, Hall, Heath, and Byrne, which he incorporated in two well-known publications, "Macklin's Bible," dedicated to the King, and "Macklin's British Poets," dedicated to the Prince of Wales. The "Bible," which he claimed "cost him upwards of £30,000," contained 60 plates, and was issued in 60 numbers, at 15s. a number. The "Poets" contained 100 plates, and was

issued in 25 numbers, containing 4 plates each, at 8 guineas a number. "Peter Pindar" alludes to Macklin in the preface to his poem, "Subjects for Painters." Horace Walpole discusses "The Shakespeares Gallery" and the "Poets' Gallery" in a letter to Lord Hailes, dated September 21st, 1790, which is too long to bear quotation. And Gillray includes Macklin in his cartoon for November 2nd, 1797, "Titianus Redivivus; or the Seven Wise Men consulting the New Venetian Oracle." In this skit on Miss Provis's pretensions to having discovered the secret of Titian's gorgeous colouring the entrepreneur figures as a dwarf, bearing his famous "Bible" in his pocket and carrying on his back a bag of tickets marked "Lottery: Five Guineas a Dip." Robert Potter would probably have refrained from describing the "Poets' Gallery" as a "room of vile pictures" had he known that his friend, Edward Jerningham, was likely to be connected with it. In the exhibition given at the "Gallery of Poets," Pall Mall, for 1791, was shown a picture painted by William Hamilton, R.A., the subject of which was taken from Jerningham's poem, "The Ancient English Wake." This circumstance led to the inclusion of Jerningham in Macklin's "British Poets," in which body he has as fit colleagues, his friends and correspondents, William Hayley and Anne Seward!

\* I cannot elucidate this reference.

## 23

DEAR SIR,

Till I was favoured with your very obliging letter, I did not know that you had revisited your native isle. I wish you joy of your return to your country; or rather, in this dearth of honour and good temper, I wish your country joy of having recovered such a son. There's for you, now!

Yesterday morning I received your packet from Berry, and thank you for the honour you have done me, and the pleasure you have given me. Good poetry always gives me pleasure;<sup>1</sup> what then must it do, when it melodizes the sentiments of Saurin?<sup>2</sup> I approve, I applaud most of your instances; but [I] did not expect to find my thinking and judicious friend led astray to Runnymede.<sup>3</sup> A little reflection on the spirit of those times would have given you very different sentiments of that celebrated transaction. Your marvellous Americanus<sup>4</sup> was the son of a fellow that would have been hanged, but that mistaken lenity spared his life. He inherited all his father's pilfering qualities. When he wanted bread-and-butter, he affected great fondness for his mother. When the boys in the streets beat him, for he was always quarrelling, he constantly ran to her to take his part. When he grew big enough to work, and she required him to do something towards his maintenance, he grew sullen, and robbed her pantry. When she offered to chastise him for these tricks, he raised the mob upon her, and beat her out of doors. He will come to the gallows at last.<sup>5</sup> Forgive me.

I will give your poem a more attentive reading in happier hours. These are days, and nights too, of anguish, and tribulation, and woe. I have been distressed with the rheumatism ever since the first day of the year. I thought it greatly abated; but on the Tuesday of the last week it returned with ten-fold violence. Whatever I have suffered from this disorder before was boy's play to this attack. I am confined to my chamber, almost to my chair; but I am now able to get a few short steps, though with pain. My physician assures me that, if I will submit to orders, and persevere, &c., &c., he will totally eradicate this disorder; and I shall have better health than I have known for some years past. (Thus far yesterday.) I am very obedient and very patient.

I thank you for giving me an account of Park Street, and beg the favour of you to present my respects to Mrs. Bacon. Mr. T. Wodehouse promised to write to me; but he is so modest that he does not like to be thanked for favours. Therefore——. I have not any intention of visiting London this next Spring; tell me therefore whatever occurs which *The Evening Post*<sup>6</sup> does not tell me. Is Mons<sup>r</sup> Rochford's translation of Sophocles into French<sup>7</sup> in verse or in prose? I concern not my self about the Warton's.<sup>8</sup> Of Mrs. Montagu I frequently think, ever with the highest respect. Sir William and Lady Jerningham will do me the honour to rank me among their most devoted servants, Miss J. among her admirers. You will always account me,

Your most obliged and most obedient humble servant,  
R. POTTER.

Scarning, February 6th, 1789.

<sup>1</sup> An allusion to "Enthusiasm: a Poem," of Edward Jerningham's, published in 1789.

<sup>2</sup> Jacques Saurin, the celebrated French Protestant divine, was born at Nimes on January 6th, 1677, and educated at Geneva. In 1701 he was chosen minister of a Walloon Church in London; but, the climate of London disagreeing with him, he settled at the Hague in 1706, where his eloquence as a preacher gained him great popularity. In his latter years at the Hague he was accused of heresy. He died there on December 30th, 1730. His pulpit oratory has been compared to that of Bossuet.

<sup>3</sup> That is to King John's signing of Magna Charta, at Runnimead, a stretch of meadow-land lying along the right bank of the Thames, one mile above Staines. The King conceded the Barons' demands on June 15th, 1215.

<sup>4</sup> The allusion is to a distich towards the end of the second part of "Enthusiasm"—

"Marvellous infant! doomed to act my plan,  
Americanus hasten into man!"

<sup>5</sup> Obviously "Liberty" in the abstract made no stronger appeal to Potter than it made to Johnson. But this apologue is not only unhistorical, it is obscure. "Americanus" stands for the American Colonists. The "Mother"



is the Mother-Country, England. But who is represented by the father, from whom "Americanus" inherited "his pilfering qualities"?

It is strange, moreover to find Robert Potter still venting anti-American rancour six years after the treaty of peace had been signed between Great Britain and the United States.

\* *The London Evening Post* was certainly in existence as early as 1733.

† Guillaume Dubois de Rochefort, born in 1781 at Lyons, published a translation of the "Théâtre de Sophocle" in 1788. Between 1766 and 1777 he brought out verse translations both of the "Iliad" and of the "Odyssey." He died at Paris on July 25th, 1788.

\* Both the Wartons were in Holy Orders, both dabbled in poetry, both were friends of Dr. Johnson, and both were members of The Club, Joseph having been elected in 1773, and Thomas in 1782. Thomas Warton (1728-1790) is best known as the author of the "History of English Poetry," as Poet Laureate from 1785 till his death, and as a great authority on the Gothic influence on our literature and architecture. Son of Thomas Warton, a former Professor of Poetry at Oxford, he was educated at Trinity College, Oxford, held the Professorship of Poetry from 1757 to 1767, and was made Professor of Ancient History in 1785. A bachelor, his recreations were smoking a pipe, drinking ale, consorting with the Oxford watermen, and attending public executions. His *opus magnum*, which is still in MS., bears the title, "Observations, Critical and Historical, on Churches, Monasteries, Castles, and other Monuments of Antiquity, in various Counties of England and Wales." Joseph Warton (1722-1800) is famous as the schoolfellow of William Collins, the poet, as Headmaster of Winchester College from 1768 to 1793, and as critic and editor of Pope. He was educated at Winchester and at Oriel College, Oxford, spent his early manhood as a parochial clergyman, and achieved distinction as an author by his "Essay on the Genius and Writings of Pope," the first volume of which appeared in 1756, and the second in 1782. As Head of Winchester he proved a very lax disciplinarian, and probably preferred mixing in London literary and artistic society to wielding the ferule among schoolboys. He was a constant attendant at the assemblies of Mrs. Montagu, and was fond of dining with Sir Joshua Reynolds and with John Wilkes. For some years Joseph Warton who, by the way, was twice married, seems to have cherished hopes of receiving preferment in the Church from the good offices of the 3rd Duke of Bolton; and indeed the Duke, who was Marquess of Winchester, made Warton, who was an ex-scholar of Winchester College, Rector of Winslade. But the young parson had the misfortune of seeing these hopes dashed on a trip to the South of France which he took with his patron, and with that patron's mistress, Lavinia Fenton, in April 1751. The Duke had separated from his wife, daughter of the wealthy 3rd Earl of Carbery, soon after marrying her in 1713; and for twenty-three years had been keeping "Polly Peachum," if I may describe the lady by the part she made celebrated in Gay's "Beggar's Opera." Now, at length, the Duchess of Bolton was believed to be dying; and the Duke had carried the Rev. Joseph Warton with him, in the capacity of chaplain, on what he hoped would prove his honeymoon in Provence, in order that Warton might perform the nuptial ceremony that would unite his Grace to the mother of his three illegitimate sons, Charles, Percy, and Horatio Armand. But the Duchess of Bolton refused to die till September 20th, 1751; and, though the Duke, outraging all propriety, made his mistress his second Duchess as early as October 20th, his temporary chaplain had in the meantime returned disconsolate to England.

24

Norwich, December 22nd, 1789.

DEAR SIR,

Sometimes, but not often, I find my self a little at leisure in the evening: I give you one of those quiet half-hours. And I give it, as Fluellen did his shilling, with a good will. My business is to enquire, where you are, how you do, and what you do. When these questions relating to your self are well answered, proceed to give me a like account of the Cossey family; I cannot get any information concerning them here.

If you should be disposed to make any enquiries concerning me and my concerns, know that my health since the end of June last has been firm. I totally left Scarning on the last day of the last month, and am here on residence this month and the next. But [I] shall most probably continue here till the end of March; the Bishop will not permit me to fix there, at Lowestoft, during the winter. I have bought a house there, a good gentleman-like tenement; it cost £550. Go to; the money is all paid. But I have no small task upon my hands yet. I have for three weeks past been employed in furnishing my house here, and chiefly with new things. It is done, every thing is paid for, and I feel comfortable. I am now making the same provision for my house at Lowestoft, and every week send something. As my son is but a few doors from me, I have a trusty agent there. All will be well. I am provided for much beyond what I ever presumed to wish for; but I do not run riot. I have the same servants, the same horse, the same dog and cat I had before, without any addition. This, you will say, is a good amount. Why then rejoice therefore!

You will some evening carry my respects to Park Street; I know nothing of my friends there. Pray tell Mr. J. Wodehouse that "sweet was our converse on the banks of his river in October last."

You see how my time and my money will be employed next spring, and of course will not expect me in town; but I by no means give up the idea of paying my respects to my friends there the following year, and I hope to find Mrs. Montagu continue the Minerva, the tutelary Goddess of the City. With every good wish, I am,

Dear Sir,  
Faithfully and affectionately yours,

R. POTTER.

Lowestoft, June 2nd, 1790.

MY DEAR SIR,

You doubtless reproach me; I reproach myself. I have now before me two letters from your Serene Excellence unanswered, the first of them dated so far back (Lord Harcourt says) as the 13th January. "I will be even with this proud priest," says your Highness, "I will not write to him again till the 13th January, 1791." "But you will, though," says the Norfolk man. My delay in paying my respects to you has been occasioned by a paragraph in your letter, which tells me you should like to visit me at my country seat, etc. This ought not to be answered negligently. I could not answer it properly till I had taken the dimensions of my little box here, and made every division of it habitable. It is done. About the 20th inst. I am to have a party of Misses with me. They will stay a month; after which I shall be happy to receive you and your Muse. To encourage you to make this visit, I need not descant on the cliffs of Lowestoft, its hanging gardens, the multitudinous sea below them, and the delicious inland views: you know them all, I presume.<sup>1</sup> Know you also that it will give me great pleasure to have you a domestic<sup>2</sup> here. I am delighted with my situation, and shall in future be very little at Norwich. What should I do at Norwich? My Bishop is translated to St. Asaph,<sup>3</sup> the Dean to Heaven. Can I have a compensation for the loss of two such men, and let me add, two such women?

I thank you for your lines upon Sir Joshua;<sup>4</sup> they well express your refined sensibility. I had seen them before I received them from you. I have expected a palinoda.

Sir J. W[odehouse] tells me that Mrs. Bacon is wonderfully well, and that Mr. and Mrs. T. W[odehouse] are at Margate. You sometimes, I suppose, call in at Park Street. When you next call there, I beg you to mention my name as a person that holds that Lady in the highest respect. Say as much of that nature as you please for me in Portman Square. I shall next spring enquire in person how you execute this commission. Adieu. I am getting off from the Land of Nod<sup>5</sup> to Bedfordshire. Our awkward post goes out so early that such lazy fellows as I am are obliged to write our letters *over night*. That is an English phrase; is it English? No matter; in all stiles, even in John Trott's, I am with great esteem,

Dear Sir,

Your faithful humble servant,

R. POTTER.

<sup>1</sup> Potter, in a vein of irony, is investing Lowestoft with fictitious beauties.

<sup>2</sup> That is a "house-mate," a most unusual sense of the word "domestic."

° Lewis Bagot (1740-1802), the Bishop of Norwich who presented Potter to the vicarage of Lowestoft and to the rectory of Kessingland on June 26th, 1789, was the seventh son of Sir Walter Bagot, Bart., and brother of the 1st Lord Bagot. He was educated with his brother at Westminster, where Cowper was his schoolfellow, and at Christ Church, Oxford. Subsequently, like Mrs. Damer, he went for the benefit of the air to Lisbon, where presumably he first met his future wife. He then took orders and was made Canon of Christ Church in 1771, in which year he married Mary Hay, second daughter of the Hon. Edward Hay, Minister Plenipotentiary to the Court of Lisbon, and brother of Thomas, 9th Earl of Kinnoul. (Miss Hay was sister to Dr. Hay, Canon of Christ Church.) He was made D.C.L. in 1772, and was appointed Dean of Christ Church on January 25th, 1777. On February 28rd, 1782, he was consecrated Bishop of Bristol. In 1788 he was translated to Norwich, and in 1790 to St. Asaph. He rebuilt the palace there. He died in London on June 4th, 1802. His only book is his "Warburtonian Lecture" of 1780 on "The Prophecies." His portrait, painted by Hoppner, hangs in Christ Church Hall. His nephew, Richard Bagot, was Bishop successively of Oxford and of Bath and Wells. Born in 1782, he died in 1854. In 1806 he married Lady Harriet Villiers, eighth and youngest daughter of George Bussy, 4th Earl of Jersey. He was Bishop of Oxford from 1829 to 1845, during the Tractarian movement.

° "Lines on a late Resignation at the Royal Academy," 1790.

° Possibly this is another way of saying that he is leaving "Sleepy Suffolk" for a time.

26

Lowestoft, January 15th, 1791.

DEAR SIR,

The unexpected news of Mrs. Bacon's death<sup>1</sup> gave me a violent shock: my nerves have not yet recovered their tone. She was the most valuable woman I ever knew, and always friendly to me. I held her in the highest respect, and shall ever respect her memory. I have written to Mr. T. Wodehouse, not in terms of condolence or consolation. I know that he must be tenderly affected at the death of such a friend: I know the importance of this event to his happiness; so I left him to his own feelings.

I thank you for your kind anxiety for my health. From a long, painful and dangerous disorder I have escaped with my life, but with the loss of the whole embonpoint; so that I am become a marvellous proper gentleman. I walk or ride every day when the weather gives me leave; but this ability is a late acquisition, and my excursions are short. I find the open air not only tonic but delectable, after a confinement of more than four months. At present I do not think of a visit to the Metropolis; I am not yet firm enough, and I must be resident at Norwich during the months of April and May, and here by the 12th of June, i.e. in the Whitsun-Week. You will tell Mrs. Montagu that I think my self much honoured by her enquiries.

I am greatly pleased to hear that you continue to hold dalliance with your beautiful nymphs of Castalia's stream, and shall expect the offspring impatiently. Have you seen a little volume of poems by the Rev. Joseph Sterling, a bard on Shannon's banks?<sup>2</sup>

I have now before me a letter from you dated the 4th September, which I did not acknowledge because at that time I was ill qualified for writing, and afterwards I knew not where to address you. In that letter you mention Dr. Darwent's poem.<sup>3</sup> I know nothing of it. What is it? Who is he?—I am,

Dear Sir,  
Very faithfully yours,  
R. POTTER.

P.S.—Your account of Sir William and Lady Jerningham gives me much pleasure.

Pray remember that the name of this town is *Lowestoft*. I am so fond of the place, that I would not lose a letter of it.

<sup>1</sup> I cannot discover the date of Mrs. Bacon's death.

<sup>2</sup> All I can find about Joseph Sterling is derived from the Catalogues of the Library of the British Museum, where the following entries are given under his name, "The History of the Chevalier Bayard," 1781, "Cambuscan, or The Squire's Tale concluded," 1785, "Poems" 1782, "Odes," 1794.

<sup>3</sup> This was Dr. Erasmus Darwin's poem "The Botanic Garden." The second part, "The Loves of the Plants," was published first, in 1789. The first part, "The Economy of Vegetation," appeared in 1792.

27

Lowestoft, February 7th, 1791.

DEAR SIR,

Will you forgive this small piece of paper? I must not overcharge my packet to Sir J. W. It means only to thank you for your beautiful and elegant poem.<sup>1</sup> I have but just received it. Our extravagant sea last week overflowed our roads, and broke down our bridges. The carrier by whom Mr. Berry sent it came within a mile of the town, shook his ears, and returned. You have liberated me from much anxiety. I apprehended that you were animadverting on the pictures already exhibited, *periculosæ plenum opus alæ*; I am glad you judged better.<sup>2</sup> You have shown a fine imagination, for which I honour you, and am, with much enthusiasm,

Devotedly yours,  
R. POTTER.

<sup>1</sup> "The Shakspeare Gallery: a Poem," 1791.

<sup>2</sup> Jerningham, in this poem, had suggested fresh subjects for pictures.

Lowestoft, January 30th, 1792.

DEAR SIR,

Your packets were sent hither to me a few days ago from Norwich, where I seldom am, except during my months of residence, April and May. So kind a remembrance ought to have been acknowledged immediately; but I know not how it is. I do nothing, I have nothing to do; yet I cannot find time even for that. For instance I began this letter (it is *to be* a letter) two days ago, and got thro' two lines and three words. I have not been able to add another word till this moment; as I am averse to writing by candle light. Let me now thank you for your very elegant poem.<sup>1</sup> Poor Abelard was ill treated by those of his own age. Divines may yet calumniate the Divine; but Poets celebrate the Lover. His sufferings claim the tear, which your verse elicits.

The Temple of Immortality is a baseless fabric; whether I occupy a nich in it, or not, ought to be indifferent to me. But it is not. I am not yet vain enough or proud enough to despise the World's good word; but I am wise enough not to be very anxious about it.

During my last residence at Norwich I did not once occupy my nich in the Cathedral; but I hope for better things in April next. I have since my return hither acquired a considerable degree of firmness; but my late illness has made me feel, what before I did not feel, that "Poor Anacreon, thou grow'st old."<sup>2</sup> This severe weather pinches me; but I have thus far withstood it stoutly. I am not wallowing in riches; the necessity of furnishing two houses, the repairs requisite to make this house habitable, the fees of offices, the old derangement of my affairs, the expence of illness, and now the addition of two curates, clip my wings close. But tho' I cannot fly, I am thankful that I can stand. But I am much distressed in my nearest and dearest connexions. My daughter is in very infirm health: I often tremble for her life. My son is irrecoverable: I must lose him. We have lived together as brothers; he was very useful to me, and had great merit. I feel for Dr. Beattie under a similar affliction;<sup>3</sup> but let me not distress you.

Tho' my health is better than I had reason ever to expect it to be, yet it is not firm enough to induce me to think seriously of a visit to the Metropolis. I should be happy to pay my respects in person to Mrs. Montagu; but [I] must be satisfied with doing it by commission: you will execute it for me. I wish to cudgel Boswell for his abuse of her.<sup>4</sup> In a former publication this fellow was a playful puppy, and diverted us with his tricks;<sup>5</sup> he is now grown a great dog, and

what is worse, a dull dog. He has finely worried his illustrious friend. Johnson is Falstaff's great basket-hilted sword; Bozzy is his dagger.

Mr. Romney either binds me to love him as long as I live, or compels me to drop all connexion with him: the circumstance is now under the test.<sup>6</sup>

I read much, but chiefly old divinity and old politics; for I love the constitution of my country, civil and ecclesiastical, and reverence our wise and good ancestors who formed it. I write nothing but what is required of me as Mons<sup>r</sup>. le Vicaire: perhaps for your edification one day. Were not Sir William and Lady J. worth a single line from you? Let them be the subject of another letter. You make me happy, when you write to me; for I am, with great esteem,

Sincerely yours,

R. POTTER.

<sup>1</sup> "Abelard to Eloisa: a Poem," 1792.

<sup>2</sup> Horace Walpole repeats the same sentence in a letter written to Mary Berry from Strawberry Hill on Sept. 27th, 1794. But he was then just seventy-seven, and had been styled in "The True Briton" "the venerable Earl of Orford." In 1792 Potter was only seventy-one.

<sup>3</sup> Dr. Beattie lost his eldest son, James Hay Beattie, on November 19th, 1790.

<sup>4</sup> In his "Life of Johnson," published in two quarto volumes, at the price of two guineas, on May 16th, 1791.

<sup>5</sup> Boswell's "Journal of a Tour to the Hebrides," published in the spring of 1786.

<sup>6</sup> Romney had painted Robert Potter's portrait in 1779 as a gift to him. He also promised to paint the son's portrait. But, despite the entreaties of the father, who wished to have the picture while his son was still alive, he completed it and sent it to Potter only after the son was dead. The son died in February, 1792, and Romney never dispatched the picture to Potter till the December of that year. (See the four delightful letters from Potter contained in the Rev. John Romney's "Life of Romney.") Another proof this of that strange lack of real sensibility on Romney's part, which even the greatest admirers of his talents must recognise! Potter's letters are so simple and poignant in their appeal to the artist to finish the picture, that their readers must always find it very difficult to forgive Romney for his dilatoriness. I have consulted all the old and most of the modern catalogues of Romney's works; but I can find no traces of this portrait of Potter, junior.

DEAR SIR,

Most probably you would not have received my thanks for your very obliging letter of the 3rd so soon, but that I am yet within reach of the Bishop's blessing, and I wish early to express myself somewhat indignantly at Mr. H. Hobart's

intelligence.<sup>2</sup> I know not with what silly misses he corresponds; but he had no right to communicate such impertinence in such company. I wish to rap his knuckles, and to assure him that I am not half so great a fool as he represents me. I beg the favour of you to *un-lie* his report.

Your account of the House of Jerningham gives me great pleasure. It is not at all unlikely that I should take my old station at Cossey before the end of this summer; nor is it impossible that I should attend you to Sennowe.<sup>3</sup> I am expected there to-day; but, having been absent more than five months from Lowestoft, I want to be there, and, what is more material, I am wanted there, and there I propose to be on Tuesday next. Mr. Wodehouse will not readily admit my reasons; for he never thinks that any man can have business which demands attention—but himself.

I am sensible that I am going down the hill, without repeated admonitions of it from my friends.<sup>4</sup> The descent has been rough and steep; at present it is easy and pleasant enough, but will not admit acts of youthful folly. I trust there is nothing Anacreontic in my old age.<sup>5</sup> I had rather drink with Socrates than with Anacreon; but you will never find a Diogenes in your old friend and

Faithful humble servant,  
R. POTTER.

<sup>1</sup> The address and date are taken from the cover of the letter.

<sup>2</sup> Henry Lewis Hobart, born 1774, was the fourth son of George, 3rd Earl of Buckinghamshire, and was at this time a youth of nineteen. He entered the Church and became Dean of Windsor. He married when he was fifty (on October 5th, 1824) Charlotte Selina, daughter of Richard Moore, great-grandson of Sir Thomas Moore, Knt., of Sayes Court, Surrey, who was grand-nephew to John Milton, the poet, through the poet's sister, Mrs. Agar. See Masson's "Life of Milton," vol. vi. p. 775. Henry Hobart died on May 8th, 1846.

<sup>3</sup> Sennow Lodge, Norfolk, was the seat of Thomas Wodehouse, 3rd son of Sir Armine Wodehouse. But he seems also to have lived at Senham.

<sup>4</sup> Presumably Edward Jerningham was one of these monitory friends.

<sup>5</sup> An allusion to Mr. H. Hobart's false "intelligence."

I hoped to have seen Col. Wodehouse,<sup>1</sup> who would doubtless have saved your pence; but I know not where to find him. So I must amerce your purse. You deserve it; your letter to me cost me heaps of money. The cover was dated January two, 1800; therefore the noble name did not protect me even from a double tax. Well, who cares? Not I, truly! Go to, Man! I am a Personage,<sup>2</sup> a Justice o' peace, an please you, a Dignitary; and as honest an old man as any man that is not older and honestier than my self. I have 40 golden guineas in the



drawer of this table, and three times as much in bank-notes, besides all the last year's Prebenda untouched. Yet I bear my faculties meekly;<sup>8</sup> and play no fantastic tricks before high heaven.<sup>4</sup> The true English of all this glorying is, I glory in the goodness of God, whose gracious Providence has made the evening of my life so comfortable. [I use(?)] so small a tipe, to the great annoyance [of my ey]es that I might tell you all about it. One [thing I h]ope you need not be told, that I am ever [ver<sup>5</sup>]y sincerely,

Your most obliged humble servant,

R. POTTER.

January 29th, 1801.

<sup>1</sup> I cannot discover the identity of Colonel Wodehouse. Possibly he is the Hon. John Wodehouse, who succeeded his father as 2nd Baron Wodehouse on May 29th, 1834; but I can find no record of this peer's connection with the army.

<sup>2</sup> It is rather quaint that this charming letter, Robert Potter's "Nunc Dimittis," should bear such a Shakespearean flavour. The passage beginning "Go to, Man!" is redolent of Dogberry:—

"I am a wise fellow; and, which is more, an officer; and, which is more, a householder; and, which is more, as pretty a piece of flesh as any is in Messina; and one that knows the law, go to; and a rich fellow enough, go to; and a fellow that hath had losses; and one that hath two gowns, and every thing handsome about him." ("Much Ado About Nothing," iv, 2.)

<sup>3</sup> "Besides, this Duncan

Hath borne his faculties so meek. . . ."

("Macbeth," i. 7.)

"But, man, proud man,

Drest in a little brief authority,

Plays such fantastic tricks before high heaven

As makes the angels weep; . . ."

("Measure for Measure," ii. 2.)

<sup>4</sup> The words inserted between square brackets are an attempt to restore the text. The breaking of the seal has torn away a portion of the letter.

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\* "The Dictionary of National Biography," gives this lady's name as *Fenouilhet*; but Mr. Malcolm Salaman, in his "Old English Mezzotints," and E. Hamilton and Sir Walter Armstrong in their respective Catalogues *Raisonnés* of Reynolds's Portraits spell the name *Fenhoulet*.—L. B.

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