

THE
WORKS

OF

HORATIO WALPOLE,

EARL OF ORFORD.

VOL. V.



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THE
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OF
HORATIO WALPOLE,
EARL OF ORFORD.

IN FIVE VOLUMES.

VOL. V.



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OF THE

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L E T T E R S

FROM

THE HON. HORACE WALPOLE

TO

THE HON. HENRY SEYMOUR CONWAY,

From the Year 1740 to the Year 1795.

VOL. V.

B



From Sculpt.

Field Marshal Conway.

Published as the Act directs May 1st 1798. by G.G. & J. Robinson. Paternoster Row London.

L E T T E R S

FROM

THE HON. HORACE WALPOLE

TO

THE HON. HENRY SEYMOUR CONWAY,

From the Year 1740 to the Year 1795.

LETTER I.

TO THE HON. HENRY SEYMOUR CONWAY.

Florence, March 6, 1740 N. S.

HARRY, my dear, one would tell you what a monster you are, if one were not sure your conscience tells you so every time you think of me. At Genoa, in the year of our Lord one thousand seven hundred and thirty-nine, I received the last letter from you; by your not writing to me since, I imagine you propose to make this leap year. I should have sent many a scold after you in this long interval, had I known where to have scolded; but you told me you should leave Geneva immediately. I have dispatched sundry enquiries into England after you, all fruitless. At last drops in a chance letter to lady Sophy Farnham from a girl at Paris, that

Second son of Francis, first lord Conway, by Charlotte Shorter, his third wife.

He was afterwards secretary in Ireland during the viceroyalty of William fourth duke of Devonshire; groom of the bed-chamber to George II. and to George III.; secretary of state in the year 1765; lieutenant general of the ordnance

in 1770; commander in chief in 1782, and a field-marshal in 1793.

This correspondence commences when Mr. Walpole was 23 years old, and Mr. Conway two years younger. They had gone abroad together with Mr. Gray in the year 1739, had spent three months together at Rheims, and afterwards separated at Geneva.

4 LETTERS FROM THE HON. HORACE WALPOLE

tells her for news, Mr. Henry Conway is here. Is he indeed? and why was I to know it only by this scrambling way? Well, I hate you for this neglect, but I find I love you well enough to tell you so. But, dear now, don't let one fall into a train of excuses and reproaches; if the god of indolence is a mightier deity with you than the god of caring for one, tell me, and I won't dun you; but will drop your correspondence as silently as if I owed you money.

If my private consistency was of no weight with you; yet is a man nothing who is within three days journey of a conclave? nay, for what you knew I might have been in Rome. Harry, art thou so indifferent, as to have a cousin at the election of a pope without courting him for news? I'll tell you, were I any where else, and even Dick H—— were at Rome, I think verily I should have wrote to him. Popes, cardinals, adorations, coronations, St. Peters! oh, what costly sounds! and don't you write to one yet? I shall set out in about a fortnight, and pray then think me of consequence.

I have crept on upon time from day to day here; fond of Florence to a degree: 'tis infinitely the most agreeable of all the places I have seen since London: that you know one loves, right or wrong, as one does one's nurse. Our little Arno is not boated and swelling like the Thames, but 'tis vastly pretty, and, I don't know how, being Italian, has something visionary and poetical in its stream. Then one's unwilling to leave the gallery, and—but—in short, one's unwilling to get into a post-chaise. I am as surfeited with mountains and inns, as if I had eat them. I have many to pass before I see England again, and no Tory to entertain me on the road! Well, this thought makes me dull, and that makes me finish.

Adieu!

Yours ever,

HQR. WALPOLE.

P. S. Direct to me, (for to be sure you will not be so outrageous as to leave me quite off) *recommandé à mons. Mann, ministre de sa majesté Britannique à Florence.*

LETTER II.

Rome, April 23, 1740 N. S.

AS I have wrote you two such long letters lately, my dear Hal, I did not hurry myself to answer your last; but chose to write to poor Selwyn upon his illness. I pity you excessively upon finding him in such a situation: what a shock it must have been to you! He deserves so much love from all that know him, and you owe him so much friendship, that I can scarce conceive a greater shock. I am very glad you did not write to me till he was out of danger; for this great distance would have added to my pain, as I must have waited so long for another letter. I charge you, don't let him relapse into balls; he does not love them, and, if you please, your example may keep him out of them. You are extremely pretty people to be dancing and trading with French poulterers and pastry-cooks, when a hard frost is starving half the nation, and the Spanish war ought to be employing the other half. We are much more public-spirited here; we live upon the public news, and triumph abundantly upon the taking Porto-Bello. If you are not entirely debauched with your balls, you must be pleased with an answer of lord Hartington's to the governor of Rome. He asked him what they had determined about the vessel that the Spaniards took under the cannon of Civita Vecchia, whether they had restored it to the English? The governor said, they had done justice. My lord replied, "If you had not, we should have done it ourselves." Pray reverence our spirit, lieutenant Hal.

Sir, Moscovita is not a pretty woman, and she does sing ill; that's all.

My dear Harry, I must now tell you a little about myself, and answer your questions. How I like the inanimate part of Rome you will soon perceive at my arrival in England; I am far gone in medals, lamps, idols, prints, &c. and all the small commodities to the purchase of which I can attain; I would buy the Coliseum if I could: judge. My mornings are spent in the most agreeable manner; my evenings ill enough. Roman conversations are dreadful things! such untoward mawkins as the princesses! and the princes are worse. Then the whole city is littered with French and German abbés, who make up a dismal contrast with the inhabitants.

John Selwyn, elder brother of George Augustus Selwyn. He died about 1750.

The

The conclave is far from enlivening up; its secrets don't transpire. I could give you names of this cardinal and that, that are talked of, but each is contradicted the next hour. I was there t'other day to visit one of them, and one of the most agreeable, Alexander Albani. I had the opportunity of two cardinals making their entry: upon that occasion the gate is unlocked, and their eminencies come to talk to their acquaintance over the threshold. I have received great civilities from him I named to you, and I wish he were out, that I might receive greater: a friend of his does the honours of Rome for him; but you know that it is unpleasant to visit by proxy. Card. Delci, the object of the Corfini faction, is dying; the hot weather will probably dispatch half a dozen more. Not that it is hot yet; I am now writing to you by my fire-side.

Harry, you saw lord Deskfoord at Geneva; don't you like him? He is a mighty sensible man. There are few young people have so good understandings. He is mighty grave, and so are you; but you can both be pleasant when you have a mind. Indeed one can make you pleasant, but his solemn *Scotchery* is a little formidable: before you I can play the fool from morning to night, courageously. Good night. I have other letters to write, and must finish this.

Yours ever,

HOR. WALPOLE

LETTER III.

DEAR HAL,

Florence, March 25, 1741 N.S.

YOU must judge by what you feel yourself of what I feel for Selwyn's recovery, with the addition of what I have suffered from post to post. But as I find the whole town have had the same sentiments about him, (though I am sure few so strong as myself) I will not repeat what you have heard so much. I shall write to him to-night, though he knows without my telling him how very much I love him. To you, my dear Harry, I am infinitely obliged for the three successive letters you wrote me about him, which gave me double pleasure, as they shewed your attention for me at a time that you knew I must be so unhappy; and your friendship for him.

Your account of fir Robert's victory was so extremely well told, that I made Gray translate it into French, and have showed it to all that could taste it, or were inquisitive on the occasion. I have received a print by this post that diverts me extremely; *the Motion*. Tell me, dear now, who made the design, and who took the likenesses; they are admirable: the lines are as good as one sees on such occasions. I wrote last post to fir Robert, to wish him joy; I hope he received my letter.

I was to have set out last Tuesday, but on Sunday came the news of the queen of Hungary being brought to bed of a son; on which occasion here will be great triumphs, operas and masquerades, which detain me for a short time.

I won't make you any excuse for sending you the following lines; you have prejudice enough for me to read with patience any of my idlenesses.

My dear Harry, you enrage me with talking of another journey to Ireland; it will shock me if I don't find you at my return: pray take care and be in England.

I wait with some patience to see Dr. Middleton's Tully, as I read the greatest part of it in manuscript; though indeed that is rather a reason for my being impatient to read the rest. If Tully can receive any additional honour, Dr. Middleton is most capable of conferring it.

I receive with great pleasure any remembrances of my lord and your sisters; I long to see all of you. Patapan³ is so handsome that he has been named the silver fleece; and there is a new order of knighthood to be erected to his honour, in opposition to the golden. Precedents are searching, and plans drawing up for that purpose. I hear that the natives pretend to be companions, upon the authority of their dog-skin waistcoats; but a council that has been held on purpose has declared their pretensions impertinent. Patapan has lately taken wife unto him, as ugly as he is genteel, but of a very great family, being the direct heiress of Canis Scaliger, lord of

¹ On the event of Mr. Sandys's motion in the house of commons to remove fir Robert Walpole from the king's presence and councils for ever.

lected column in the place of St. Mark, at Florence, afterwards printed in the *Fugitive Pieces*.

² Here follows the inscription for the neg-

³ A dog of Mr. Walpole's.

8 LETTERS FROM THE HON. HORACE WALPOLE

Verona: which principality we design to seize à la Prussienne; that is, as soon as ever we shall have persuaded the republic of Venice, that we are the best friends they have in the world. Adieu, dear child!

Yours ever,

HOR. WALPOLE.

P. S. I left my subscriptions for Middleton's Tully with Mr. Selwyn; I won't trouble him, but I wish you would take care and get the books, if Mr. S. has kept the list.

LETTER IV.

Re di Cofano, vulg. Radicofani, July 5, 1740 N. S.

YOU will wonder, my dear Hal, to find me on the road from Rome: why, intend I did to stay for a new popedom, but the old eminences are cross and obstinate, and will not choose one, the holy ghost does not know when. There is a horrid thing called the mal' aria, that comes to Rome every summer and kills one, and I did not care for being killed so far from christian burial. We have been jolted to death; my servants let us come without springs to the chaise, and we are wore threadbare: to add to our disasters, I have sprained my ankle, and have brought it along, laid upon a little box of bawbles that I have bought for presents in England. Perhaps I may pick you out some little trifle there, but don't depend upon it; you are a disagreeable creature, and may be I shall not care for you. Though I am so tired in this devil of a place, yet I have taken it into my head, that it is like Hamilton's Bawn, and I must write to you. 'Tis the top of a black barren mountain, a vile little town at the foot of an old citadel: yet this, know you, was the residence of one of the three kings that went to Christ's birth-day; his name was Alabaster, Abarasser, or some such thing; the other two were kings, one of the East, the other of Cologne. 'Tis this of Cofano, who was represented in an ancient painting, found in the Palatine Mount, now in the possession of Dr. Mead; he was crowned by Augustus. Well, but about writing—what do you think I write with?

Nay,

Nay, with a pen; there was never a one to be found in the whole circumference *but one*, and that was in the possession of the governor, and had been used time out of mind to write the parole with: I was forced to lend to borrow it. It was sent me under the conduct of a farceant and two Swiss, with desire to return it when I should have done with it. 'Tis a curiosity, and worthy to be laid up with the relics which we have just been seeing in a small novel of Capucins on the side of the hill, and which were all brought by his majesty from Jerusalem. Among other things of great sanctity there is a set of gnashing of teeth, the grinders very entire; a bit of the worm that never dies, preserved in spirits; a crow of St. Peter's cock, very useful against Easter; the crisping and curling, frizzling and frowning of Mary Magdalen; which she cut off on growing devout. The good man that showed us all these commodities was got into such a train of calling them the blessed this, and the blessed that, that at last he showed us a bit of the blessed fig-tree that Christ cursed.

Florence, July 9.

MY DEAR HARRY,

WE are come hither, and I have received another letter from you with Hosier's Ghost. Your last put me in pain for you, when you talked of going to Ireland; but now I find your brother and sister go with you, I am not much concerned. Should I be? You have but to say, for my feelings are extremely at your service to dispose as you please. Let us see: you are to come back to stand for some place; that will be about April. 'Tis a sort of thing I should do too; and then we should see one another, and that would be charming: but it is a sort of thing I have no mind to do; and then we shall not see one another, unless you would come hither—but that you cannot do: nay, I would not have you, for then I shall be gone.—So! there are many *ifs* that just signify nothing at all. Return I must sooner than I shall like. I am happy here to a degree. I'll tell you my situation. I am lodged with Mr. Mann*, the best of creatures. I have a terreno all to myself, with an open gallery on the Arno, where I am now writing to you. Over against me is the famous Gallery; and, on either hand, two fair bridges. Is not this charming and cool? The air is so serene, and so secure, that one sleeps with all the windows and doors thrown open

* Afterwards Sir Horace Mann. He was at this time resident at Florence from George II.

to the river, and only covered with a flight gauze to keep away the gnats. Lady Pomfret¹ has a charming conversation once a week. She has taken a vast palace and a vast garden, which is vastly commodious, especially to the cicisbeo-part of mankind, who have free indulgence to wander in pairs about the arbours. You know her daughters: lady Sophia² is still, may she must be, the beauty she was: lady Charlotte³ is much improved, and is the cleverest girl in the world & speaks the purest Tuscan like any Florentine. The princess Craon⁴ has a constant pharaoh and supper every night, where one is quite at one's ease. I am going into the country with her and the prince for a little while, to a villa of the great duke's. The people are good-humoured here and easy; and what makes me pleased with them, they are pleased with me. One loves to find people care for one, when they can have no view in it.

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

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

Unless I sent you back news that you and others send me, I can send you none. I have left the conclave, which is the only stirring thing in this part of the world, except the child that the queen of Naples is to be delivered of in August. There is no likelihood the conclave will end, unless the messages take effect which 'tis said the Imperial and French ministers have sent to their respective courts for leave to quit the Corsini for the Albani faction; otherwise there will never be a pope. Corsini has lost the only one he could

¹ Henrietta Louisa, wife of Thomas earl of Pomfret.

² Afterwards married to John lord Carteret, who became earl of Granville on the death of his mother in the year 1744.

³ Afterwards married to William Finch, brother to ——— earl of Winchelsea.

⁴ The princess Craon was the favourite mistress of Leopold the last duke of Lorraine, who married her to monsieur de Beauveau, and prevailed on the emperor to make him a prince of the empire. They at this time resided at Florence, where prince Craon was at the head of the council of regency.

have

have ventured to make pope, and him he designed; 'twas Cenci, a relation of the Corfini's mistress. The last morning Corfini made him rise, stuffed a dish of chocolate down his throat, and would carry him to the scrutiny. The poor old creature went, came back, and died. I am sorry to have lost the sight of the pope's coronation, but I might have staid for seeing it till I had been old enough to be pope myself.

Harry, what luck the chancellor has! first, indeed, to be in himself so great a man; but then in accidents: he is made chief justice and peer, when Talbot is made chancellor and peer: Talbot dies in a twelvemonth, and leaves him the seals at an age when others are scarce made solicitors:—then marries his son into one of the first families of Britain, obtains a patent for a marquissate and eight thousand pounds a year after the duke of Kent's death: the duke dies in a fortnight, and leaves them all! People talk of fortune's wheel that is always rolling: troth, my lord Hardwicke has overtaken her wheel, and rolled along with it.

I perceive miss Jenny¹ would not venture to Ireland, nor stray so far from London; I am glad I shall always know where to find her within three-score miles. I must say a word to my lord², which, Harry, be sure you don't read. [“My dear lord, I don't love troubling you with letters, because I know you don't love the trouble of answering them; not that I should insist on that ceremony, but I hate to burthen any one's conscience. Your brother tells me he is to stand member of parliament: without telling me so, I am sure he owes it to you. I am sure you will not repent setting him up; nor will he be ungrateful to a brother who deserves so much, and whose least merit is not the knowing how to employ so great a fortune.”]

There, Harry, I have done. Don't suspect me: I have said no ill of you behind your back. Make my best compliments to miss Conway³.

I thought I had done, and lo, I had forgot to tell you, that who d'ye think

¹ Miss Jane Conway, half sister to Henry marquis of Hertford, elder brother to H. Seymour Conway. She died unmarried in 1749.

² Francis lord Conway, afterwards earl and Hayne in Devonshire. ³ Afterwards married to John Harris, esq. of

12 LETTERS FROM THE HON. HORACE WALPOLE

is here?—Even Mr. More! our Rhein's Mr. More! the fortification, hornwork, ravelin, bastion Mr. More! *which is very pleasant sure.* At the end of the eighth side, I think I need make no excuse for leaving off: but I am going to write to Selwyn, and to the lady of the mountain; from whom I have had a very kind letter. She has at last received the Chantilly brags. Good night: write to me from one end of the world to t'other.

Yours ever,

HOR. WALPOLE.

LETTER V.

Florence, September 25, 1740 N.S.

MY DEAR HAL,

I BEGIN to answer your letter the moment I have read it, because you bid me; but I grow so unfit for a correspondence with any body in England, that I have almost left it off. 'Tis so long since I was there, and I am so utterly a stranger to every thing that passes there, that I must talk vastly in the dark to those I write; and having in a manner settled myself here, where there can be no news, I am void of all matter for filling up a letter. As, by the absence of the great duke, Florence is become in a manner a country town, you may imagine that we are not without demêlés; but for a country town I believe there never were a set of people so peaceable, and such strangers to scandal. 'Tis the family of love, where every body is paired, and go as constantly together as perfoquets. Here nobody hangs or drowns themselves; they are not ready to cut one another's throats about elections or parties; don't think that wit consists in saying bold truths, or humour in getting drunk. But I shall give you no more of their characters, because I am so unfortunate as to think that their encomium consists in being the reverse of the English, who in general are either mad, or enough to make other people so. After telling you so fairly my sentiments, you may believe, my dear Harry, that I had much rather see you here than in England. 'Tis an evil wish for you, who

* See a letter to Mr. West, dated Rheims, 20th July, 1739.

should

should not be lost in so obscure a place as this. I will not make you compliments, or else here is a charming opportunity for saying what I think of you. As I am convinced you love me, and as I am conscious you have one strong reason for it, I will own to you, that for my own peace you should wish me to remain here. I am so well within and without, that you would scarce know me. I am younger than ever, think of nothing but diverting myself, and live in a round of pleasures. We have operas, concerts, and balls, mornings and evenings. I dare not tell you all one's idlenesses; you would look so grave and senatorial, at hearing that one rises at eleven in the morning, goes to the opera at nine at night, to supper at one, and to bed at three! But literally here the evenings and nights are so charming and so warm, one can't avoid 'em.

Did I tell you lately — is here? She laughs at my lady W——, scolds my lady Pomfret, and is laughed at by the whole town. Her dress, her avarice, and her impudence must amaze any one that never heard her name. She wears a foul mob, that does not cover her greasy black locks, that hang loose, never combed or curled; an old mazarine blue wrapper, that gapes open and discovers a canvas petticoat. Her face swelled violently on one side with the remains of a —, partly covered with a plaister, and partly with white paint, which for cheapness she has bought so coarse, that you would not use it to wash a chimney. — In three words I will give you her picture as we drew it in the Sortes Virgilianæ —

Insanam vatem aspicias.

I give you my honour, we did not choose it; but Gray, Mr. Cooke, Sir Fr. Dashwood and I, and several others, drew it fairly amongst a thousand for different people, most of which did not hit as you may imagine: those that did I will tell you.

For our most religious and gracious —

— *Dii, talem terris avertite pestem:*

For one that would be our most religious and gracious —

*Purpureus veluti cum flos succisus aratro
Languescit moriens, lassove papavera collo
Demisere caput, pluviam cum forte gravantur.*

For

For his son.

Regis Romani; primus qui legibus urbem
Fundabit, Curibus parvis et paupere terrâ
Missus in imperium magnum.

For sir Robert.

Res dura et regni novitas me talia cogunt
Moliri, et late fines custode tueri.

I will shew you the rest when I see you.

HOR. WALPOLE.

LETTER VI.

London, 1741.

MY DEAREST HARRY,

BEFORE I thank you for myself, I must thank you for that excessive good nature you showed in writing to poor G——. I am less impatient to see you, as I find you are not the least altered, but have the same tender friendly temper you always had. I wanted much to see if you were still the same—but you are.

Don't think of coming before your brother; he is too good to be left for any one living: besides, if it is possible, I will see you in the country. Don't reproach me, and think nothing could draw me into the country: impatience to see a few friends has drawn me out of Italy; and Italy, Harry, is pleasanter than London. As I do not love living en famille so much as you (but then indeed my family is not like yours), I am hurried about getting myself a house; for I have so long lived single, that I do not much take to being confined with * * * * *

You won't find me much altered, I believe; at least, outwardly. I am not grown a bit shorter, or a bit fatter, but am just the same long lean creature

ture as usual. Then I talk no French, but to my footman; nor Italian, but to myself. What inward alterations may have happened to me, you will discover best; for you know 'tis said, one never knows that one's self. I will answer, that that part of it that belongs to you, has not suffered the least change—I took care of that.

For virtù, I have a little to entertain you: it is my sole pleasure.—I am neither young enough nor old enough to be in love.

My dear Harry, will you take care and make my compliments to that charming lady Conway¹, who I hear is so charming, and to miss Jenny, who I know is so? As for miss Anne², and her love *as far as it is decent*, tell her, decency is out of the question between us, that I love her without any restriction. I settled it yesterday with miss Conway, that you three are brothers and sister to me, and that if you had been so, I could not love you better. I have so many cousins, and uncles and aunts, and bloods that grow in Norfolk, that if I had portioned out my affections to them, as they say I should, what a modicum would have fallen to each!—So, to avoid fractions, I love my family in you three, their representatives³.

Adieu, my dear Harry! Direct to me at Downing-street. Good bye!

Yours ever,

HOR. WALPOLE.

LETTER VII.

Arlington-street, July 29, 1744.

MY DEAREST HARRY,

I FEEL that I have so much to say to you, that I foresee there will be but little method in my letter; but if upon the whole you see my meaning, and the depth of my friendship for you, I am content.

¹ Isabella Fitzroy, daughter of Charles duke of Grafton.

² Miss Anne Conway, youngest sister of Henry Seymour Conway.

³ They were first cousins by the mother's side; Francis the first lord Conway having married Charlotte, eldest daughter of John Shorter of Bybrook in Kent, sister to Catherine Shorter lady Walpole.

It was most agreeable to me to receive a letter of confidence from you, at the time I expected a very different one from you; though, by the date of your last, I perceive you had not then received some letters, which though I did not see I must call simple, as they could only tend to make you uneasy for some months. I should not have thought of communicating a quarrel to you at this distance; and I don't conceive the sort of friendship of those that thought it necessary. When I heard it had been wrote to you, I thought it right to myself to give you my account of it—but, by your brother's desire, I suppressed my letter, and left it to be explained by him, who wrote to you so sensibly on it, that I shall say no more; but that I think myself so ill used, that it will prevent my giving you thoroughly the advice you ask of me; for how can I be sure that my resentment might not make me see in a stronger light the reasons for your breaking off an affair, which you know before I never approved?

You know my temper is so open to any body I love, that I must be happy at seeing you lay aside a reserve with me, which is the only point that ever made me dissatisfied with you. That silence of yours has, perhaps, been one of the chief reasons that has always prevented my saying much to you on a topic which I saw was so near your heart. Indeed, its being so near was another reason; for how could I expect you would take my advice, even if you bore it? But, my dearest Harry, how can I advise you now? Is it not gone too far for me to expect you should keep any resolution about it; especially in absence, which must be destroyed the moment you meet again? And if you ever should marry and be happy, won't you reproach me with having tried to hinder it?—I think you as just, and honest, as I think any man living. But any man living in that circumstance would think I had been prompted by private reasons. I see as strongly as you can, all the arguments for your breaking off; but indeed the alteration of your fortune adds very little strength to what they had before. You never had fortune enough to make such a step at all prudent: she loved you enough to be content with that; I can't believe this change will alter her sentiments, for I must do her the justice to say, that 'tis plain she preferred you with nothing to all the world. I could talk on upon this head; but I will only leave you to consider, with-

This was an early attachment of Mr. Conway's. By his having complied with the wishes and advice of his friend on this subject, and got the better of his passion, he probably felt that he,

in some measure, owed to Mr. Walpole the subsequent happiness of his life in his marriage with another person. E.

out advising you on either side, these two things : whether you think it honest to break off with her after such engagements as yours (how strong I don't know), after her refusing very good matches for you, and show her that she must think of making her fortune ; or whether you will wait with her till some amendment in your fortune can put it in your power to marry her.

My dearest Harry, you must see why I don't care to say more on this head. My wishing it could be right for you to break off with her (for, without it is right, I would not have you on any account take such a step) makes it impossible for me to advise it ; and therefore I am sure you will forgive my declining an act of friendship, which your having put in my power gives me the greatest satisfaction. But it does put something else in my power, which I am sure nothing can make me decline, and for which I have long wanted an opportunity. Nothing could prevent my being unhappy at the smallness of your fortune, but its throwing it into my way to offer you to share mine. As mine is so precarious, by depending on so bad a constitution, I can only offer you the immediate use of it. I do that most sincerely. My places still (though my lord W. has cut off three hundred pounds a year, to save himself the trouble of signing his name ten times for once) bring me in near two thousand pounds a year. I have no debts, no connections ; indeed no way to dispose of it particularly. By living with my father, I have little real use for a quarter of it. I have always flung it away all in the most idle manner. But, my dear Harry, idle as I am, and thoughtless, I have sense enough to have real pleasure in denying myself bawbles, and in saving a very good income to make a man happy for whom I have a just esteem and most sincere friendship. I know the difficulties any gentleman and man of spirit must struggle with, even in having such an offer made him, much more in accepting it. I hope you will allow there are some in making it. But hear me : if there is any such thing as friendship in the world, these are the opportunities of exerting it, and it can't be exerted without 'tis accepted. I must talk of myself to prove to you that it will be right for you to accept it. I am sensible of having more follies and weaknesses and fewer real good qualities than most men. I sometimes reflect on this, though I own too seldom. I always want to begin acting like a man and a sensible one, which I think I might be if I would. Can I begin better, than by taking care of my fortune for one I love ? You have seen (I have seen you have) that I am fickle, and foolishly fond of twenty new people : but I don't really love

them: I have always loved you constant^{ly}: I am willing to convince you and the world, what I have always told you, that I loved you better than any body. If I ever felt much for any thing, which I know may be questioned, it was certainly for my mother. I look on you as my nearest relation by her, and think I can never do enough to show my gratitude and affection to her. For these reasons, don't deny me what I have set my heart on—the making your fortune easy to you. * * * * *

[The rest of this letter is wanting.]

LETTER VIII.

Houghton, Oct. 6, 1744

MY DEAREST HARRY,

MY lord¹ bids me tell you how much he is obliged to you for your letter, and hopes you will accept my answer for his. I'll tell you what, we shall both be obliged to you if you will inclose a magnifying glass in your next letters; for your two last were in so diminutive a character, that we were forced to employ all Mrs. Leneve's spectacles, besides an ancient family reading-glass with which my grandfather used to begin the psalm, to discover what you said to us. Besides this, I have a piece of news for you: sir Robert Walpole, when he was made earl of Orford, left the ministry, and with it the palace in Downing-street; as numbers of people found out three years ago, who not having your integrity were quick in perceiving the change of his situation. Your letter was full as honest as you; for, though directed to Downing-street, it would not, as other letters would have done, address itself to the present possessor. Do but think if it had! The smallness of the hand would have immediately struck my lord Sandys² with the idea of a plot; for what he could not read at first sight, he would certainly have concluded must be cypher.

I march next week towards London, and have already begun to send my heavy artillery before me, consisting of half a dozen books and part of my

¹ Sir Robert Walpole, first earl of Orford.

chequer on the resignation of sir Robert Walpole in February 1741, and afterwards created lord Sandys.

² Samuel Sandys, made chancellor of the ex-

linen

linen; my light horse commanded by Patapan follows this day se'nnight. A detachment of hussars surpris'd an old bitch fox yesterday morning, who had lost a leg in a former engagement; and then having received advice of another litter being advanced as far as Dasingham, lord Walpole commanded captain Riley's horse with a strong party of fox-hounds to overtake them: but on the approach of our troops the enemy stole off, and are now encamped at Sechford common, whither we every hour expect orders to pursue them.

My dear Harry, this is all I have to tell you, and to my great joy, which you must forgive me, is full as memorable as any part of the Flanders campaign. I do not desire to have you engaged in the least more glory than you have been. I should not love the remainder of you the least better for your having lost an arm or a leg; and have as full persuasion of your courage as if you had contributed to the slicing off twenty pair from French officers. Thank God, you have sense enough to content yourself without being a hero; though I don't quite forget your expedition a hussar hunting the beginning of this campaign.—Pray, no more of those jaunts! I don't know any body you would oblige with a present of such game: for my part, a fragment of the oldest hussar on earth should never have a place in my museum; they are not antique enough: and for a live one, I must tell you I like my racoon infinitely better.

Adieu, my dear Harry! I long to see you.—You will easily believe, the thought I have of being particularly well with you is a vast addition to my impatience; though you know it is nothing new to me to be overjoyed at your return.

Yours ever,

HOR. WALPOLE.

L E T T E R IX.

Arlington-street, May 27, 1745.

MY DEAR HARRY,

AS gloriously as you have set out, yet I despair of seeing you a perfect hero! You have none of the charming violences that are so essential to that

Mr. Conway was now with the allied army in Flanders.

D 2

character.

character. You write as coolly after behaving well in a battle, as you fought in it. Can your friends flatter themselves with seeing you one day or other be the death of thousands, when you wish for peace in three weeks after your first engagement¹, and laugh at the ambition of those men who have given you this opportunity of distinguishing yourself? With the person of an Orondates, and the courage, you have all the compassion, the reason, and the reflection, of one that never read a romance. Can one ever hope you will make a figure, when you only fight because it was right you should, and not because you hated the French, or loved destroying mankind? This is so un-English, or so un-heroic, that I despair of you!

Thank Heaven, you have one spice of madness! Your admiration of your master² leaves me a glimmering of hope that you will not be always so unreasonably reasonable. Do you remember the humorous lieutenant, in one of Beaumont and Fletcher's plays, that is in love with the king? Indeed your master is not behind hand with you; you seem to have agreed to puff one another.

If you are all acting up to the strictest rules of war and chivalry in Flanders, we are not less scrupulous on this side the water in fulfilling all the duties of the same order. The day the young volunteer departed for the army (unluckily indeed it was after the battle), his tender mother Sisygambis, and the beautiful Statira, a lady formerly known in your history by the name of Artemisia, from her cutting off her hair on your absence, were so afflicted and so inseparable, that they made a party together to Mr. *Graham's*³ (you may read *Iapis* if you please) to be blooded. It was settled that this was a more precious way of expressing concern than shaving the head, which has been known to be attended with false locks the next day.

For the other princess you wot of, who is not entirely so tall as the former, nor so evidently descended from a line of monarchs—I don't hear her talk of retiring. At present she is employed in buying up all the nose-gays in Covent Garden, and laurel-leaves at the pastry-cooks', to weave

¹ The battle of Fontenoy, where Mr. Conway greatly distinguished himself.

² William duke of Cumberland, to whom Mr. Conway was aide-du-camp.

³ A celebrated apothecary in Pall-mall.

chaplets.



chaplets for the return of her hero. Who that is, I don't pretend to know or guess. All I know is, that in this age retirement is not one of the fashionable expressions of passion.

MOR. WALPOLE.

LETTER X.

Arlington-street, July 1, 1745.

MY DEAR HARRY,

IF it were not for that one slight inconvenience, that I should probably be dead now, I should have liked much better to have lived in the last war than in this; I mean as to the pleasantness of writing letters. Two or three battles won, two or three towns taken, in a summer, were pretty objects to keep up the liveliness of a correspondence. But now it hurts one's dignity to be talking of English and French armies, at the first period of our history in which the tables are turned. After having learnt to spell out of the reigns of Edward the third and Harry the fifth, and begun lisping with Agincourt and Cressy, one uses one's self but awkwardly to the sounds of Tournay and Fontenoy. I don't like foreseeing the time so near, when all the young orators in parliament will be haranguing out of Demosthenes upon the imminent danger we are in from the overgrown power of king Philip. As becoming as all that public spirit will be, which to be sure will now come forth, I can't but think we were at least as happy and as great when all the young Pitts and Lytteltons were pelting oratory at my father for rolling out a twenty years peace, and not envying the trophies which he passed by every day in Westminster-hall. But one must not repine; rather reflect on the glories which they have drove the nation headlong into. One must think all our distresses and dangers well laid out, when they have purchased us Glover's¹ Oration for the merchants, the admiralty for the duke of Bedford, and the reversion of secretary at war for Pitt, which he will certainly have, unless the French king should happen to have the nomination; and then I fear, as much obliged as that court is to my lord Cobham and his nephews, they would be so partial as to prefer some

¹ The author of Leonidas.

illiterate nephew of cardinal Tencin's, who never heard of Leonidas or the Hanover troops.

With all these reflections, as I love to make myself easy, especially politically, I comfort myself with what St. Evremond (a favourite philosopher of mine, for he thought what he liked, not liked what he thought) said in defence of cardinal Mazarin, when he was reproached with neglecting the good of the kingdom that he might engross the riches of it: "Well, let him get all the riches, and then he will think of the good of the kingdom, for it will all be his own." Let the French but have England, and they won't want to conquer it. We may possibly contract the French spirit of being supremely content with the glory of our monarch, and then—why then it will be the first time we ever were contented yet.

We hear of nothing but your retiring, and of Dutch treachery: in short, 'tis an ugly scene!

I know of no home news but the commencement of the gaming act, for which they are to put up a scutcheon at White's for the death of play; and the death of Winnington's wife, which may be an unlucky event for my lady —. As he has no children, he will certainly marry again; and who will give him their daughter, unless he breaks off that affair, which I believe he will now very willingly make a marriage article? We want him to take lady Charlotte Fermor. She was always his beauty, and has so many charming qualities, that she would make any body happy. He will make a good husband; for he is excessively good-natured, and was much better to that strange wife than he cared to own.

You wondered at my journey to Houghton; now wonder more, for I am going to Mount Edgecumbe. Now my summers are in my own hands, and I am not obliged to pass great part of them in Norfolk, I find it is not so very terrible to dispose of them up and down. In about three weeks I shall set out, and see Wilton and Doddington's in my way. Dear Harry, do but get a victory, and I will let off every cannon at Plymouth; reserving two, till I hear particularly that you have killed two more Frenchmen with

Mr. Conway was still with the army in Flanders.

your

your own hand¹. Lady Mary² sends you her compliments; she is going to pass a week with miss Townshend at Muffits; I don't think you will be forgot. Your sister Anne has got a new distemper, which she says feels like something *jumping* in her. You know my style on such an occasion, and may be sure I have not spared this distemper. Adieu!

Yours ever,

HOR. WALPOLE.

LETTER XI.

Windfor Hill⁴, Oct. 3, 1746.

MY DEAR HARRY,

YOU ask me if I am really grown a philosopher. Really I believe not; for I shall refer you to my practice rather than to my doctrine, and have really acquired what they only pretended to seek, content. So far indeed I was a philosopher even when I lived in town, for then I was content too; and all the difference I can conceive between those two opposite doctors was, that Aristippus loved London, and Diogenes Windsor: and if your master the duke, whom I sincerely prefer to Alexander, and who certainly can intercept more sunshine, would but stand out of my way, which he is extremely in, while he lives in the park here, I should love my little tub of forty pounds a year, more than my palace dans la rue des ministres, with all my pictures and bronzes, which you ridiculously imagine I have encumbered myself with in my solitude. Solitude it is, as to the tub itself, for no soul lives in it with me; though I could easily give you room at the butt end of it, and with vast pleasure; but George Montagu, who perhaps is a philosopher too, though I am sure not of Pythagoras's silent sect, lives but two barrels off; and Ashton, a christian philosopher of our acquaint-

¹ Alluding to Mr. Conway's having been engaged with two French grenadiers at once in the battle of Fontenoy.

² Lady Mary Walpole, youngest daughter of sir R. Walpole, afterwards married to Charles Churchill, esq.

³ Daughter of Charles viscount Townshend, afterwards married to Edward Cornwallis brother to earl Cornwallis, and groom of the bed-chamber to the king.

⁴ In the summer of the year 1746 Mr. Walpole had hired a small house at Windfor.

ance,

ance, lives at the foot of that hill which you mention with a melancholy satisfaction that always attends the reflection. Apropos, here is an ode on the very subject, which I desire you will please to like excessively¹:

* * * * *

You will immediately conclude, out of good breeding, that it is mine, and that it is charming. I shall be much obliged to you for the first thought, but desire you will retain only the second, for it is Mr. Gray's, and not

Your humble servant's,

HOR. WALPOLE.

LETTER XII.

Windfor, October 24, 1746.

WELL, Harry, Scotland is the last place on earth I should have thought of for turning any body poet: but I begin to forgive it half its treasons in favour of your verses, for I suppose you don't think I am the dupe of the highland story that you tell me: the only use I shall make of it is to commend the lines to you, as if they really were a Scotsman's. There is a melancholy harmony in them that is charming, and a delicacy in the thoughts that no Scotchman is capable of, though a *Scotchwoman* might inspire it. I beg both for Cynthia's sake and my own that you would continue your de Tristibus, till I have an opportunity of seeing your muse, and she of rewarding her: Reprens ta musette, berger amoureux! If Cynthia has ever travelled ten miles in fairy land, she must be wondrous content with the person and qualifications of her knight, who in future story will be read of thus: Elmedorus was tall and perfectly well made, his face oval, and features regularly handsome, but not effeminate; his complexion sentimentally brown, with not much colour; his teeth fine, and forehead agreeably low, round which his black hair curled naturally and beautifully. His eyes were black too, but had nothing of fierce or insolent; on the contrary, a certain melancholy swimmingness that described hopeless

¹ Here follows Mr. Gray's Ode on the distant prospect of Eton college.

love,

love, rather than a natural amorous languish. His exploits in war, where he always fought by the side of the renowned Paladine William of England, have endeared his memory to all admirers of true chivalry, as the mournful elegies which he poured out among the desert rocks of Caledonia in honour of the peerless lady and his heart's idol, the incomparable Cynthia, will for ever preserve his name in the flowery annals of poetry.

What a pity it is I was not born in the golden age of Louis the fourteenth, when it was not only the fashion to write folios, but to read them too! Or rather, it is a pity the same fashion don't subsist now, when one need not be at the trouble of invention, nor of turning the whole Roman history into romance, for want of proper heroes. Your campaign in Scotland rolled out and well be-epitheted would make a pompous work, and make one's fortune; at six-pence a number, one should have all the damsels within the liberties for subscribers: whereas now, if one has a mind to be read, one must write metaphysical poems in blank verse, which though I own to be still easier have not half the imagination of romances, and are dull without any agreeable absurdity. Only think of the gravity of this wise age, that have exploded *Cleopatra and Pharamond*, and approve *The Pleasures of the Imagination*, *The Art of preserving Health*, and *Leonidas*!—I beg the age's pardon: it has done approving these poems, and has forgot them.

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

Yours ever,

HOR. WALPOLE.

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

“In trim gardens taking pleasure.”

Mr. Conway was now in Scotland with the duke of Cumberland, to whom he had been appointed aide-du-camp in the year 1743.

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LETTER XIII.

Arlington-street, April 16, 1747.

DEAR HARRY,

WE are all skyrockets and bonfires to-night for your last year's victory¹; but if you have a mind to perpetuate yourselves in the calendar, you must take care to refresh your conquests. I was yesterday out of town, and the very signs as I passed through the villages made me make very quaint reflections on the mortality of fame and popularity. I observed how the duke's head had succeeded almost universally to admiral Vernon's, as his had left but few traces of the duke of Ormond's. I pondered these things in my heart, and said unto myself, Surely all glory is but as a sign²!

You have heard that old Lovat's³ tragedy is over: it has been succeeded by a little farce, containing the humours of the duke of Newcastle and his man Stone. The first event was a squabble between his grace and the sheriff about holding up the head on the scaffold—a custom that has been disused, and which the sheriff would not comply with, as he received no order in writing. Since that the duke has burst ten yards of breeches strings⁴ about the body, which was to be sent into Scotland; but it seems it is customary for vast numbers to rise to attend the most trivial burial. The duke, who is always at least as much frightened at doing right as at doing wrong, was three days before he got courage enough to order the burying in the Tower. I must tell you an excessive good story of George Selwyn: Some women were scolding him for going to see the execution, and asked him, how he could be such a barbarian to see the head cut off? “Nay,” says he, “if that was such a crime, I am sure I have made amends, for I went to see it sewed on again.” When he was at the undertaker's, as soon as they had stitched him together, and were going to put the body into the coffin, George, in my lord chancellor's voice, said, “My lord Lovat, your lordship may rise.” My lady T—— has picked up a little stable-boy in the Tower,

¹ The battle of Culloden.² Soon after Mr. Walpole published a paper in *The World* upon this subject.³ Simon Frazer lord Lovat, beheaded on Tower-hill the 9th of April 1747.⁴ Alluding to a trick of the duke of Newcastle's.

which

which the warders have put upon her for a natural son of lord Kilmar-nock's, and taken him into her own house. You need not tell Mr. T. this from me.

We have had a great and fine day in the house on the second reading the bill for taking away the heritable jurisdictions in Scotland. Lyttelton¹ made the finest oration imaginable; the solicitor general², the new advocate³, and Hume Campbell⁴, particularly the last, spoke excessively well for it, and Oswald⁵ against it. The majority was 233 against 102. Pitt⁶ was not there; the duchess of Queensberry had ordered him to have the gout.

I will give you a commission once more to tell lord Bury⁷ that he has quite dropped me: if I thought he would take me up again, I would write to him; a message would encourage me. Adieu!

Yours ever,

HOR. WALPOLE.

LETTER XIV.

Twickenham, June 8, 1747.

YOU perceive by my date that I am got into a new camp, and have left my tub at Windsor. It is a little play-thing-house that I got out of Mrs. Chenevix's⁸ shop, and is the prettiest bawble you ever saw. It is set in enamelled meadows, with philigrée hedges:

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

Two delightful roads; that you would call dusty, supply me continually with coaches and chaises: barges as solemn as barons of the exchequer move under

¹ Sir George, afterwards created lord Lyttelton.

² William Murray, afterwards earl of Mansfield.

³ William Grant, lord advocate of Scotland.

⁴ Only brother to the earl of Marchmont.

⁵ James Oswald, afterwards a lord of trade, and vice-treasurer of Ireland.

⁶ William Pitt, afterwards earl of Chatham.

⁷ George Keppel, eldest son of William earl of Albemarle, whom he succeeded in the title in 1755. He was now, together with Mr. Conway, aide-du-camp to the duke of Cumberland.

⁸ A famous toy-shop.

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

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

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

I could tell you much election-news, none else; though not being tho-

* Mr. Conway was in Flanders with William duke of Cumberland.

roughly attentive to so important a subject, as to be sure one ought to be, I might now and then mistake, and give you a candidate for Durham in place of one for Southampton, or name the returning-officer instead of the candidate. In general, I believe, it is much as usual—those sold in detail that afterwards will be sold in the representation—the ministers bribing jacobites to choose friends of their own—the name of well-wishers to the present establishment, and patriots, outbidding ministers that they may make the better market of their own patriotism:—in short, all England, under some name or other, is just now to be bought and sold; though, whenever we become posterity and forefathers, we shall be in high repute for wisdom and virtue. My great great grand-children will figure me with a white beard down to my girdle; and Mr. Pitt's will believe him unspotted enough to have walked over nine hundred hot ploughshares, without hurting the sole of his foot. How merry my ghost will be, and shake its ears to hear itself quoted as a person of consummate prudence!—Adieu; dear Harry!

Yours ever,

HOR. WALPOLE.

LETTER XV.

Strawberry-hill, August 29, 1748.

DEAR HARRY,

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

There's general my lady Castlécomer, and general my lady dowager Ferrers! Why do you think I can extract more out of them than you can out of Hawley or Honeywood? Your old women dress, go to the duke's levee, see that the soldiers cock their hats right, sleep after dinner, and soak with their led captains till bed-time, and tell a thousand lies of what they never did in their youth. Change hats for head-clothes, the rounds for visits,

visits, and led captains for toad-eaters, and the life is the very same. In short, these are the people I live in the midst of, though not with; and it is for want of more important histories that I have wrote to you so seldom; not, I give you my word, from the least negligence. My present and sole occupation is planting, in which I have made great progress, and talk very learnedly with the nurserymen, except that now and then a lettuce run to seed overturns all my botany, as I have more than once taken it for a curious West-Indian flowering shrub. Then the deliberation with which trees grow, is extremely inconvenient to my natural impatience. I lament living in so barbarous an age, when we are come to so little perfection in gardening. I am persuaded that a hundred and fifty years hence it will be as common to remove oaks a hundred and fifty years old, as it is now to transplant tulip-roots. I have even begun a treatise or panegyric on the great discoveries made by posterity in all arts and sciences; wherein I shall particularly descant on the great and cheap convenience of making trout-rivers—one of the improvements which Mrs. Kerwood wondered Mr. Hedges would not make at his country-house, but which was not then quite so common as it will be. I shall talk of a secret for roasting a wild boar and a whole pack of hounds alive, without hurting them, so that the whole chace may be brought up to table; and for this secret, the duke of Newcastle's grandson, if he can ever get a son, is to give a hundred thousand pounds. Then the delightfulness of having whole groves of humming-birds, tame tigers taught to fetch and carry, pocket spying-glasses to see all that is doing in China, with a thousand other toys, which we now look upon as impracticable, and which pert posterity would laugh in one's face for staring at, while they are offering rewards for perfecting discoveries, of the principles of which we have not the least conception! If ever this book should come forth, I must expect to have all the learned in arms against me, who measure all knowledge backward: some of them have discovered symptoms of all arts in Homer; and Pineda^{*} had so much faith in the accomplishments of his ancestors, that he believed Adam understood all sciences but politics. But as these great champions for our forefathers are dead, and Boileau not alive to hitch me into a verse with Perrault, I am determined to admire the learning of posterity, especially being convinced that half our

^{*} Pineda was a Spanish jesuit, and a professor of theology. He died 1637, after writing voluminous commentaries upon several books of the holy scriptures, besides an universal history of the church.

present knowledge sprung from discovering the errors of what had formerly been called so. I don't think I shall ever make any great discoveries myself, and therefore shall be content to propose them to my descendents, like my lord Bacon, who, as doctor Shaw says very prettily in his preface to Boyle, *had the art of inventing arts*: or rather like a marquis of Worcester, of whom I have seen a little book which he calls *A century of inventions*, where he has set down a hundred machines to do impossibilities with, and not a single direction how to make the machines themselves.

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

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

Yours ever,

HOR. WALPOLE.

LETTER XVI.

Strawberry-hill, Oct. 6, 1748.

DEAR HARRY,

I AM sorry our wishes clash so much. Besides that I have no natural inclination for the parliament, it will particularly disturb me now in the middle of all my planting; for which reason I have never inquired when it will meet; and cannot help you to guess—but I should think not hastily—for I believe the peace, at least the evacuations are not in so prosperous a way

as

as to be ready to make any figure in the king's speech. But I speak from a distance; it may all be very toward: our ministers enjoy the consciousness of their wisdom, as the good do of their virtue, and take no pains to make it shine before men. In the mean time we have several collateral emoluments from the pacification: all our milliners, tailors, tavern-keepers, and young gentlemen are tiding to France for our improvement and luxury; and as I foresee we shall be told on their return that we have lived in a total state of blindness for these six years, and gone absolutely retrograde to all true taste in every particular, I have already begun to practise walking on my head, and doing every thing the wrong way. Then Charles Frederick has turned all his virtue into fire-works, and, by his influence at the Ordnance, has prepared such a spectacle for the proclamation of the peace as is to surpass all its predecessors of bouncing memory. It is to open with a concert of fifteen hundred hands, and conclude with so many hundred thousand crackers all set to music, that all the men killed in the war are to be awakened with the crash, as if it was the day of judgment, and fall a dancing, like the troops in the Rehearsal. I wish you could see him making squibs of his papillotes, and bronzed over with a patina of gunpowder, and talking himself still hoarser on the superiority that his firework will have over the Roman naumachia.

I am going to dinner with lady Sophia Thomas at Hampton-court, where I was to meet the Cardigans; but I this minute receive a message that the duchess of Montagu¹ is extremely ill, which I am much concerned for on lady Cardigan's² account, whom I grow every day more in love with; you may imagine, not her person, which is far from improved lately: but since I have been here, I have lived much with them; and, as George Montagu³ says, *in all my practice* I never met a better understanding, nor more really estimable qualities; such a dignity in her way of thinking, so little idea of any thing mean, or ridiculous, and such proper contempt for both!

¹ She was mother to lady Cardigan, and daughter to the great duke of Marlborough.

Brudenell earl of Cardigan, afterwards created duke of Montagu.

² Lady Mary Montagu, third daughter of John duke of Montagu and wife of George

³ Nephew to the earl of Halifax, and elder brother of colonel, afterwards sir Charles Montagu. K. B.

Adieu!

Adieu! I must go dress for dinner, and you perceive that I wish I had, but have nothing to tell you.

Yours ever,

HOR. WALPOLE.

LETTER XVII.

Strawberry-hill, May 5, 1753.

THOUGH my letter bears a country date, I am only a passenger here, just come to overlook my workmen, and repose myself upon some shavings, after the fatigues of the season. You know balls and masquerades always abound as the weather begins to be too hot for them, and this has been quite a spring-tide of diversion. Not that I am so abandoned as to have partaken of all; I neither made the Newmarket campaign under the duke¹, nor danced at any ball, nor *looked well* at any masquerade: I begin to submit to my years, and amuse myself—only just as much as I like. Indeed, when parties and politics are at an end, an Englishman may be allowed not to be always grave and out of humour. His royal highness has won as many hearts at Newmarket as he lost in Scotland; he played deep, and handsomely; received every body at his table with the greatest good humour, and permitted the familiarities of the place with ease and sense.

There have been balls at the duchess of Norfolk's, at Holland-house, and lord Granville's, and a subscription masquerade: the dresses were not very fine, not much invention, nor any very absurd. I find I am telling you extreme trifles; but you desired me to write, and there literally happens nothing of greater moment. If I can fill out a sheet even in this way, I will; for at Sligo² perhaps I may appear a journalist of consequence.

There is a madame de Mezieres arrived from Paris, who has said a

¹ William duke of Cumberland.

² Mr. Conway was then with his regiment quartered at Sligo in Ireland.

thousand impertinent things to my lady Albemarle, on my lord's not letting her come to Paris*. I should not repeat this to you, only to introduce George Selwyn's account of this woman, who, he says, is mother to the princefs of Montauban, grandmother to madame de Brionne, sister to general Oglethorpe, and was laundress to the duchefs of Portsmouth.

Sir Charles Williams, never very happy at panegyric, has made a distich on the queen of Hungary, which I send you for the curiosity, not the merit of it:

O regina orbis prima & pulcherrima, ridens
Es Venus, incedens Juno, Minerva loquens.

It is infinitely admired at Vienna, but baron Munchausen has received a translation of it into German in six verses, which are still more applauded.

There is another volume published of lord Bolinbroke's; it contains his famous letter to sir William Windham, with an admirable description of the pretender and his court, and a very poor justification of his own treachery to that party; a flimsy unfinished state of the nation, written at the end of his life, and the common-place tautology of an old politician, who lives out of the world and writes from newspapers; and a superficial letter to Mr. Pope, as an introduction to his Essays, which are printed, but not yet published.

What shall I say to you more? You see how I am forced to tack paragraphs together, without any connection or consequence! Shall I tell you one more idle story, and will you just recollect that you once concerned yourself enough about the heroine of it, to excuse my repeating such a piece of tittle-tattle? This heroine is lady ———, the hero is—not entirely of royal blood; at least I have never heard that Lodowie the toothdrawer was in any manner descended from the house of Bourbon. Don't be alarmed: this plebeian operator is not in the catalogue of your successors. How the lady was the aggressor is not known; 'tis only conjectured that French politeness and French interestedness could never have gone such

* Lord Albemarle was then ambassador at Paris.

lengths without mighty provocation. The first instance of the tooth-drawer's ungentle behaviour was on hearing it said that lady — was to have her four girls drawn by Liotard; which was wondered at, as his price is so great—"Oh!" said Lodomie, "*chacune paie pour la sienne*." Soon after this insult, there was some dispute about payments, and tooth-powder, and divers messages passed. At last the lady wrote a card, to say she did not understand such impertinent answers being given to her chairman by an *arracheur de dents*. The angry little gentleman, with as much intrepidity as if he had drawn out all her teeth, tore the card in five flits, and returned it with this astonishing sentence, "I return you your impertinent card, and desire you will pay me what you owe me." All I know more is, that the tooth-drawer still lives; and so do many lords and gentlemen, formerly thought the slaves of the offended fair one's will and passions, and among others, to his great shame,

Your sincere friend,

HOR. WALPOLE.

LETTER XVIII.

Strawberry-hill, May 24, 1753.

IT is well you are married! How would my lady A—— have liked to be asked in a parish-church for three Sundays running? I really believe she would have worn her weeds for ever, rather than have passed through so impudent a ceremony! What do *you* think?—But you will want to know the interpretation of this preamble. Why, there is a new bill, which, under the notion of preventing clandestine marriages, has made such a general rummage and reform in the office of matrimony, that every Strephon and Chloe, every dowager and her H——, will have as many impediments and formalities to undergo as a treaty of peace. Lord Bath invented this bill, but had drawn it so ill, that the chancellor was forced to draw a new one—

Philip Yorke earl of Hardwicke.

F 2

and

and then grew so fond of his own creature, that he has crammed it down the throats of both houses—though they gave many a gulp before they could swallow it. The duke of Bedford attacked it first with great spirit and mastery, but had little support, though the duke of Newcastle did not vote. The lawyers were all ordered to nurse it through our house; but, except the poor attorney general¹, who is nurse indeed to all intents and purpose, and did amply gossip over it, not one of them said a word. Nugent² shone extremely in opposition to the bill, and, though every now and then on the precipice of absurdity, kept clear of it, with great humour and wit and argument, and was unanswered—Yet we were beat. Last Monday it came into the committee: Charles Townshend acted a very good speech with great cleverness, and drew a picture of his own story and his father's tyranny, with at least as much parts as modesty. Mr. Fox³ mumbled the chancellor and his lawyers, and pinned the plan of the bill upon a pamphlet he had found of Dr. Gally's, where the doctor, recommending the French scheme of matrimony, says, *It was found that fathers were too apt to forgive.* The gospel, I thought, said Mr. Fox, enjoined forgiveness; but pious Dr. Gally thinks fathers are too apt to forgive. Mr. Pelham, extremely in his opinion against the bill, and in his inclination too, was forced to rivet it, and, without speaking one word for it, taught the house how to vote for it; and it was carried against the chairman's leaving the chair by 165 to 84.

This is all the news I know, or at least was all when I came out of town; for I left the tinkering of the bill, and came hither last Tuesday to my workmen. I flatter myself I shall get into tolerable order to receive my lady A—— and you at your return from Sligo, from whence I have received your letter, and where I hope you have had my first. I say nothing of the exile of the parliament of Paris, for I know no more than you will see in the public papers; only, as we are going to choose a new parliament, we could not do better than choose the exiles: we could scarce choose braver or honest men. I say as little of mademoiselle Murphy⁴, for I conclude you hear nothing but her health drank in whisky. Don't all the

¹ Sir Dudley Ryder.

² Robert Nugent, afterwards created lord Clare and earl Nugent.

³ Henry Fox, afterwards created lord Holland.

⁴ An Irish woman who was for a short time mistress to Louis XV.

naked

naked Irish flatter themselves with preferment, and claim a relation with her? Miss Chudleigh says there is some sense in belonging to a king who turns off an old mistress when he has got a new one.

Arlington-street, May 29.

I AM come to town for a day or two, and find that the marriage-bill has not only lasted till now in the committee, but has produced, or at least disclosed, extreme heats. Mr. Fox and Mr. Pelham have had very high words on every clause, and the former has renewed his attacks on the chancellor under the name of Dr. Gally. Yesterday on the nullity clause they sat till half an hour after three in the morning, having just then had a division on adjournment, which was rejected by the ministry by above 80 to 70. The speaker², who had spoken well against the clause, was so misrepresented by the attorney general, that there was danger of a skirmishing between the great wig and the coif, the former having given a flat lye to the latter. Mr. Fox, I am told, outdid himself for spirit, and severity on the chancellor and the lawyers. I say I am told; for I was content with having been beat twice, and did not attend. The heats between the two ministers were far from cooling by the length of the debate. Adieu! You did little expect in these times, and at this season, to have heard such a parliamentary history! The bill is not near finished; Mr. Fox has declared he will dispute every inch of ground. I hope he won't be banished to Pontoise². I shall write to you no more, so pray return. I hear most favourable accounts of my lady A——.

Yours ever,

HOR. WALPOLE.

¹ Arthur Onslow.

² The parliament of Paris having espoused the cause of religious liberty, and apprehended several priests who by the authority of the arch-

bishop of Paris and other prelates had refused the sacraments to those who would not subscribe to the bull Unigenitus, were banished by the king, Louis XV. to Pontoise. E.

LETTER

LETTER XIX.

Strawberry-hill, Saturday July 6, 1754.

YOUR letter certainly stopped to drink somewhere by the way, I suppose with the hearty hostess at the Windmill; for, though written on Wednesday, it arrived here but this morning: it could not have travelled more deliberately in the speaker's body-coach. I am concerned, because, your fishmonger not being arrived, I fear you have staid for my answer. The fish¹ are apprized that they are to *ride* over to Park-place, and are ready booted and spurred; and the moment their pad arrives, they shall set forth. I would accompany them on a pillion, if I were not waiting for lady Mary², who has desired to bring her poor little sick girl here for a few days to try the air. You know how courteous a knight I am to distressed virgins of five years old, and that my castle-gates are always open to them³. You will, I am sure, accept this excuse for some days; and as soon as ever my hospitality is completed, I will be ready to obey your summons, though you should send a water-pot for me. I am in no fear of not finding you in perfect verdure; for the sun, I believe, is gone a great way off to some races or other, where his horses are to run for a king's plate: we have not heard of him in this neighbourhood. Adieu!

Yours ever,

HOR. WALPOLE.

¹ Gold fish.² Lady Mary Churchill.³ Mr. Conway's only daughter had been left

with Mr. Walpole at Strawberry-hill, when he and lady Ailesbury went to Ireland with his regiment.

LETTER XX.

Strawberry-hill, Sept. 23, 1755.

DEAR HARRY,

—NEVER make me excuses for a letter that tells me so many agreeable things as your last; that you are got well to Dublin; that you are all well, and that you have accommodated all your politics to your satisfaction—and I may be allowed to say, greatly to your credit. What could you tell me that would please me so much?

When I have indulged a little my joy for your success and honour, it is natural to consider the circumstances you have told me; and you will easily excuse me if I am not quite as much satisfied with the conduct of your late antagonists, as I am with yours. You have tranquillized a nation, have repaired your master's honour, and secured the peace of your administration;—but what shall one say to the speaker, Mr. Malone and the others? Don't they confess that they have gone the greatest lengths, and risked the safety of their country on a mere personal pique? If they did not contend for profit, like our patriots (and you don't tell me that they have made any lucrative stipulations), yet it is plain that their ambition had been wounded, and that they resented their power being crossed. But I, who am whig to the backbone, indeed in the strictest sense of the word, feel hurt in a tenderer point, and which you, who are a minister, must not allow me: I am offended at their agreeing to an address that avows such deference for prerogative, and that is to protest so deeply against having intended to attack it. However rebel this may sound at your court, my Gothic spirit is hurt; I do not love such loyal expressions from a parliament. I do not so much consider myself writing to Dublin castle, as from Strawberry castle, where you know how I love to enjoy my liberty. I give myself the airs, in my nutshell, of an old baron, and am tempted almost to say with an old earl of Norfolk, who was a very free speaker at least, if he was not an excellent poet,

Mr. Conway was now secretary of state to the marquis of Hartington, lord lieutenant of Ireland.

When

When I am in my castle of Bungey,
 Situate upon the river Waveney,
 I ne care for the king of Cockney.

I have been roving about Hampshire, have been at Winchester and Southampton and twenty places, and have been but one day in London—consequently know as little news as if I had been shut up in Bungey castle. Rumours there are of great bickerings and uneasinesses; but I don't believe there will be any bloodshed of places, except Legge's¹, which nobody seems willing to take—I mean as a sinecure. His majesty of Cockney is returned exceedingly well, but grown a little out of humour at finding that we are not so much pleased with all the Russians and Hessians that he has hired to recover the Ohio. We are an ungrateful people!

Make a great many compliments for me to my lady A——. I own I am in pain about Missy². As my lady is a little coquette herself, and loves crowds and admiration and a court life, it will be very difficult for her to keep a strict eye upon Missy. The Irish are very forward and bold:—I say no more; but it would hurt you both extremely to have her marry herself idly; and I think my lord chancellor has not extended his matrimonial foresight to Ireland. However, I have much confidence in Mrs. Elizabeth Jones³: I am sure, when they were here, she would never let Missy whisper with a boy that was old enough to speak.

Adieu! As the winter advances, and plots thicken, I will write you letters that shall have a little more in them than this. In the mean time I am going to the Bath, not for my health, you know I never am ill, but for my amusement. I never was there, and at present there are several of my acquaintance. The French academy have chosen my lord Chesterfield, and he has written them a letter of thanks that is the finest composition in the world: indeed, I was told so by those who have not seen it; but they would have told me so if they had seen it, whether it was the finest or the worst; suffices it to be his.

Yours ever,

HOR. WALPOLE.

¹ Henry Bilson Legge, second son of William Earl of Dartmouth; he was chancellor of the exchequer.

² Anne Seymour Conway, only child of Mr. Conway and lady Ailesbury, then an infant.

³ Miss Conway's nurse.

LETTER XXI.

Arlington-street, Nov. 15, 1755.

I PROMISED you histories, and there are many people that take care I should have it in my power to keep my word. To begin in order, I should tell you, that there were 289 members at the Cockpit meeting, the greatest number ever known there: but Mr. Pitt, who is too great a general to regard numbers, especially when there was a probability of no great harmony between the commanders, did not however postpone giving battle. The engagement was not more decisive than long: we sat till within a quarter of five in the morning; an uninterrupted serious debate from before two. Lord Hillsborough moved the address, and very injudiciously supposed an opposition. Martin, Legge's secretary, moved to omit in the address the indirect approbation of the treaties, and the direct assurances of protection to Hanover. These questions were at length divided; and against Pitt's inclination, the last, which was the least unpopular, was first decided by a majority of 311 against 105. Many then went away; and on the next division the numbers were 290 to 89. These are the general outlines. The detail of the speeches, which were very long, and some extremely fine, it would be impossible to give you in any compass. On the side of the opposition (which I must tell you by the way, though it set out decently, seem extremely resolved) the speakers (I name them in their order) were: the 3d Colebrook, Martin, Northey, sir Richard Lyttelton, Doddington, George Grenville, sir F. Dashwood, Beckford, sir G. Lee, Legge, Potter, Dr. Hay, Geo. Townshend, lord Egmont, Pitt, and admiral Vernon: on the other side were, lord Hillsborough, O'Brien, young Stanhope, Hamilton, Alstone, Ellis, lord Barrington, sir G. Lyttelton, Nugent, Murray, sir T. Robinson, my uncle, and Mr. Fox. As short as I can, I will give you an account of them. Sir Richard, Beckford, Potter, G. Townshend, the admiral of course, Martin, and Stanhope were very bad: Doddington was well, but very *acceding*: Dr. Hay by no means answers his reputation; it was easy, but not striking. Lord Egmont was doubling, absurd, and obscure. Sir G. Lee and lord Barrington were much disliked; I don't think, so deservedly. Poor A—— was mad, and spoke ten times to order. Sir George, our friend, was dull and timid. Legge was the latter. Nu-

Sir George Lyttelton.

gent roared, and sir Thomas rumbled. Mr. Fox was extremely fatigued, and did little. Geo. Grenville's was very fine and much beyond himself, and very pathetic. The attorney general¹ in the same style, and very artful, was still finer. Then there was a young Mr. Hamilton² who spoke for the first time, and was at once perfection: his speech was set, and full of antithesis, but those antitheses were full of argument: indeed his speech was the most argumentative of the whole day: and he broke through the regularity of his own composition, answered other people, and fell into his own track again with the greatest ease. His figure is advantageous, his voice strong and clear, his manner spirited, and the whole with the ease of an established speaker. You will ask, what could be beyond this? Nothing, but what was beyond what ever was, and that was Pitt! He spoke at past one, for an hour and thirty-five minutes: there was more humour, wit, vivacity, finer language, more boldness, in short, more astonishing perfections than even you, who are used to him, can conceive. He was not abusive, yet very attacking on all sides: he ridiculed my lord Hillsborough, crushed poor sir George, terrified the attorney, lashed my lord Granville, painted my lord of Newcastle, attacked Mr. Fox, and even hinted up to the duke³. A few of the Scotch were in the minority, and most of the princess's people, not all: all the duke of Bedford's in the majority. He himself spoke in the other house for the address (though professing uncertainty about the treaties⁴ themselves), against my lord Temple and lord Halifax, without a division. My lord Talbot was neuter; he and I were of a party: my opinion was strongly with the opposition; I could not vote for the treaties; I would not vote against Mr. Fox. It is ridiculous perhaps, at the end of such a debate, to give an account of my own silence; and as it is of very little consequence what I did, so it is very unlike me to justify myself. You know how much I hate *professions* of integrity; and my pride is generally too great to care what the generality of people say of me: but your heart is good enough to make me wish you should think well of mine.

You will want to know what is to be the fate of the ministry in opposition: but that I can't tell you. I don't believe they have determined what

¹ William Murray, afterwards lord Mansfield.

³ The duke of Cumberland.

² William Gerard Hamilton. It was this speech which, not being followed, as was naturally expected, by repeated exhibitions of similar eloquence, acquired him the name of *single-speech* Hamilton. E.

⁴ Treaties of subsidy with the landgrave of Hesse and the empress of Russia for the defence of Hanover.

to do, more than oppose, nor that it is determined what to do with them. Though it is clear that it is very humiliating to leave them in place, you may conceive several reasons why it is not eligible to dismiss them. You know where you are, how easy it is to buy an opposition who have not places; but tell us what to do with an opposition that has places? If you say, Turn them out; I answer, That is not the way to quiet any opposition, or a ministry so constituted as ours at present. Adieu!

Yours ever,

HOR. WALPOLE.

LETTER XXII.

Arlington-street, January 24, 1756.

OH! sir, I shall take care how I ever ask favours of you again! It was with great reluctance that I brought myself to ask this: you took no notice of my request; and I flattered myself that I was punished for having applied to you so much against my inclination. Just as I grew confirmed in the pride of being mortified, I hear that you have outgone my application, and in the kindest manner in the world have given the young man a pair of colours. It would have been unpleasant enough to be refused; but to obtain more than one asked is the most provoking thing in the world! I was prepared to be very grateful if you had done just what I desired; but I declare I have no thanks ready for a work of supererogation. If there ever was a saint that went to heaven for mere gratitude, which I am persuaded is a much more uncommon qualification than martyrdom, I must draw upon his heard of merit to acquit myself. You will at least get thus much by this charming manner of obliging me: I look upon myself as doubly obliged: and when it cost me so much to ask one favour, and I find myself in debt for two, I shall scarce run in tick for a third.

What adds to my vexation is, that I wrote to you but the night before last. Unless I could return your kindness with equal grace, it would not be very decent to imitate you by beginning to take no notice of it; and therefore you must away with this letter upon the back of the former.

We had yesterday some history in the house: Beckford produced an accusation in form against admiral K—— on his way to an impeachment. Governor Verres was a puny culprit in comparison! Jamaica indeed has not quite so many costly temples and ivory statues, &c. as Sicily had: but what K—— could not or had not a propensity to commit in rapine and petty larceny, he has made up in tyranny. The papers are granted, and we are all going to turn jurymen. The rest of the day was spent in a kind of avoidupoise war. Our friend sir George Lyttelton opened the budget; well enough in general, but was strangely bewildered in the figures; he stumbled over millions, and dwelt pompously upon farthings. Pitt attacked him pretty warmly on mortgaging the sinking fund; sir George kept up his spirit, and returned the attack on eloquence. It was entertaining enough, but ended in high compliments; and the division was 231 to 56.

Your friend lady ——, not to let the town quite lapse into politics, has entertained it with a new scene. She was to other night at the play with her court; viz. miss ——, lord Barnard, monsieur St. Simon, and her favourite footman Richard, whom, under pretence of keeping places, she always keeps in her box the whole time to see the play at his ease. Mr. Stanley, colonel Vernon, and Mr. Vaughan arrived at the very end of the farce, and could find no room, but a row and half in lady ——'s box. Richard denied them entrance very impertinently. Mr. Stanley took him by the hair of his head, dragged him into the passage, and thrashed him. The heroine was outrageous—the heroes not at all so. She sent Richard to Fielding for a warrant—He would not grant it—and so it ended—And so must I, for here is company. Adieu!

Yours ever,

HOR. WALPOLE.

My letter would have been *much cleverer*, but George Montague has been chattering by me the whole time, and insists on my making you his compliments.

LETTER

LETTER XXIII.

Arlington-street, Feb. 12, 1756.

I WILL not write to my lady A. to-night, nor pretend to answer the prettiest letter in the world, when I am out of spirits. I am very unhappy about poor Mr. Mann¹, who I fear is in a deep consumption: the doctors do not give him over, and the symptoms are certainly a little mended this week; but you know how fallacious that distemper is, and how unwise it would be to trust to it! As he is at Richmond, I pass a great deal of my time out of town to be near him, and so may have missed some news; but I will tell you all I know.

The house of commons is dwindled into a very dialogue between Pitt and Fox—one even begins to want admiral Vernon again for variety. Sometimes it is a little piquant; in which though Pitt has attacked, Fox has generally had the better. These three or four last days we have been solely upon the Pennsylvanian regiment, bickering and but once dividing 165 to 57. We are got but past the first reading yet. We want the French to put a little vivacity into us. The duke of Newcastle has expected them every hour: he was terribly alarmed t'other night; on his table he found a mysterious card with only these words, *Charles is very well, and is expected in England every day*. It was plainly some secret friend that advertised him of the pretender's approaching arrival. He called up all the servants, ransacked the whole house to know who had been in his dressing-room:—at last it came out to be an answer from the duchess of Queensberry to the duchess of Newcastle about lord Charles Douglas. Don't it put you in mind of my lord treasurer Portland in Clarendon, *Remember Cæsar!*

The French have promised letters of noblesse to whoever fits out even a little privateer. I could not help a melancholy smile when my lady A. talked of coming over soon. I fear major-general *you* will scarce be permitted to return to your plough at Park-place, when we grudge every man that is left at the plough. Between the French and the earthquakes², you

¹ Galfridus Mann, twin brother to sir Horace Mann, the envoy at Florence: he died the end of this year.

² The dreadful earthquake which had taken place at Lisbon towards the end of the preceding year.

have

have no notion how good we are grown: nobody makes a suit of clothes now but of sackcloth turned up with ashes. The fast was kept so devoutly, that Dick Edgumbe¹, finding a very lean hazard at White's, said with a sigh, "Lord, how the times are degenerated! Formerly a fast would have brought every body hither; now it keeps every body away!" A few nights before, two men walking up the Strand, one said to t'other, "Look how red the sky is! Well, thank God! there is to be no masquerade!"

My lord A. does not keep a fast; he is going to marry one of the plump C—s:—they call him the noble lord upon the woolfack.

The duchess of Norfolk has opened her new house: all the earth was there last Tuesday. You would have thought there had been a comet, every body was gaping in the air and treading on one another's toes. In short, you never saw such a scene of magnificence and taste. The tapestry, the embroidered bed, the illumination, the glasses, the lightness and novelty of the ornaments, and the ceilings, are delightful. She gives three Tuesdays, would you could be at one! Somebody asked my lord Rockingham afterwards at White's, what was there? He said, "Oh! there was all the company afraid of the duchess, and the duke afraid of all the company."—It was not a bad picture.

My lady A. flatters me extremely about my World, but it has brought me into a peck of troubles. In short, the good-natured town have been pleased to lend me a meaning, and call my lord Bute, *sir Eustace*². I need not say how ill the story tallies to what they apply it; but I do vow to you, that so far from once entering into my imagination, my only apprehension was, that I should be suspected of flattery for the compliment to the princess in the former part. It is the more cruel; because you know it is just the thing in the world on which one must not defend one's self. If I might, I can prove that the paper was writ last Easter, long before this history was ever mentioned, and flung by, because I did not like it: I mentioned it one night to my lady Hervey, which was the occasion of its being printed.

I beg you will tell my lady A. that I am sorry she could not discover any

¹ Richard Edgumbe second lord Edgumbe.

² Sir Eustace Draxbridgecourt. See World, N° 160, 5th vol.

wit in Mrs. Huffley's making a septleva. I know I never was so vain of any wit in my life as in winning a thousand leva and two five hundred levass.

You would laugh if you saw in the midst of what trumpery I am writing. Two porters have just brought home my purchases from Mrs. Kennon the midwife's sale. Brobdignag combs, old broken pots, pans, and pipkins, a horn of scraped oyster-shells, scymitars, Turkish pipes, Chinese baskets, &c. &c. My servants think my head is turned; I hope not: it is all to be called the personal estate and moveables of my great great grandmother, and to be repositied at Strawberry. I believe you think my letter as strange a miscellany as my purchases.

Yours ever,

HOR. WALPOLE.

P. S. I forgot, that I was outbid for Oliver Cromwell's nightcap.

LETTER XXIV.

Arlington-street, March 4, 1756.

DEAR HARRY,

I HAVE received so kind and so long a letter from you, and so kind too because so long, that I feel I shall remain much in your debt, at least for length. I won't allow that I am in your debt for warmth of friendship. I have nothing worth telling you: we are hitherto conquered only in threat: for my part, I have so little expectation of an invasion, that I have not buried a single enamel, nor bought a pane of painted glass the less: of the two panics in fashion, the French and the earthquake, I have not even made my option yet. The opposition get ground as little as either: Mr. Pitt talks by Shrewsbury clock, and is grown almost as little heard as that is at Westminster. We have had full eight days on the Pennsylvanian regiment. The young Hamilton has spoken and shone again; but nothing is luminous compared with Charles Townsend:—he drops down dead in a fit, has a resurrection, thunders in the capitol, confounds the treasury-bench, laughs at his

own party, is laid up the next day, and overwhelms the duchess and the good women that go to nurse him! His brother's militia-bill does not come on till next week: in the mean time he adorns the shutters, walls, and napkins of every tavern in Pall-mall with caricatures of the duke¹ and sir George Lyttelton, the duke of Newcastle and Mr. Fox. Your friend Legge has distinguished himself exceedingly on the supplies and taxes, and retains all the dignity of chancellor of the exchequer. I think I never heard so complete a scene of ignorance as yesterday on the new duties! Except Legge, you would not have thought there was a man in the house had learned troy-weight: Murray quibbled—at Hume Campbell the house groaned! Pitt and Fox were lamentable; poor sir George never knew prices from duties, nor drawbacks from premiums! The three taxes proposed were on plate, on bricks and tiles, on cards and dice. The earthquake has made us so good, that the ministry might have burned the latter in Smithfield if they had pleased. The bricks they were forced to give up, and consented graciously to accept 70,000*l.* on ale-houses, instead of 30,000*l.* on bricks. They had nearly been forced to extend the duty on plate beyond 10*l.* carrying the restriction by a majority of only two.

An embargo is laid on the shipping, to get sailors. The young court lords were going to raise troops of light-horse, but my lord Gower (I suppose by direction of the duke) proposed to the king, that they should rather employ their personal interest to recruit the army; which scheme takes place, and, as — said in the house, they are all turning recruiting sergeants. But notwithstanding we so much expect a storm from France, I am told that in France they think much more of their own internal storms than of us. Madame Pompadour wears devotion, whether forced or artful is not certain: the disputes between the king and the parliament run very high, and the duke of Orleans and the prince of Conti have set themselves at the head of the latter. Old N. came fuddled to the opera last week, and jostled an ancient lord Irwin, and then called him fool for being in his way: they were going to fight; but my lord Talbot, professing that he did not care if they were both hanged, advised them to go back and not expose themselves. You will stare perhaps at my calling N. *old*: it is not merely to distinguish him from his son; but he is such a champion and such a lover, that it is impossible not to laugh at him as if he was a Methuselah! He is en affaire

¹ The duke of Cumberland.

reglée with lady ——: at a supper there a few nights ago of two-and-twenty people, they were talking of his going to —— to direct some alterations: Mrs. N. in the softest infantine voice called out, "My lady ——, don't let him do any thing out of doors; but you will find him delightful within!"

I think I have nothing else to tell you but a bon-mot or two; with that sort of news I think I take care to supply you duly. I send you constantly the best that London affords. Dick Edgumbe has said that his last child was born on *All-gamester's-day*; Twelfth-night.

This chapter shall conclude with an epigram; the thought was George Selwyn's, who you know serves all the epigram-makers in town with wit. It is on miss Chudleigh crying in the drawing-room on the death of her mother:

What filial piety! what mournful grace,
For a lost parent, sits on Chudleigh's face!
Fair virgin, weep no more, your anguish smother!
You in this town can never want a mother.

I have told poor Mr. Mann how kind you are to him: indeed I have been exceedingly frightened and troubled for him, and thought him in immediate danger. He is certainly much mended, though I still fear a consumption for him: he has not been able to move from Richmond this whole winter: I never fail to visit him twice or thrice a week. I heartily pity the fatigue and dulness of your life; how can I flatter you with pretending to believe it will end soon: I hope you will not be forced to gain as much reputation in the camp as you have in the cabinet!—You see I must finish.

Yours ever,

HOR. WALPOLE.

LETTER XXV.

Strawberry-hill, April 16, 1756.

YOU wrong me very much in thinking I omit writing because I don't hear from you as often as you have a mind I should: you are kinder to me in that respect than I have reason, considering your numerous occupations, to expect: the real and whole truth is, that I have had nothing to tell you; for I could not tire either you or myself with all the details relating to this foolish road-bill¹, which has engrossed the whole attention of every body lately. I have entered into it less than any body. What will you say when you are told that proxies have been sent for to Scotland? that my lord Harrington has been dragged into the house of lords from his coffin, and lord Arran carried thither to take the oaths, who I believe has not appeared there since the Revolution? In short, it has become quite a trial for power; and though the dukes of Grafton and Bedford have lent their names and their vehemence, you will guess what has been the engine behind the curtain.

The French are so obliging as to wait till we have done with these important squabbles: the house of commons takes care too not to draw off the attention of the nation. The militia-bill has passed through that solitude, but I hear will be stopped in the house of lords. I have lived lately in a round of great disagreeable suppers, which you know are always called, for my lady Yarmouth, as if the poor woman loved nothing but cramming: I suppose it will so much become the etiquette, that in the next reign there will be nothing but suppers for my lord B—. I am now come hither to keep my Newmarket, but the weather is cold and damp: it is uncertain whether the duke makes that campaign, or against the French. As the road-bill extinguished the violence about the two operas of next year, and they made the invasion forgot, and the invasion the earthquake, I foresee—and I go almost upon as sure grounds as prophets that take care to let the event precede the prediction—I foresee that the Hanoverians will swallow

¹ The Paddington or New Road, which the duke of Bedford opposed as making a dust behind Bedford-house, and from some intended buildings being likely to interrupt his prospect. The duke of Grafton warmly espoused the other side of the question.



Col. John Campbell afterwards Duke of Argyll.

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