

disappointed at having offended one whom I ought by so many ties to try to please, and whom, if I ever meant any thing, I had meant to please? I intended you should see how much I despise wit, if I have any, and that you should know my heart was void of vanity and full of gratitude. They are very few I desire should know so much; but my passions act too promptly and too naturally, as you saw, when I am with those I really love, to be capable of any disguise. Forgive me, madam, this tedious detail; but of all people living I cannot bear that you should have a doubt about me.

LETTER VI.

Strawberry-hill, October 1, 1762.

MADAM,

I HOPE you are as free from any complaint, as I am sure you are full of joy. Nobody partakes more of your satisfaction for Mr. Hervey's 'safe return'; and now he is safe, I trust you enjoy his glory: for this is a wicked age; you are one of those un-Lacedæmonian mothers, that are not content unless your children come off with all their limbs. A Spartan countess would not have had the confidence of my lady Albemarle to appear in the drawing-room without at least one of her sons being knocked on the head¹. However, pray, madam, make my compliments to her; one must conform to the times, and congratulate people for being happy, if they like it. I know one matron, however, with whom I may condole; who, I dare swear, is miserable that she has not one of her acquaintance in affliction, and to whose door she might drive with all her sympathising greyhounds to inquire after her, and then to Hawkins's, and then to Graham's, and then cry over a ball of rags that she is picking, and be so sorry for poor Mrs. Such an one, who has lost an only son!

When your ladyship has hung up all your trophies, I will come and make you a visit. There is another ingredient I hope not quite disagreeable that

¹ General William Hervey, youngest son of Havannah. The eldest, lord Albemarle, commanded the land forces; the second, afterwards lord Keppel, was then captain of a man

² From the Havannah.

³ Lady Anne Lenox, countess of Albemarle, of war; and the third was colonel of a regiment. E.

Mr.

Mr. Hervey has brought with him, un-Lacedæmonian too, but admitted among the other vices of our system. If besides glory and riches they have brought us peace, I will make a bonfire myself, though it should be in the mayoralty of that virtuous citizen Mr. Beckford. Adieu, madam!

Your ladyship's most faithful humble servant,

HOR. WALPOLE.

LETTER VII.

Strawberry-hill, October 31, 1762.

MADAM,

IT is too late, I fear, to attempt acknowledging the honour madame de Chabot¹ does me; and yet, if she is not gone, I would fain not appear ungrateful. I do not know where she lives, or I would not take the liberty again of making your ladyship my penny-post. If she is gone, you will throw my note into the fire.

Pray, madam, blow your nose with a piece of flannel—not that I believe it will do you the least good—but; as all wise folks think it becomes them to recommend nursing and flannelling the gout, I imitate them; and I don't know any other way of lapping it up, when it appears in the person of a running cold. I will make it a visit on Tuesday next, and shall hope to find it tolerably vented.

I am, madam, your ladyship's most faithful servant,

HOR. WALPOLE.

P. S. You must tell me all the news, when I arrive, for I know nothing of what is passing. I have only seen in the papers, that the cock and hen doves² that went to Paris not having been able to make peace, there is a third dove³ just flown thither to help them.

¹ Lady Mary Chabot, daughter to the earl of Stafford.

² The duke and duchess of Bedford.

³ Mr. Hans Stanley.

LETTER VIII.

November 10, 1764.

SOH! madam, you expect to be thanked, because you have done a very obliging thing! But I won't thank you, and I won't be obliged. It is very hard one can't come into your house and commend any thing, but you must recollect it and send it after one! I will never dine in your house again; and when I do, I will like nothing; and when I do, I will commend nothing; and when I do, you shan't remember it.—You are very grateful indeed to providence that gave you so good a memory, to stuff it with nothing but bills of fare of what every body likes to eat and drink! I wonder you are not ashamed—I wonder you are not ashamed! Do you think there is no such thing as gluttony of the memory?—You a christian! A pretty account you will be able to give of yourself!—Your fine folks in France may call this friendship and attention, perhaps—but sure, if I was to go to the devil, it should be for thinking of nothing but myself, not of others from morning to night. I would send back your temptations; but, as I will not be obliged to you for them, verily I shall retain them to punish you, ingratitude being a proper chastisement for sinful friendliness.

Thine in the spirit,

PILCHARD WHITFIELD.

LETTER IX.

Strawberry-hill, June 11, 1765.

I AM almost as much ashamed, madam, to plead the true cause of my faults towards your ladyship, as to have been guilty of any neglect. It is scandalous at my age to have been carried backwards and forwards to balls and suppers and parties by very young people, as I was all last week. My resolutions of growing old and staid, are admirable: I wake with a sober plan, and intend to pass the day with my friends—then comes the duke of R——, and hurries me down to Whitehall to dinner—then the duchess of G—— sends for me to loo in Upper Grosvenor-street—before I can

* Lady Hervey, it is supposed, had sent Mr. Walpole some potted pilchards. E.

get thither, I am begged to step to Kensington to give Mrs. Anne Pitt my opinion about a bow window—after the loo, I am to march back to Whitehall to supper—and after that, am to walk with miss Pelham on the terrafs till two in the morning, because it is moonlight and her chair is not come. All this does not help my morning laziness; and by the time I have breakfasted, fed my birds and my squirrels and dressed, there is an auction ready.—In short, madam, this was my life last week, and is I think every week, with the addition of forty episodes.—Yet, ridiculous as it is, I send it your ladyship, because I had rather you should laugh at me than be angry. I cannot offend you in intention, but I fear my sins of omission are equal to many a good christian's. Pray forgive me. I really will begin to be between forty and fifty by the time I am fourscore: and I truly believe I shall bring my resolutions within compass; for I have not chalked out any particular business that will take me above forty years more; so that, if I do not get acquainted with the grandchildren of all the present age, I shall lead a quiet sober life yet before I die.

As Mr. Bateman's is the kingdom of flowers, I must not wish to send you any; else, madam, I could load waggons with acacias, honeysuckles, and seringas. Madame de Juliac, who dined here yesterday, owned that the climate and odours equalled Languedoc, I fear the want of rain made the turf put her in mind of it too. Monsieur de Caraman entered into the Gothic spirit of the place, and really seemed pleased: which was more than I expected; for, between you and me, madam, our friends the French have seldom eyes for any thing they have not been used to see all their lives.

I beg my warmest compliments to your host and lord Ilchester. I wish your ladyship all pleasure and health, and am, notwithstanding my idleness,

Your most faithful and devoted humble servant,

HOR. WALPOLE.

LETTER X.

Arlington-street, September 3, 1765.

THE trouble your ladyship has given yourself so immediately, makes me, as I always am, ashamed of putting you to any. There is no persuading you to oblige moderately. Do you know, madam, that I shall tremble to deliver the letters you have been so good as to send me? If you have said half so much of me, as you are so partial as to think of me, I shall be undone. Limited as I know myself, and hampered in bad French, how shall I keep up to any character at all? Madame d'Aiguillon and madame Geoffrin will never believe that I am the true messenger; but will conclude that I have picked Mr. Walpole's portmanteau's pocket. I wish only to present myself to them as one devoted to your ladyship: that character I am sure I can support in any language, and it is the one to which they would pay the most regard—Well! I don't care, madam—it is your reputation is at stake more than mine; and if they find me a simpleton that don't know how to express myself, it will all fall upon you at last. If your ladyship will risk that, I will, if you please, thank you for a letter to madame d'Egmont too: I long to know your friends, though at the hazard of their knowing yours. Would I were a *jolly* old man, to match, at least, in that respect, your *jolly* old woman! —But, alas! I am nothing but a poor worn-out-rag, and fear, when I come to Paris, that I shall be forced to pretend that I have had the gout in my understanding. My spirits, such as they are, will not bear translating; and I don't know whether I shall not find it the wisest part I can take to fling myself into geometry or commerce, or agriculture, which the French now esteem, don't understand, and think we do. They took George Selwyn for a poet, and a judge of planting and dancing; why may not I pass for a learned man and a philosopher? If the worst comes to the worst, I will admire Clarissa and Sir Charles Grandison; and declare that I have not a friend in the world that is not like my lord Edward Bonston, though I never knew a character like it in my days, and hope I never shall; nor do I think Rousseau need to have gone so far out of his way to paint a disagreeable Englishman.

If you think, madam, this folly is not very favourable to the country I am going to; recollect, that all I object to them is their quitting their own agree-

The duchesse d'Aiguillon.

able

able style, to take up the worst of ours. Heaven knows, we are unpleasing enough: but in the first place they don't understand us; and in the next, if they did, so much the worse for them. What have they gained by leaving Moliere, Boileau; Corneille, Racine, La Rochefoucault, Crébillon, Marivaux, Voltaire, &c. No nation can be another nation. We have been clumsily copying them for these hundred years, and are not we grown wonderfully like them? Come, madam, you like what I like of them; I am going thither, and you have no aversion to going thither—but own the truth; had not we both rather go thither fourscore years ago? Had you rather be acquainted with the charming madame Scarron, or the canting madame de Maintenon? with Louis XIV. when the Montespan governed him, or when Pere le Tellier? I am very glad when folks go to heaven, though it is after another body's fashion; but I wish to converse with them when they are themselves. I abominate a conqueror; but I do not think he makes the world much compensation, by cutting the throats of his protestant subjects to atone for the massacres caused by his ambition.

The result of all this dissertation, madam, for I don't know how to call it a letter, is, that I shall look for Paris in the midst of Paris, and shall think more of the French that have been than the French that are, except of a few of your friends and mine. Those I know, I admire and honour, and I am sure I will trust to your ladyship's taste for the others; and if they had no other merit, I can but like those that will talk to me of you. They will find more sentiment in me on that chapter, than they can miss parts; and I flatter myself that the one will atone for the other.

I am, madam, your ladyship's

Most obliged and most obedient humble servant,

HOR. WALPOLE.

LETTER XI.

Paris, September 14, 1765.

I AM but two days old here, madam, and I doubt I wish I was really so, and had my life to begin, to live it here. You see how just I am, and ready to

to make amende honorable to your ladyship. Yet I have seen very little. My lady Hertford has cut me to pieces, and thrown me into a caldron with taylors, periwig-makers, snuff-box-wrights, milliners, &c. which really took up but little time; and I am come out quite new, with every thing but youth. The journey recovered me with magic expedition. My strength, if mine could ever be called strength, is returned; and the gout going off in a minuet step. I will say nothing of my spirits, which are indecently juvenile, and not less improper for my age than for the country where I am; which, if you will give me leave to say it, has a thought too much gravity. I don't venture to laugh or talk nonsense, but in English.

Madame Geoffrin came to town but last night, and is not visible on Sundays; but I hope to deliver your ladyship's letter and paquet to-morrow. Mesdames d'Aiguillon, d'Egmont, and Chabot, and the duc de Nivernois are all in the country. Madame de Boufflers is at L'Isle Adam, whither my lady Hertford is gone to-night to sup, for the first time, being no longer chained down to the incivility of an embassadess. She returns after supper; an irregularity that frightens me, who have not yet got rid of all my barbarisms. There is one, alas! I never shall get over—the dirt of this country: it is melancholy after the purity of Strawberry! The narrowness of the streets, trees clipped to resemble brooms, and planted on pedestals of chalk, and a few other points, do not edify me. The French opera, which I have heard to-night, disgusted me as much as ever; and the more for being followed by the Devin de Village, which shows that they can sing without cracking the drum of one's ear. The scenes and dances are delightful: the Italian comedy charming. Then I am in love with treillage and fountains, and will prove it at Strawberry. Chantilly is so exactly what it was when I saw it above twenty years ago, that I recollected the very position of monsieur le Duc's chair and the gallery. The latter gave me the first idea of mine; but, presumption apart, mine is a thousand times prettier. I gave my lord Herbert's compliments to the statue of his friend the constable¹; and, waiting some time for the concierge, I called out, *Où est Vatel*?²

In short, madam, being as tired as one can be of one's own country, I

¹ The constable de Montmorency.—See Life of lord Herbert of Chesham, page 67. which Louis XIV. made to the grand Condé at Chantilly, put an end to his existence because he feared the sea-fish would not arrive in time

² The maître d'hotel, who during the visit for one day's repast! E.

don't

don't say whether that is much or little, I find myself wonderfully disposed to like this—Indeed I wish I could wash it. Madame de Guerchy is all goodness to me; but that is not new. I have already been prevented by great civilities from madame de Bentheim and my old friend madame de Mirepoix; but am not likely to see the latter much, who is grown a most particular favourite of the king, and seldom from him. The dauphin is ill, and thought in a very bad way. I hope he will live, lest the theatres should be shut up. Your ladyship knows I never trouble my head about royalties, farther than it affects my own interest.—In truth, the way that princes affect my interest is not the common way.

I have not yet tapped the chapter of baubles, being desirous of making my revenues maintain me here as long as possible. It will be time enough to return to my parliament when I want money.

Mr. Hume, that is, *the Mode*, asked much about your ladyship. I have seen madame de Monaco, and think her very handsome, and extremely pleasing. The younger madame d'Egmont, I hear, disputes the palm with her; and madame de Brionne is not left without partisans. The nymphs of the theatres are *laides à faire peur*, which at my age is a piece of luck, like going into a shop of curiosities, and finding nothing to tempt one to throw away one's money.

There are several English here, whether I will or not. I certainly did not come for them, and shall connect with them as little as possible. The few I value, I hope sometimes to hear of. Your ladyship guesses how far that wish extends. Consider too, madam, that one of my unworthinesses is washed and done away, by the confession I made in the beginning of my letter.

I am, madam, your ladyship's

Most faithful and devoted humble servant,

HOR. WALPOLE.

LETTER

LETTER XII.

Paris, October 3, 1765.

STILL I have seen neither madame d'Egmont nor the duchesse d'Aiguillon, who are in the country; but the latter comes to Paris to-morrow. Madame Chabot I called on last night. She was not at home, but the hotel de Carnavalet¹ was; and I stopped on purpose to say an ave Maria before it. It is a very singular building, not at all in the French style, and looks like an ex voto raised to her honour by some of her foreign votaries. I don't think her honoured half enough in her own country. I shall burn a little incense before your cardinal's heart², madam, *à votre intention*.

I have been with madame Geoffrin several times, and think she has one of the best understandings I ever met, and more knowledge of the world. I may be charmed with the French, but your ladyship must not expect that they will fall in love with me. Without affecting to lower myself, the disadvantage of speaking a language worse than any idiot one meets, is insurmountable: the silliest Frenchman is eloquent to me, and leaves me embarrassed and obscure. I could name twenty other reasons, if this one was not sufficient. As it is, my own defects are the sole cause of my not liking Paris entirely: the constraint I am under from not being perfectly master of their language, and from being so much in the dark, as one necessarily must be, on half the subjects of their conversation, prevents my enjoying that ease for which their society is calculated. I am much amused, but not comfortable.

The duc de Nivernois is extremely good to me; he enquired much after your ladyship. So does colonel Drumgold. The latter complains; but both of them, especially the Duc, seem better than when in England. I met the duchesse de Coëssé this evening at madame Geoffrin's. She is pretty, with a great resemblance to her father, lively and good-humoured; not genteel.

Yesterday I went through all my presentations at Versailles. 'Tis very convenient to gobble up a whole royal family in an hour's time, instead of

¹ Madame de Sevigné's residence in Paris.² The cardinal de Richlieu's heart at the Sorbonne.

being

being sacrificed one week at Leicester-house, another in Grosvenor-street, a third in Cavendish-square, &c. &c. &c. *La Reine* is *le plus grand roi du monde*¹, and talked much to me, and would have said more if I would have let her; but I was awkward, and shrunk back into the crowd. None of the rest spoke to me. The king is still much handsomer than his pictures, and has great sweetness in his countenance, instead of that farouche look which they give him. The mesdames are not beauties, and yet have something Bourbon in their faces. The dauphiness I approve the least of all: with nothing good-humoured in her countenance, she has a look and accent that made me dread lest I should be invited to a private party at lod with her². The poor dauphin is ghastly, and perishing before one's eyes.

Fortune bestowed upon me a much more curious sight than a set of princes; the wild beast of the Gevaudan, which is killed, and actually in the queen's anti-chamber. It is a thoughtless than a leviathan and the beast in the Revelations, and has not half so many wings and eyes and talons as I believe they have, or will have some time or other; this being possessed but of two eyes, four feet, and no wings at all. It is as like a wolf as a commissary in the late war, except, notwithstanding all the stories, that it has not devoured near so many persons. In short, madam, now it is dead and come, a wolf it certainly was, and not more above the common size than Mrs. C—— is. It has left a dowager and four young princes.

Mr. Stanley, who I hope will trouble himself with this, has been most exceedingly kind and obliging to me. I wish that, instead of my being so much in your ladyship's debt, you were a little in mine, and then I would beg you to thank him for me. Well, but as it is, why should not you, madam? He will be charmed to be so paid, and you will not dislike to please him. In short, I would fain have him know my gratitude; and it is hearing it in the most agreeable way, if expressed by your ladyship.

I am, madam, your most obliged and obedient humble servant,

HOR. WALPOLE.

¹ Madame de Sevigné thus expresses herself of Louis XIV. after his having taken much notice of her at Versailles. See her Letters. E.

² He means, that she had a resemblance to the late princess Amelia. E.

LETTER XIII.

Paris, October 13, 1765.

HOW are the mighty fallen! Yes, yes, madam, I am as like the duc de Richelieu as two peas; but then they are two old withered grey peas. Do you remember the fable of Cupid and Death, and what a piece of work they made with huffling their arrows together? This is just my case: love might shoot at me, but it was with a gouty arrow. I have had a relapse in both feet, and kept my bed six days: but the fit seems to be going off; my heart can already go alone, and my feet promise themselves the mighty luxury of a cloth shoe in two or three days. Mr. and Mrs. Ramfay¹, who are here, and are, alas! to carry this, have been of great comfort to me, and have brought their delightful little daughter, who is as quick as Ariel. Mr. Ramfay could want no assistance from me: what do we both exist upon here, madam, but your bounty and charity? When did you ever leave one of your friends in want of another? Madame Geoffrin came and sat two hours last night by my bed-side: I could have sworn it had been my lady Hervey, she was so good to me. It was with so much sense, information, instruction, and correction! The manner of the latter charms me. I never saw any body in my days that catches one's faults and vanities and impositions so quick, that explains them to one so clearly, and convinces one so easily. I never liked to be set right before! You cannot imagine how I taste it! I make her both my confessor and director, and begin to think I shall be a reasonable creature at last, which I had never intended to be. The next time I see her, I believe I shall say, "Oh! Common Sense, sit down: I have been thinking so and so; is not it 'absurd?'"—for t'other sense and wisdom, I never liked them; I shall now hate them for her sake. If it was worth her while, I assure your ladyship she might govern me like a child.

The duc de Nivernois too is astonishingly good to me. In short, madam, I am going down hill, but the sun sets pleasingly. Your two other friends have been in Paris; but I was confined, and could not wait on them. I passed a whole evening with lady Mary Chabot most agreeably: she charged me over and over with a thousand compliments to your ladyship. For fights, alas! and pilgrimages, they have been cut short! I had destined the fine

¹ Allan Ramfay, the painter.

days of October to excursions ; but you know, madam, what it is to reckon without one's host, the gout. It makes such a coward of me, that I shall be afraid almost of entering a church. I have lost too the Dumenil in Phedre and Merope, two of her principal parts, but I hope not irrecoverably.

Thank you, madam, for the Taliacotian extract : it diverted me much. It is true, in general I neither see nor desire to see our wretched political trash : I am sick of it up to the fountain-head. It was my principal motive for coming hither ; and had long been my determination, the first moment I should be at liberty, to abandon it all. I have acted from no views of interest ; I have shown I did not ; I have not disgraced myself—and I must be free. My comfort is, that, if I am blamed, it will be by *all* parties. A little peace of mind for the rest of my days is all I ask, to balance the gout.

I have writ to madame de Guerchy about your orange-flower water ; and I sent your ladyship two little French pieces that I hope you received. The uncomfortable posture in which I write will excuse my saying any more ; but it is no excuse against my trying to do any thing to please one, who always forgets pain when her friends are in question.

Your ladyship's faithful humble servant,

HOR. WALPOLE.

LETTER XIV.

Paris, Nov. 21, 1765.

MADAME GEOFFRIN has given me a parcel for your ladyship with two knotting-bags, which I will send by the first opportunity that seems safe : but I hear of nothing but difficulties ; and shall, I believe, be saved from ruin myself, from not being able to convey any purchases into England. Thus I shall have made an almost fruitless journey to France, if I can neither fling away my money, nor preserve my health. At present, indeed, the gout is gone. I have had my house swept, and made as clean as I could—no very easy matter in this country ; but I live in dread of seven worse spirits entering in. The terror I am under of a new fit has kept me from almost seeing any thing. The damps and fogs are full as great and frequent here as in London ; but there is a little frost to-day, and I shall begin my devo-

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tions

tions to-morrow. It is not being fashionable to visit churches; but I am *de la vilaine cour*; and I beg your ladyship to believe that I have no youthful pretensions. The duchess of Richmond tells me that they have made twenty foolish stories about me in England; and say, that my person is admired here. I cannot help what is said without foundation; but the French have neither lost their eyes, nor I my senses. A skeleton I was born—skeleton I am—and death will have no trouble in making me one. I have not made any alteration in my dress, and certainly did not study it in England. Had I had any such ridiculous thoughts, the gout is too sincere a monitor to leave one under any such error. Pray, madam, tell lord and lady Holland what I say: they have heard these idle tales; and they know so many of my follies, that I should be sorry they believed more of me than are true. If all arose from madame Geoffrin calling me in joke *le nouveau Richelieu*, I give it under my hand that I resemble him in nothing but wrinkles.

Your ladyship is much in the right to forbear reading politics. I never look at the political letters that come hither in the Chronicles. I was sick to death of them before I set out; and perhaps should not have stirred from home, if I had not been sick of them and all they relate to. If any body could write ballads and epigrams *à la bonne heure*! But dull personal abuse in prose is tiresome indeed—A serious invective against a pickpocket, or written by a pickpocket, who has so little to do as to read?

The dauphin continues languishing to his exit, and keeps every body at Fontainebleau. There is a little bustle now about the parliament of Bretagne; but you may believe, madam, that when I was tired of the squabbles at London, I did not propose to interest myself in quarrels at Hull or Liverpool. Indeed if the *duc de Chaulnes*¹ commanded at Rennes, or *Pomenars*² was sent to prison, I might have a little curiosity. You wrong me in thinking I quoted a text from my Saint³ ludicrously. On the contrary, I am so true a bigot, that, if she could have talked nonsense, I should, like any other bigot, believe she was inspired.

The season, and the emptiness of Paris, prevent any thing new from appearing. All I can send your ladyship is a very pretty logogriphe, made by the

¹ Governor of Brittany in the time of madame de Sevigné.

² See madame de Sevigné's Letters.

³ Madame de Sevigné.

old blind madame du Deffand, whom perhaps you know—certainly must have heard of. I sup there very often; and she gave me this last night—you must guess it.

Quoique je forme un corps, je ne suis qu'une idée ;
Plus ma beauté vieillit, plus elle est décidée :
Il faut, pour me trouver, ignorer d'où je viens :
Je tiens tout de lui, qui réduit tout à rien *.

Lady Mary Chabot inquires often after your ladyship. Your other two friends are not yet returned to Paris ; but I have had several obliging messages from the duchesse d'Aiguillon.

It pleased me extremely, madam, to find no mention of your own gout in your letter. I always apprehend it for you, as you try its temper to the utmost, especially by staying late in the country, which you know it hates. Lord ! it has broken my spirit so, that I believe it might make me leave Strawberry at a minute's warning. It has forbid me tea, and been obeyed ; and I thought that one of the most difficult points to carry with me. Do, let us be well, madam, and have no gouty notes to compare !

I am your ladyship's most faithful humble servant,

HOR. WALPOLE.

LETTER XV.

Paris, November 28, 1765.

WHAT, another letter ! Yes, yes, madam ; though I must whip and spur, I must try to make my thanks keep up with your favours : for any other return, you have quite distanced me. This is to acknowledge the receipt of the duchess d'Aiguillon—you may set what sum you please against the debt. She is delightful, and has much the most of a woman of

* The word is *Noblesse*.

quality of any I have seen, and more cheerfulness too; for, to show your ladyship that I am sincere, that my head is not turned, and that I retain some of my prejudices still, I avow that gaiety, whatever it was formerly, is no longer the growth of this country; and I will own too that Paris can produce women of quality that I should not call women of fashion: I will not use so ungentle a term as vulgar; but for their indelicacy, I could call it still worse. Yet with these faults, and the latter is an enormous one in my English eyes, many of the women are exceedingly agreeable—I cannot say so much for the men—always excepting the duc de Nivernois. You would be entertained, for a quarter of an hour, with his duchess—she is the duke of Newcastle properly placed, that is, chattering incessantly out of devotion, and making interest against the devil that she may dispose of bishoprics in the next world.

Madame d'Egmont is expected to-day, which will run me again into arrears. I don't know how it is—Yes, I do: it is natural to impose on bounty, and I am like the rest of the world: I am going to abuse your goodness, *because* I know nobody's so great. Besides being the best friend in the world, you are the best *commissionnaire* in the world, madam: you understand from friendship to scissars. The inclosed model was trusted to me, to have two pair made as well as possible—but I really blush at my impertinence. However, all the trouble I mean to give your ladyship is, to send your groom of the chambers to bespeak them; and a pair besides of the common size for a lady, as well made as possible, for the honour of England's steel.

The two-knotting-bags from madame Geoffrin went away by a clergyman two days ago; and I concerted all the tricks the doctor and I could think of, to elude the vigilance of the custom-house officers.

With this, I send your ladyship the *Orpheline leguée*: its intended name was the *Anglomanie*; my only reason for sending it; for it has little merit, and had as slender success, being acted but five times. However, there is nothing else new.

The dauphin continues in the same languishing and hopeless state, but
with

with great coolness and firmness. Somebody gave him t'other day *The preparation for death*: he said, "C'est la nouvelle du jour."

I have nothing more to say, but what I have always to say, madam, from the beginning of my letters to the end, that I am

Your ladyship's most obliged and most devoted humble servant,

HOR. WALPOLE.

November 28, three o'clock.

Oh, madam, madam, madam, what do you think I have found since I wrote my letter this morning? I am out of my wits! Never was any thing like my luck, it never forsakes me! I have found count Grammont's picture! I believe I shall see company upon it, certainly keep the day holy. I went to the Grand Augustins to see the pictures of the reception of the knights of the holy ghost: they carried me into a chamber full of their portraits; I was looking for Bassompierre; my *laquais de louage* opened a door, and said, Here are more. One of the first that struck me was *Philibert comte de Grammont*! It is old, not at all handsome, but has a great deal of finesse in the countenance. I shall think of nothing now but having it copied.—If I had seen or done nothing else, I should be content with my journey hither.

LETTER XVI.

Paris, January 2, 1766.

WHEN I came to Paris, madam, I did not know that by New-Year's Day I should find myself in Siberia; at least as cold. There have not been two good days together since the middle of October.—However, I do not complain, as I am both well and well pleased, though I wish for a little of your sultry English weather, all French as I am. I have entirely left off dinners, and lead the life I always liked, of lying late in bed, and sitting

* The title of a French book of devotion.

up late. I am told of nothing but how contradictory this is to your ladyship's orders; but as I shall have dull dinners and triste evenings enough when I return to England, all your kindness cannot persuade me to sacrifice my pleasures here too. Many of my opinions are fantastic; perhaps this is one, that nothing produces gout like doing any thing one dislikes. I believe the gout, like a near relation, always visits one when one has some other plague. Your ladyship's dependence on the waters of Sunning-hill is, I hope, better founded; but in the mean time my system is full as pleasant.

Madame d'Aiguillon's goodness to me does not abate, nor madame Geoffrin's. I have seen but little of madame d'Egmont, who seems very good, and is universally in esteem. She is now in great affliction, having lost suddenly monsieur Pignatelli, the minister at Parma, whom she bred up, and whom she and her family had generously destined for her grand-daughter, an immense heiress. It was very delicate and touching what madame d'Egmont said to her daughter-in-law on this occasion:—"Vous voyez, ma chere, combien j'aime mes enfans d'adoption!" This daughter-in-law is delightfully pretty, and civil, and gay, and conversible, though not a regular beauty like madame de Monaco.

The bitterness of the frost deters me, madam, from all fights: I console myself with good company, and still more, with being absent from bad. Negative as this satisfaction is, it is incredibly great, to live in a town like this, and to be sure every day of not meeting one face one hates! I scarce know a positive pleasure equal to it.

Your ladyship and lord Holland shall laugh at me as much as you please for my dread of being thought *charming*; yet I shall not deny my panic, as surely nothing is so formidable as to have one's limbs on crutches and one's understanding in leading-strings. The prince of Conti laughed at me t'other day on the same account. I was complaining to the old blind charming madame du Deffand, that she preferred Mr. Crawford to me: "What," said the prince, "does not she love you?" "No, sir," I replied, "she likes me no better than if she had seen me."

Mr. Hume carries this letter and Rousseau to England. I wish the former may not repent having engaged with the latter, who contradicts and quarrels

quarrels with all mankind, in order to obtain their admiration. I think both his means and his end below such a genius. If I had talents like his, I should despise any suffrage below my own standard, and should blush to owe any part of my fame to singularities and affectations. But great parts seem like high towers erected on high mountains, the more exposed to every wind, and readier to tumble. Charles Townshend is blown round the compass; Rousseau insists that the north and south blow at the same time; and Voltaire demolishes the Bible to erect fatalism in its stead:—So compatible are the greatest abilities and greatest absurdities!

Madame d'Aiguillon gave me the inclosed letter for your ladyship. I wish I had any thing else to send you; but there are no new books, and the theatres are shut up for the dauphin's death, who, I believe, is the greatest loss they have had since Harry IV.

I am your ladyship's most faithful and obedient humble servant,

HOR. WALPOLE.

LETTER, XVII.

Paris, Saturday night, Jan. 11, 1766.

I HAVE just now, madam, received the scissars, by general Vernon, from Mr. Conway's office. Unluckily I had not received your ladyship's notification of them sooner, for want of a conveyance, and wrote to my servant to inquire of yours how they had been sent; which I fear may have added a little trouble to all you had been so good as to take, and for which I give you ten thousand thanks: but your ladyship is so exact and so friendly, that it almost discourages rather than encourages me. I cannot bring myself to think that ten thousand obligations are new letters of credit.

I have seen Mrs. F——, and her husband may be as happy as he will: I cannot help pitying him. She told me it is *colder* here than in England; and in truth I believe so: I blow the fire between every paragraph, and am quite cut off from all fights. The agreeableness of the evenings makes me some amends. I am just going to sup at madame d'Aiguillon's with

madame d'Egmont, and I hope madame de Brionne, whom I have not yet seen; but she is not very well, and it is doubtful. My last new passion, and I think the strongest, is the duchess de Choiseul. Her face is pretty, not very pretty; her person a little model. Cheerful, modest, full of attentions, with the happiest propriety of expression, and greatest quickness of reason and judgment, you would take her for the queen of an allegory: one dreads its finishing, as much as a lover, if she would admit one, would wish it should finish.—In short, madam, though *you* are the last person that will believe it, France is so agreeable, and England so much the reverse, that I don't know when I shall return. The civilities, the kindnesses, the honours I receive, are so many and so great, that I am continually forced to put myself in mind how little I am entitled to them, and how many of them I owe to your ladyship. I shall talk you to death at my return—Shall you bear to hear me tell you a thousand times over, that madame Geoffrin is the most rational woman in the world, and madame d'Aiguillon the most animated and most obliging?—I think you will—Your ladyship *can* endure the panegyric of your friends. If you should grow impatient to hear them commended, you have nothing to do but to come over. The best air in the world is that where one is pleased: Sunning waters are nothing to it. The frost is so hard, it is impossible to have the gout; and though the fountain of youth is not here, the fountain of age is, which comes to just the same thing. One is never old here, or never thought so. One makes verses as if one was but seventeen—for example:—

ON MADAME DE FORCALQUIER SPEAKING ENGLISH.

Soft sounds that steal from fair Forcalquier's lips,
Like bee that murmuring the jâsmin sips!
Are these my native accents? None so sweet,
So gracious, yet my ravish'd ears did meet.
O pow'r of beauty! thy enchanting look
Can melodize each note in nature's book.
The roughest wrath of Russians, when they swear,
Pronounc'd by thee, flows soft as Indian air;
And dulcet breath, attemper'd by thine eyes,
Gives British prose o'er Tuscan verse the prize.

You

You must not look, madam, for much meaning in these lines; they were intended only to run smoothly, and to be easily comprehended by the fair scholar who is learning our language. Still less must you show them: they are not calculated for the meridian of London, where you know I dread being represented as a shepherd. Pray let them think that I am wrapped up in Canada bills, and have all the pamphlets sent over about the colonies and the stamp-act.

I am very sorry for the accounts your ladyship gives me of lord Holland. He talks, I am told, of going to Naples: one would do a great deal for health, but I question if I could buy it at that expence. If Paris would answer his purpose, I should not wonder if he came hither—but to live with Italians must be woeful, and would ipso facto make me ill. It is true I am a bad judge: I never tasted illness but the gout, which, tormenting as it is, I prefer to all other distempers: one knows the fit will end, will leave one quite well, and dispenses with the nonsense of physicians—and absurdity is more painful than pain: at least the pain of the gout never takes away my spirits, which the other does.

I have never heard from Mr. Chute this century, but am glad the gout is rather his excuse than the cause, and that it lies only in his pen. I am in too good humour to quarrel with any body—and consequently cannot be in haste to see England, where at least one is sure of being quarrelled with. If they vex me, I will come back hither directly: and I shall have the satisfaction of knowing that your ladyship will not blame me.

Your most faithful humble servant,

HOR. WALPOLE.

LETTER XVIII.

Paris, February 3, 1766.

I HAD the honour of writing to your ladyship on the 4th and 12th of last month, which I only mention, because the latter went by the post, which I have found is not always a safe conveyance.

I am sorry to inform you, madam, that you will not see madame Geoffrin
 Z z z 2 this

this year, as she goes to Poland in May. The king has invited her, promised her an apartment exactly in her own way, and that she shall see nobody but whom she chooses to see. This will not surprise you, madam; but what I shall add, will; though I must beg your ladyship not to mention it even to her, as it is an absolute secret here, as she does not know that I know it, and as it was trusted to me by a friend of yours. In short, there are thoughts of sending her with a public character, or at least with a commission from hence—a very extraordinary honour, and I think never bestowed but on the marechale de Guébriant. As the Dussions have been talked of, and as madame Geoffrin has enemies, its being known might prevent it; and it might make her uneasy that it was known. I should have told it to no mortal, but your ladyship; but I could not resist giving you such a pleasure. In your answer, madam, I need not warn you not to specify what I have told you.

My favour here continues; and favour never displeases. To me too it is a novelty, and I naturally love curiosities. However, I must be looking towards home, and have perhaps only been treasuring up regret. At worst, I have filled my mind with a new set of ideas; some resource to a man who was heartily tired of his old ones. When I tell your ladyship that I play at whist, and can bear even French music, you will not wonder at any change in me. Yet I am far from pretending to like every body of every thing I see. There are some chapters on which I still fear we shall not agree; but I will do your ladyship the justice to own, that you have never said a syllable too much in behalf of the friends to whom you was so good as to recommend me. Madame d'Egmont, whom I have mentioned but little, is one of the best women in the world, and, though not at all striking at first, gains upon one much. Colonel Gordon, with this letter, brings you, madam, some more seeds from her. I have a box of pomatums for you from madame de Boufflers, which shall go by the next conveyance that offers. As he waits for my parcel, I can only repeat how much I am

Your ladyship's most obliged and faithful humble servant,

HOR. WALPOLE.

¹ Sent with the character of ambassador has been misinformed with respect to madame from Louis XIII. to the king of Poland. Mr. Geoffrin; no such plan having ever been really Walpole, in a subsequent letter, owns having in agitation. E.

LETTER XIX.

Paris, March 10, 1766.

THERE are two points, madam, on which I must write to your ladyship, though I have been confined these three or four days with an inflammation in my eyes. My watchings and revellings had, I doubt, heated my blood, and prepared it to receive a stroke of cold, which in truth was amply administered. We were two-and-twenty at the marechale du Luxembourg's, and supped in a temple rather than in a hall. It is vaulted at top with gods and goddesses, and paved with marble; but the god of fire was not of the number.—However, as this is neither of my points, I shall say no more of it.

I send your ladyship lady Albemarle's box, which madame Geoffrin brought to me herself yesterday. I think it very neat and charming, and it exceeds the commission but by a guinea and half. It is lined with wood between the two golds, as the price and necessary size would not admit metal enough without, to leave it of any solidity.

The other point I am indeed ashamed to mention so late. I am more guilty than even about the scissars. Lord Hertford sent me word a fortnight ago, that an ensigncy was vacant, to which he should recommend Mr. Fitzgerald. I forgot both to thank him and to acquaint your ladyship, who probably know it without my communication. I have certainly lost my memory! This is so idle and young, that I begin to fear I have acquired something of *the fashionable man*, which I so much dreaded. Is it to England then that I must return to recover friendship and attention? I literally wrote to lord Hertford, and forgot to thank him. Sure I did not use to be so abominable! I cannot account for it; I am as black as ink, and must turn—*methodist*, to fancy that repentance can wash me white again. No, I will not; for then I may sin again, and trust to the same nostrum.

I had the honour of sending your ladyship the funeral sermon on the dauphin, and a tract to laugh at sermons:

Your hane and antidote are both before you.

The

The first is by the archbishop of Toulouse¹, who is thought the first man of the clergy. It has some sense, no pathetic, no eloquence, and, I think, clearly no belief in his own doctrine. The latter is by the abbé Coyer, written lively, upon a single idea; and though I agree upon the inutility of the remedy he rejects, I have no better opinion of that he would substitute. Preaching has not failed, from the beginning of the world till to-day, because inadequate to the disease, but because the disease is incurable. If one preached to lions and tigers, would it cure them of thirsting for blood, and sucking it when they have an opportunity? No; but when they are whelped in the Tower, and both caressed and beaten, do they turn out a jot more tame when they are grown up? So far from it, all the kindness in the world, all the attention, cannot make even a monkey (that is no beast of prey) remember a pair of scissars or an ensigny.

Adieu, madam! and pray don't forgive me, till I have forgiven myself. I dare not close my letter with any professions; for could you believe them in one that you had so much reason to think

Your most obedient humble servant,

HOR. WALPOLE?

LETTER XX.

Strawberry-hill, June 28, 1766.

IT is consonant to your ladyship's long-experienced goodness, to remove my error as soon as you could. In fact, the same post that brought madame d'Aiguillon's letter to you, brought me a confession from madame du Deffand of her guilt². I am not the less obliged to your ladyship for *informing* against the true criminal. It is well for me however that I hesitated, and did not, as monsieur de Guerchy pressed me to do, constitute myself prisoner. What a ridiculous vain-glorious figure I should have

¹ Brionne de Lomenie.

² Madame du Deffand had sent Mr. Walpole a snuff-box, in which was a portrait of madame de Sevigné, accompanied by a letter written in

her name from the Elysian-fields, and addressed to Mr. Walpole, who did not at first suspect madame du Deffand as the author, but thought both the present and letter had come from the duchess of Choiseul. E.

made at Versailles, with a laboured letter and my present ! I still shudder when I think of it, and have scolded madame du Deffand black and blue. However, I feel very comfortable ; and though it will be imputed to my own vanity, that I showed the box as madame de Choiseul's present, I resign the glory, and submit to the shame with great satisfaction. I have no pain in receiving this present from madame du Deffand, and must own have great pleasure that nobody but she could write that most charming of all letters'. Did not lord Chesterfield think it so, madam ? I doubt our friend Mr. Hume must allow that not only madame de Boufflers, but Voltaire himself, could not have written so well. When I give up madame de Sevigné herself, I think his sacrifices will be trifling.

Pray, madam, continue your waters ; and, if possible, wash away that original sin, the gout. What would one give for a little rainbow to tell one, one should never have it again ! Well, but then one should have a burning fever—for I think the greatest comfort that good-natured divines give us is, that we are not to be drowned any more, in order that we may be burnt. It will not at least be this summer ; here is nothing but hay-cocks swimming round me. If it should cease raining by Monday se'nnight, I think of dining with your ladyship at Old Windsor ; and if Mr. Bateman presses me mightily, I may take a bed there.

* The letter accompanying the portrait, and written in the name of madame de Sevigné.— It was as follows :

“ Des Champs Elisées,

Point de succession de tems, point de date.

“ Je connois votre folle passion pour moi, votre enthousiasme pour mes lettres, votre veneration pour les lieux que j'ai habités : j'ai appris le culte que vous m'y avez rendu : j'en suis si penetrée, que j'ai sollicité & obtenu la permission de mes Souverains de vous venir trouver pour ne vous quitter jamais. J'abandonne sans regret ces lieux fortunés ; je vous prefere à tous ses habitans : jouissez du plaisir de me voir ; ne vous plaignez point que ce ne soit qu'en peinture ; c'est la seule existence que puissent avoir les ombres. J'ai été maîtresse de choisir l'age où je voulois reparoitre ; j'ai pris celuy de vingt cinq

ans pour m'assurer d'être toujours pour vous un objet agréable. Ne craignez aucun changement ; c'est un singulier avantage des ombres ; quoique legeres, elles sont immuables.

“ J'ai pris la plus petite figure qu'il m'a été possible, pour n'être jamais séparée de vous. Je veux vous accompagner par tout, sur terre, sur mer, à la ville, aux champs ; mais ce que j'exige de vous, c'est de me mener incessamment en France, de me faire revoir ma patrie, la ville de Paris, et d'y choisir pour votre habitation le fauxbourg St. Germain ; c'étoit là qu'habitoient mes meilleures amies, c'est le séjour des vôtres ; vous me ferez faire connoissance avec elles : je serai bien aise de juger si elles sont dignes de vous, & d'être les rivales de

RABUTIN DE SEVIGNE.”

As I have a waste of paper before me, and nothing more to say, I have a mind to fill it with a translation of a tale that I found lately in the *Dictionnaire d'Anecdotes*, taken from a German author. The novelty of it struck me, and I put it into verse—ill-enough; but, as the old duchess of Rutland used to say of a lie, it will do for news into the country.

From Time's usurping power, I see,
Not Acheron itself is free.
His wasting hand my subjects feel,
Grow old, and wrinkle though in hell.
Decrepit is Alecto grown,
Megæra worn to skin and bone;
And t'other beldam is so old,
She has not spirits left to scold.
Go, Hermes, bid my brother Jove
Send three new furies from above.
To Mercury thus Pluto said:
The winged deity obey'd.

It was about the self-same season,
That Juno, with as little reason,
Rung for her abigail; and you know,
Iris is chamber-maid to Juno.
Iris, d'ye hear? Mind what I say,
I want three maids—inquire—No, stay!
Three virgins—Yes, unspotted all;
No characters equivocal.
Go find me three, whose manners pure
Can envy's sharpest tooth endure.
The goddesses curtsy'd, and retir'd;
From London to Pekin inquir'd;
Search'd huts and palaces—in vain;
And, tir'd, to heaven came back again.
Alone! are you returned alone?
How wicked must the world be grown!

What

What has my profligate been doing ?
 On earth has he been spreading ruin ?
 Come, tell me all——Fair Iris sigh'd,
 And thus disconsolate replied :
 'Tis true, O queen ! three maids I found,
 The like are not on christian ground ;
 So chaste, severe, immaculate,
 The very name of man they hate :
 These—but, alas ! I came too late ;
 For Hermes had been there before ;
 In triumph off to Pluto bore
 Three sisters, whom yourself would own
 The true supports of virtue's throne.
 To Pluto !—Mercy ! cried the queen,
 What can my brother Pluto mean ?
 Poor man ! he dotes, or mad he sure is !
 What can he want them for ?—Three furies.

You will say I am an *infernal* poet ; but every body cannot write as they
 do *aux champs Elysées*. Adieu, madam !

Yours most faithfully,

HOR. WALPOLE.

L E T T E R S

FROM

THE HON. HORACE WALPOLE

TO

CAROLINE CAMPBELL,

COUNTESS DOWAGER OF AILESBUURY,

From the Year 1760 to the Year 1779.

L E T T E R S

FROM

THE HON. HORACE WALPOLE

TO

CAROLINE CAMPBELL,

COUNTESS DOWAGER OF AILESBUURY,

From the Year 1760 to the Year 1779.

LETTER I.

TO CAROLINE CAMPBELL, COUNTESS DOWAGER OF AILESBUURY.

Whichnovre, August 23, 1760.

WELL, madam, if I had known whither I was coming, I would not have come alone! Mr. Conway and your ladyship should have come too. Do you know, this is the individual manor-house,^a where married ladies may have a flitch of bacon upon the easiest terms in the world? I should have expected that the owners would be ruined in satisfying the conditions of the obligation, and that the park would be stocked with hogs instead of deer.—On the contrary, it is thirty years since the flitch was claimed, and Mr. Offley was never so *near* losing one as when you and Mr. Conway were at Ragley. He so little expects the demand, that the flitch is only hung in effigie over the hall chimney, carved in wood. Are not you ashamed, madam, never to have put in your claim? It is above a year and a day that you have been married, and I never once heard either of you

^a Of Whichnovre near Litchfield.

mention

mention a journey to Whichnovre. If you quarrelled at loo every night, you could not quit your pretensions with more indifference. I had a great mind to take my oath, as one of your witnesses, that you neither of you would, if you were at liberty, prefer any body else, *ne fairer ne fouler*; and I could easily get twenty persons to swear the same. Therefore, unless you will let the world be convinced, that all your apparent harmony is counterfeit, you must set out immediately for Mr. Offley's, or at least send me a letter of attorney to claim the fitch in your names; and I will send it up by the coach, to be left at the *Blue Boar*, or wherever you will have it delivered. But you had better come in person; you will see one of the prettiest spots in the world; it is a little paradise, and the more like the antique one, as, by all I have said, the married couple seems to be driven out of it. The house is very indifferent: behind is a pretty park; the situation, a brow of a hill, commanding sweet meadows, through which the Trent serpentizes in numberless windings and branches. The spires of the cathedral of Litchfield are in front at a distance, with variety of other steeples, seats, and farms, and the horizon bounded by rich hills covered with blue woods. If you love a prospect, or bacon, you will certainly come hither.

Wentworth-castle, Sunday night.

I HAD writ thus far yesterday, but had no opportunity of sending my letter. I arrived here last night, and found only the duke of Devonshire, who went to Hardwicke this morning: they were down at the menagerie, and there was a clean little pullet, with which I thought his grace looked as if he should be glad to eat a slice of Whichnovre bacon. We follow him to Chatsworth to-morrow, and make our entry to the public dinner, to the disagreeableness of which I fear even lady M——'s company will not reconcile me.

My Gothic building, which my lord Strafford has executed in the menagerie, has a charming effect. There are two bridges built besides; but the new front is very little advanced. Adieu, madam!

Your most affectionate evidence,

HOR. WALPOLE.

LETTER

LETTER II.

Strawberry-hill, June 13th, 1761.

I NEVER ate such good snuff, nor smelt such delightful buns, as your ladyship has sent me. Every time you rob the duke's dessert, does it cost you a pretty snuff-box? Do the pastors at the Hague¹ enjoin such expensive retributions? If a man steals a kiss there, I suppose he does penance in a sheet of Brussels lace. The comical part is, that you own the theft, and send it me, but say nothing of the vehicle of your repentance. In short, madam, the box is the prettiest thing I ever saw, and I give you a thousand thanks for it.

When you comfort yourself about the operas, you don't know what you have lost; nay, nor I neither; for I was here, concluding that a serenata for a birth-day would be as dull and as vulgar as those festivities generally are, but I hear of nothing but the enchantment of it. There was a second orchestra in the footman's gallery, disguised by clouds, and filled with the music of the king's chapel. The choristers behaved like angels, and the harmony between the two bands was in the most exact time. Elisi piqued himself, and beat both heaven and earth. The joys of the year do not end there. The under-actors open at Drury-lane to-night with a new comedy by Murphy, called *All in the Wrong*. At Ranelagh all is fireworks and sky-rockets. The birth-day exceeded the splendour of Haroun Alraschid, and the Arabian Nights, when people had nothing to do but to scour a lantern, and send a genie for a hamper of diamonds and rubies. Do you remember one of those stories, where a prince has eight statues of diamonds, which he overlooks, because he fancies he wants a ninth; and to his great surprise the ninth proves to be pure flesh and blood, which he never thought of? Some how or other, lady — is the ninth statue; and, you will allow, has better white and red than if she was made of pearls and rubies. Oh! I forgot, I was telling you of the birth-day: my lord P—— had drunk the king's health so often at dinner, that at the ball he took Mrs. —— for a beautiful woman, and, as she says, *made an improper use of his hands*. The proper use of hers, she thought, was to give him a box on the ear, though within the verge of the court. He returned it by a push, and she tumbled off the end

¹ Lady Ailesbury remained at the Hague while Mr. Conway was with the army during the campaign of 1761. E.

of the bench ; which his majesty has accepted as sufficient punishment, and she is not to lose her right hand'.

I enclose the list your ladyship desired : you will see that the *plurality of Worlds* are Moore's, and of some I do not know the authors. There is a late edition with these names to them.

My duchess was to set out this morning. I saw her for the last time the day before yesterday at lady Kildare's : never was a journey less a party of pleasure. She was so melancholy, that all mirth ———'s oddness and my spirits could scarce make her smile. Towards the end of the night, and that was three in the morning, I did divert her a little. I slipped Pam into her lap, and then taxed her with having it there. She was quite confounded ; but, taking it up, saw he had a telescope in his hand, which I had drawn, and that the card, which was split, and just waxed together, contained these lines :

Ye simple astronomers, lay by your glasses ;
The transit of Venus has proved you all asses :
Your telescopes signify nothing to scan it ;
'Tis not meant in the clouds, 'tis not meant of a planet :
The seer who foretold it mistook or deceives us,
For Venus's transit is when Grafton leaves us.

I don't send your ladyship these verses as good, but to show you that all gallantry does not centre at the Hague.

I wish I could tell you that Stanley and Buffy, by crossing over and figuring in, had forwarded the peace. It is no more made than Belleisle is taken. However, I flatter myself that you will not stay abroad till you return for the coronation, which is ordered for the beginning of October. I don't care to tell you how lovely the season is ; how my acacias are powdered with flowers, and my hay just in its picturesque moment. Do they ever make any other hay in Holland than bullrushes in ditches ? My new buildings rise so swiftly, that I shall not have a shilling left, so far from giving commissions on Amsterdam. When I have made my house so big that I

* The old punishment for giving a blow in the king's presence. E.

don't

don't know what to do with it, and am entirely undone, I propose, like king Pyrrhus, who took such a roundabout way to a bowl of punch, to sit down and enjoy myself; but with this difference, that it is better to ruin one's self than all the world. I am sure you would think as I do, though Pyrrhus were king of Prussia. I long to have you bring back the only hero that ever I could endure. Adieu, madam! I sent you just such another piece of tittle-tattle as this by general Waldegrave: you are very partial to me, or very fond of knowing every thing that passes in your own country, if you can be amused so. If you can, 'tis surely my duty to divert you, though at the expence of my character; for I own I am ashamed when I look back and see four sides of paper scribbled over with nothings.

Your ladyship's most faithful servant,

HOR. WALPOLE.

LETTER III.

Strawberry-hill, July 20th, 1761.

I BLUSH, dear madam, on observing that half my letters to your ladyship are prefaced with thanks for presents:—don't mistake; I am not ashamed of thanking you, but of having so many occasions for it. Monsieur Hop has sent me the piece of china: I admire it as much as possible, and intend to like him as much as ever I can; but hitherto I have not seen him, not having been in town since he arrived.

Could I have believed that the Hague would so easily compensate for England? nay, for Park-place! Adieu, all our agreeable suppers! Instead of lady Cecilia's¹ French songs, we shall have madame Welderen quavering a confusion of d's and t's, b's and p's—*Bourquoi sçais du blaire?*²—Worse than that, I expect to meet all my——relations at your house, and sir Samson Gideon instead of Charles Townshend. You will laugh like Mrs. Tipkin³ when a Dutch Jew tells you that he bought at two and a half per cent. and sold at four. Come back, if you have any taste left: you had better be

¹ Lady Cecilia West, daughter of John earl of Delawar, afterwards married to general James Johnston.

² The first words of a favourite French air.

³ A character in the *Tender Husband*, or the *Accomplished Fools*.

here talking robes, ermine and tiffue, jewels and tresses, as all the world does; than own you are so corrupted. Did you receive my notification of the new queen? Her mother is dead, and she will not be here before the end of August."

My mind is much more at peace about Mr. Conway than it was. Nobody thinks there will be a battle, as the French did not attack them when both armies shifted camps; and since that, Soubise has entrenched himself up to the whiskers:—whiskers I think he has, I have been so afraid of him! Yet our hopes of meeting are still very distant: the peace does not advance; and if Europe has a *silver* left in its pockets, the war will continue; though happily all parties have been so scratched, that they only sit and look anger at one another, like a dog and cat that don't care to begin again.

We are in danger of losing our sociable box at the opera. The new queen, is very musical, and, if Mr. deputy Hodges and the city don't exert their veto, will probably go to the Haymarket. * * * * * G—— P——, in imitation of the Adonises in Tanzai's retinue, has asked to be her majesty's grand harper. *Dieu sçait quelle raclerie il y aura!* All the guitars are untuned; and if miss Conway¹ has a mind to be in fashion at her return, she must take some David or other to teach her the new twing twang, twing twing twang. As I am still desirous of being in fashion with your ladyship, and am, over and above, very grateful, I keep no company but my lady Denbigh and lady Blandford, and learn every evening, for two hours, to mash my English. Already I am tolerably fluent in saying *she* for *he*².

Good night, madam! I have no news to send you: one cannot announce a royal wedding and a coronation every post.

Your most faithful and obliged servant,

HOR. WALPOLE.

P. S. Pray, madam, do the gnats bite your legs? Mine are swelled as big as *one*, which is saying a great deal for me.

¹ The honourable Anne Damer.

² A mistake which these ladies, who were both Dutch women, constantly made. E.

July 22.

I HAD writ this, and was not time enough for the mail, when I receive your charming note, and this magnificent victory! Oh! my dear madam, how I thank you, how I congratulate you, how I feel for you, how I have felt for you and for myself!—But I bought it by two terrible hours to-day—I heard of the battle two hours before I could learn a word of Mr. Conway—I sent all round the world, and went half round it myself. I have cried and laughed, trembled and danced, as you bid me. If you had sent me as much old china as king Augustus gave two regiments for, I should not be half so much obliged to you as for your note. How could you think of me, when you had so much reason to think of nothing but yourself?—And then they say virtue is not rewarded in this world. I will preach at Paul's Cross, and quote you and Mr. Conway; no two persons were ever so good and so happy. In short, I am serious in the height of all my joy. God is very good to you, my dear madam; I thank him for you; I thank him for myself: it is very unallayed pleasure we taste at this moment!—Good night! My heart is so expanded, I could write to the last scrap of my paper; but I won't.

Yours most entirely,

HOR. WALPOLE.

LETTER IV.

Strawberry-hill, Sept. 27, 1761.

YOU are a mean mercenary woman. If you did not want histories of weddings and coronations, and had not jobs to be executed about muslins and a bit of china and counterband goods, one should never hear of you. When you don't want a body, you can frisk about with Gressiers and Burgomasters, and be as merry in a dyke as my lady Frog herself. The moment your curiosity is agog, or your cambric seized, you recollect a good cousin in England, and, as folks said two hundred years ago, begin to write *upon the knees of your heart*. Well! I am a sweet-tempered creature, I forgive you. I have already writ to a little friend in the custom-house, and will try what can be done; though, by Mr. Amyand's report to the duchess of Richmond, I fear

* Of Kirkdenckirck.

4 B 2

your

your case is desperate.—For the genealogies, I have turned over all my books to no purpose; I can meet with no lady Howard that married a Carey, nor a lady Seymour that married a Caufield. Lettice Caufield, who married Francis Staunton, was daughter of Dr. James (not George) Caufield, younger brother of the first lord Charlemont. This is all I can ascertain. For the other pedigree; I can inform your friend that there was a sir Nicholas Throckmorton, who married an Anne Carew, daughter of sir Nicholas Carew, knight of the garter, not Carey—But this sir Nicholas Carew married Joan Courtney—not a Howard; and besides, the Careys and Throckmortons you wot of were just the reverse: your Carey was the cock, and Throckmorton the hen—mine are vice versa:—otherwise, let me tell your friend, Carews and Courtneys are worth Howards any day of the week, and of ancients blood:—so, if descent is all he wants, I advise him to take up with the pedigree as I have refuted it. However, I will cast a figure once more, and try if I can conjure up the dames Howard and Seymour that he wants.

My heraldry was much more offended at the coronation with the ladies that did walk, than with those that walked out of their place; yet I was not so *perilously* angry as my lady Cowper, who refused to set a foot with my lady M—; and when she was at last obliged to associate with her, set out on a round trot, as if she designed to prove the antiquity of her family by marching as lustily as a maid of honour of queen Gwiniver. It was in truth a brave sight. The sea of heads in Palace-yard, the guards horse and foot, the scaffolds, balconies and procession, exceeded imagination. The hall, when once illuminated, was noble; but they suffered the whole parade to return into it in the dark, that his majesty might be surprised with the quickness with which the sconces caught fire. The Champion acted well; the other Paladins had neither the grace nor alertness of Rinaldo. Lord Effingham and the duke of Bedford were but untoward knights errant; and lord Talbot had not much more dignity than the figure of general Monke in the abbey. The habit of the peers is unbecoming to the last degree; but the peeresses made amends for all defects. Your daughter Richmond, lady Kildare, and lady Pembroke were as handsome as the Graces. Lady Rochford, lady Holderness, and lady Lyttelton looked exceedingly well in that their day; and for those of the day before, the duchess of Queensberry, lady Westmorland, and lady Albemarle were surprising. Lady Harrington was noble at a distance, and so covered with diamonds, that you would have thought she had bid

somebody or other, like Falstaff, *rob me the exchequer*. Lady Northampton was very magnificent too, and looked prettier than I have seen her of late. Lady Spencer and lady Bolingbroke were not the worst figures there. The duchess of Ancaſter marched alone after the queen with much majeſty; and there were two new Scotch peeresses that pleaſed every body, lady Sutherland and lady Dunmore. Per contra, were lady P——, who had put a wig on, and old E——, who had ſcratched hers off; lady S——, the dowager E——, and a lady S—— with her tresses coal black, and her hair coal white. Well! it was all delightful, but not half ſo charming as its being over—The gabble one heard about it for ſix weeks before, and the fatigue of the day, could not well be compensated by a mere puppet-show; for puppet-show it was, though it coſt a million. The queen is ſo gay that we ſhall not want fights; ſhe has been at the Opera, the Beggar's Opera and the Rehearsal, and two nights ago carried the king to Ranelagh. In ſhort, I am ſo miſerable with loſing my duchess, and you and Mr. Conway, that I believe, if you ſhould be another ſix weeks without writing to me, I ſhould come to the Hague and ſcold you in perſon—for, alas! my dear lady, I have no hopes of ſeeing you here. Stanley is recalled, is expected every hour—Buſſy goes to-morrow; and Mr. Pitt is ſo impatient to conquer Mexico, that I don't believe he will ſtay till my lord Briſtol can be ordered to leave Madrid. I tremble, leſt Mr. Conway ſhould not get leave to come—nay, are we ſure he would like to aſk it? He was ſo impatient to get to the army, that I ſhould not be ſurpriſed if he ſtaid there till every ſuttler and woman that follows the camp was come away. You aſk me if we are not in admiration of prince Ferdinand—In truth, we have thought very little of him. He may outwit Broglio ten times, and not be half ſo much talked of, as lord Talbot's backing his horſe down Weſtminſter-hall. The generality are not ſtruck with any thing under a complete victory. If you have a mind to be well with the mob of England, you muſt be knocked on the head like Wolfe, or bring home as many diamonds as Clive. We live in a country where ſo many follies or novelties ſtart forth every day, that we have not time to try a general's capacity by the rules of Polybius.

I have hardly left room for my obligations—to your ladyſhip, for my com-

¹ The duchess of Grafton, who was abroad.

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missions at Amsterdam; to Mrs. Sally^{*}, for her tea-pots, which are likely to stay so long at the Hague, that I fear they will have begot a whole set of China; and to miss Conway and lady George, for thinking of me. Pray assure them of my *re-thinking*. Adieu, dear madam! Don't you think we had better write oftener and shorter?

Yours most faithfully,

HOR. WALPOLE.

LETTER V.

Strawberry-hill, Oct. 10, 1761.

I DON'T know what business I had, madam, to be an œconomist: it was out of character. I wished for a thousand more drawings in that sale at Amsterdam, but concluded they would be very dear; and not having seen them, I thought it too rash to trouble your ladyship with a large commission.

I wish I could give you as good an account of your commission; but it is absolutely impracticable. I employed one of the most sensible and experienced men in the custom-house; and all the result was, he could only recommend me to Mr. Amyand as the newest and consequently the most polite of the commissioners—but the duchess of Richmond had tried him before—to no purpose. There is no way of recovering any of your goods, but purchasing them again at the sale.

What am I, doing, to be talking to you of drawings and chintzes, when the world is all turned topsy turvy? Peace, as the poets would say, is not only returned to heaven, but has carried her sister Virtue along with her—Oh! no, Peace will keep no such company—Virtue is an errant strumpet, and loves diamonds as well as my lady——, and is as fond of a coronet as my lord Melcombe. Worse! worse! She will set men to cutting throats, and pick their pockets at the same time. I am in such a passion, I cannot tell you what I am angry about—Why, about Virtue and Mr. Pitt; two errant cheats, gipsies! I believe he was a comrade of Elizabeth Canning, when he lived at Enfield-wash. In short, the council were for making peace;

* Lady Ailesbury's woman.

But

But he, as loving his own pride and purposes,
Evades them with a bombast circumstance,
Horribly stuff'd with epithets of war,
And in conclusion—nonfits my mediators.

He insisted on a war with Spain, was resisted, and last Monday resigned. The city breathed vengeance on his opposers, the council quaked, and the Lord knows what would have happened; but yesterday, which was only Friday, as this giant was stalking to seize the Tower of London, he stumbled over a silver penny, picked it up, carried it home to lady Esther, and they are now as quiet, good sort of people, as my lord and lady Bath who lived in the vinegar-bottle. In fact, madam, this immaculate man has accepted the barony of Chatham for his wife, with a pension of three thousand pounds a year for three lives; and though he has not quitted the house of commons, I think my lord A—— would now be as formidable there. The pension he has left us, is a war for three thousand lives! perhaps, for twenty times three thousand lives!—But—

Does this become a soldier? *this* become
Whom armies follow'd, and a people lov'd?

What! to sneak out of the scrape, prevent peace, and avoid the war! blast one's character, and all for the comfort of a paltry annuity, a long-necked peeress, and a couple of Grenvilles! The city looks mighty foolish, I believe, and possibly even Beckford may blush. Lord Temple resigned yesterday; I suppose his virtue pants for a dukedom. Lord Egremont has the seals; lord Hardwicke, I fancy, the privy seal; and George Grenville, no longer speaker, is to be the cabinet minister in the house of commons. Oh! madam, I am glad you are inconstant to Mr. Conway, though it is only with a Barrette! If you piqued yourself on your virtue, I should expect you would sell it to the master of a Trechscot.

I told you a lie about the king's going to Ranelagh—No matter; there is no such thing as truth. Garrick exhibits the coronation, and, opening the end of the stage, discovers a real bonfire and real mob: the houses in Drury-lane let their windows at three-pence a head. Rich is going to produce a finer coronation, nay, than the real one; for there is to be a dinner for the knights

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knights of the bath and the barons of the cinque ports, which lord Talbot refused them.

I put your Castles and Stauntons into the hands of one of the first heralds upon earth, and who has the entire pedigree of the Careys; but he cannot find a drop of Howard or Seymour blood in the least artery about them. Good night, madam!

Yours most faithfully,

HOR. WALPOLE.

LETTER VI.

DEAR MADAM,

Arlington-street, Nov. 28, 1761.

YOU are so bad and so good, that I don't know how to treat you. You give me every mark of kindness but letting me hear from you. You send me charming drawings the moment I trouble you with a commission, and you give lady Cecilia¹ commissions for trifles of my writing, in the most obliging manner. I have taken the latter off her hands. The Fugitive Pieces, and the Catalogue of Royal and Noble Authors shall be conveyed to you directly. Lady Cecilia and I agree how we lament the charming suppers there, every time we pass the corner of Warwick-street! We have a little comfort for your sake and our own, in believing that the campaign is at an end, at least for this year—but they tell us, it is to recommence here or in Ireland. You have nothing to do with that. Our politics, I think, will soon be as warm as our war. Charles Townshend is to be lieutenant-general to Mr. Pitt. The duke of Bedford is privy-seal; lord Thomond, cofferer; lord George Cavendish, comptroller.

Diversions, you know, madam, are never at highwater-mark before Christmas: yet operas flourish pretty well: those on Tuesdays are removed to Mondays, because the queen likes the burlettas, and the king cannot go on Tuesdays, his post-days. On those nights we have the middle front box, railed in, where lady Mary² and I sit in triste state like a lord mayor and lady mayorefs. The night before last there was a private ball at court, which

¹ Lady Cecilia Johnston.

² Lady Mary Coke.

began

began at half an hour after six, lasted till one, and finished without a supper. The king danced the whole time with the queen, lady Augusta with her four, younger brothers. The other performers were: the two duchesses of Ancaſter and Hamilton, who danced little; lady Effingham and lady Egremont, who danced much; the fix maids of honour; lady Suſan Stewart, as attending, lady Augusta; and lady Caroline Ruſſel, and lady Jane Stewart, the only, women not of the family. Lady Northumberland is at Bath; lady Weymouth lies in; lady Bolingbroke was there in waiting, but in black gloves, ſo did not dance. The men, beſides the royals, were lords March and Eglintoun, of the bed-chamber; lord Cantelupe, vice-chamberlain; lord Huntingdon; and four ſtrangers, lord Mandeville, lord Northampton, lord Suffolk, and lord Grey. No fitters-by, but the princeſs; the duchefs of Bedford, and lady Bute.

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

I.

Thyſis, when we parted, ſwore
Ere the ſpring he would return.
Ah! what means yon violet flow'r,
And the buds that deck the thorn?
'Twas the lark that upward ſprung,
'Twas the nightingale that ſung.

II.

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

Adieu, madam!

Your moſt faithful ſervant,
HOR. WALPOLE.

LETTER VII.

MADAM,

Strawberry-hill, March 5, 1762.

ONE of your slaves, a fine young officer, brought me two days ago a very pretty medal from your ladyship. Amidst all your triumphs you do not, I see, forget your English friends, and it makes me extremely happy. He pleased me still more, by assuring me that you return to England when the campaign opens. I can pay this news by none so good as by telling you that we talk of nothing but peace. We are equally ready to give law to the world, or peace. Martinico has not made us intractable. We and the new Czar are the best sort of people upon earth: I am sure, madam, you must adore him; he is willing to resign all his conquests, that you and Mr. Conway may be settled again at Park-place. My lord Chesterfield, with the despondence of an old man and the wit of a young one, thinks the French and Spaniards must make some attempt upon these islands, and is frightened lest we should not be so well prepared to repel invasions as to make them: he says, "*What will it avail us if we gain the whole world, and lose our own soul?*"

I am here alone, madam, and know nothing to tell you. I came from town on Saturday for the worst cold I ever had in my life, and, what I care less to own even to myself, a cough. I hope lord Chesterfield will not speak more truth in what I have quoted, than in his assertion, that one need not cough if one did not please. It has pulled me extremely, and you may believe I do not look very plump, when I am more emaciated than usual. However, I have taken James's powder for four nights, and have found great benefit from it; and if Miss Conway does not come back with *soixante et douze quartiers*, and the hauteur of a Landgravine, I think I shall still be able to run down the precipices at Park-place with her—This is to be understood, supposing that we have any summer. Yesterday was the first moment that did not feel like Thule: not a glimpse of spring or green, except a miserable almond-tree, half opening one bud, like my lord P——'s eye.

It will be warmer, I hope, by the king's birth-day, or the old ladies will catch their deaths. There is a court dress to be instituted—(to thin the drawing-rooms)—stiff-bodied gowns and bare shoulders. What dreadful discoveries will be made both on fat and lean! I recommend to you the idea of Mrs. C——, when half-stark; and I might fill the rest of my paper with such images, but your imagination will supply them; and you shall excuse me, though

TO THE COUNTESS OF AILESBURY. 563

though I leave this a short letter: but I wrote merely to thank your ladyship for the medal, and, as you perceive, have very little to say, besides that known, and lasting truth, how much I am Mr. Conway's and

Your ladyship's faithful humble servant,

HOR. WALPOLE.

LETTER VIII.

MADAM,

Strawberry-hill, July 31, 1762.

MAGNANIMOUS as the fair soul of your ladyship is, and plaited with superabundance of Spartan fortitude, I felicitate my own good fortune who can circle this epistle with branches of the gentle olive, as well as crown it with victorious laurel. This pompous paragraph, madam, which in compliment to my lady Lyttelton I have penned in the style of her lord, means no more, than that I wish you joy of the castle of Waldeck¹, and more joy on the peace, which I find every body thinks is concluded. In truth, I have still my doubts; and yesterday came news, which, if my lord Bute does not make haste, may throw a little rub in the way. In short, the Czar is dethroned. Some give the honour to his wife; others, who add the little circumstance of his being murdered too, ascribe the revolution to the archbishop of Novogorod, who, like other priests, thinks assassination a less affront to heaven than three Lutheran churches. I hope the latter is the truth; because, in the honey-moonhood of lady C——'s tenderness, I don't know but she might miscarry at the thought of a wife preferring a crown, and scandal says a regiment of grenadiers, to her husband.

I have a little meaning in naming lady Lyttelton and lady C——, who I think are at Park-place. Was not there a promise that you all three would meet Mr. Churchill and lady Mary here in the beginning of August? Yes, indeed was there, and I put in my claim.—Not confining your heroic and musical ladyships to a day or a week; my time is at your command: and I wish the rain was at mine; for, if you or it do not come soon, I shall not have a leaf left. Strawberry is browner than lady B——, F——.

¹ At the taking of which Mr. Conway had assisted. E

I was grieved, madam, to miss seeing you in town on Monday, particularly as I wished to settle this party. If you will let me know when it will be your pleasure, I will write to my sister.

I am your ladyship's

Most faithful servant,

HOR. WALPOLE.

LETTER IX.

Arlington-street, Dec. 29, 1772.

INDEED, madam, I want you and Mr. Conway in town. Christmas has dispersed all my company, and left nothing but a loo-party or two. If all the fine days were not gone out of town too, I should take the air in a morning; but I am not yet nimble enough, like old Mrs. Nugent, to jump out of a post-chaise into an assembly.

You have a woful taste, my lady, not to like lord G——'s bon mot. I am almost too indignant to tell you of a most amusing book in six volumes, called *Histoire philosophique et politique du commerce des deux Indes*. It tells one every thing in the world—how to make conquests, invasions, blunders, settlements, bankruptcies, fortunes, &c. tells you the natural and historical history of all nations; talks commerce, navigation, tea, coffee, china, mines, salt, spices; of the Portuguese, English, French, Dutch, Danes, Spaniards, Arabs, Caravans, Persians, Indians, of Louis XIV, and the king of Prussia; of la Bourdonnois, Dupleix and admiral Saunders; of rice, and women that dance naked; of camels, gingams and muslin; of millions of millions of livres, pounds, rupees, and gouries; of iron, cables, and Circassian women; of law and the Mississippi; and against all governments and religions. This and every thing else is in the two first volumes. I cannot conceive what is left for the four others. And all is so mixed, that you learn forty new trades, and fifty new histories, in a single chapter. There is spirit, wit, and clearness—and if there were but less avoirdupois weight in it, it would be the richest book in the world in materials—but figures to me are so many cyphers, and only put me in mind of children that say, an hundred hundred hundred millions. However,

ever, it has made me learned enough to talk about Mr. Sykes and the secret committee¹, which is all that any body talks of at present; and yet mademoiselle Heinel is arrived. This is all I know, and a great deal too, considering I know nothing—and yet, were there either truth or lies,² I should know them, for one hears every thing in a sick room. Good night both!

LETTER X.

Strawberry-hill, Nov. 7, 1774.

I HAVE written such tomes to Mr. Conway³, madam, and have so nothing new to write, that I might as well methinks begin and end like the lady to her husband: *Je vous écris parceque je n'ai rien à faire: je finis parceque je n'ai rien à vous dire.* Yes, I have two complaints to make, one of your ladyship, the other of myself. You tell me nothing of lady Harriet³: Have you no tongue, or the French no eyes? or are her eyes employed in nothing but seeing? What a vulgar employment for a fine woman's eyes after she is risen from her toilet! I declare I will ask no more questions—What is it to me, whether she is admired or not? I should know how charming she is, though all Europe were blind. I hope I am not to be told by any barbarous nation upon earth what beauty and grace are!

For myself, I am guilty of the gout in my elbow; the left—witness my handwriting. Whether I caught cold by the deluge in the night, or whether the bootikins like the water of Styx can only preserve the parts they surround, I doubt they have saved me but three weeks, for so long my reckoning has been out. However, as I feel nothing in my feet, I flatter myself that this Pindaric transition will not be a regular ode, but a fragment, the more valuable for being imperfect.

Now for my gazette.—Marriages—Nothing done. Intrigues—More in the political than civil way. Births—Under par since lady B—— left off breeding. Gaming—Low water. Deaths—Lord Mortcn, lord Wentworth,

¹ Upon East Indian affairs.³ Lady Harriet Stanhope, afterwards married² Mr. Conway and lady Ailesbury were now to lord Foley, at Paris together.

duchess Douglas. Election stock—More buyers than sellers. Promotions—Mr. Wilkes as high as he can go—A-propos, he was told lord chancellor intended to signify to him that the king did not approve the city's choice: he replied, Then I shall signify to his lordship, that I am at least as fit to be lord mayor as he to be lord chancellor. This being more gospel than every thing Mr. Wilkes says, the formal approbation was given.

Mr. Burke has succeeded at Bristol, and sir James Peachey will miscarry in Suffex. But what care you, madam, about our parliament? You will see the rentrée of the old one, with songs and epigrams into the bargain. We do not shift our parliaments with so much gaiety. Money in one hand, and abuse in t'other—those are all the arts we know. *Wit and a gamut* I don't believe ever signified a parliament¹, whatever the glossaries may say; for they never produce pleasantry and harmony. Perhaps you may not taste this Saxon pun, but I know it will make the Antiquarian Society die with laughing.

Expectation hangs on America. The result of the general assembly is expected in four or five days. If one may believe the papers, which one should not believe, the other-side-of-the-waterists are not *doux comme des moutons*, and yet we do intend to eat them. I was in town on Monday; the duchess of B—— graced our lóo, and made it as rantipole as a quaker's meeting. *Loois Quinze*², I believe, is arrived by this time, but I fear without *quinze louis*.

Your herb, snuff and the four glasses are lying in my warehouse, but I can hear of no ship going to Paris. You are now at Fontainebleau, but not thinking of Francis I. the queen of Sweden and Monaldeschi. It is terrible that one cannot go to courts that are gone! You have supped with the chevalier de Boufflers: Did he act every thing in the word, and sing every thing in the world, and laugh at every thing in the world? Has madame de Cambis sung to you *Sans dépit, sans legereté*³? Has lord Cholmondeley delivered my paquet? I hear I have hopes of madame d'Olonne. Gout or no gout, I think I shall be little in town till after Christmas. My elbow makes me bless

¹ *Wetenagemot* was the name of the Saxon great council, the supposed origin of parliaments. E.

² This was a cant name given to a lady who

was very fond of lóo, and who had lost much money at that game. E.

³ The first words of a favourite French air.

TO THE COUNTESS OF AILESURY. 567

myself that I am not at Paris. Old age is no such uncomfortable thing, if one gives one's self up to it with a good grace, and don't drag it about.

To midnight dances and the public show.

If one stays quietly in one's own house in the country, and cares for nothing but one's self, scolds one's servants, condemns every thing that is new, and recollects how charming a thousand things were formerly that were very disagreeable, one gets over the winters very well, and the summers get over themselves.

LETTER XI.

From t'other side of the water, August 17th, 1775.

INTERPRETING your ladyship's orders in the most personal sense, as respecting the dangers of the sea, I write the instant I am landed. I did not, in truth, set out till yesterday morning at eight o'clock; but finding the roads, horses, postillions, tides, winds, moons, and captain Factors in the pleasantest humour in the world, I embarked almost as soon as I arrived at Dover, and reached Calais before the sun was awake;—and here I am for the sixth time in my life, with only the trifling distance of seven-and-thirty years between my first voyage and the present. Well, I can only say in excuse, that I am got into the land of Strulbrugs, where one is never too old to be young, and where *la bequille du pere Barnabas* blossoms like Aaron's rod, or the Glastonbury thorn.

Now to be sure I shall be a little mortified, if your ladyship wanted a letter of news, and did not at all trouble your head about my navigation. However, you will not tell one so; and therefore I will persist in believing that this good news will be received with transport at Park-place, and that the bells of Henley will be set a-ringing. The rest of my adventures must be deferred till they have happened, which is not always the case of travels. I send you no compliments from Paris, because I have not got thither, nor delivered the bundle which Mr. Conway sent me. I did, as your ladyship commanded,
buy

568 LETTERS FROM THE HON. HORACE WALPOLE

buy three pretty little medallions in frames of filigraine, for our dear old friend¹. They will not ruin you, having cost not a guinea and half; but it was all I could find that was genteel and portable; and as she does not measure by guineas, but attentions, she will be as much pleased as if you had sent her a dozen acres of Park-place. As they are in bas-relief, too, they are feelable, and that is a material circumstance to her. Indeed I wish the Diomedé had even so much as a pair of Nankin!

Adieu, toute la chere famille! I think of October with much satisfaction; it will double the pleasure of my return.

 LETTER XII.

Paris, August 20, 1775.

I HAVE been sea-sick to death; I have been poisoned by dirt and vermin; I have been stifled by heat, choked by dust, and starved for want of any thing I could touch: and yet, madam, here I am perfectly well, not in the least fatigued; and, thanks to the rivelled parchments, formerly faces, which I have seen by hundreds, I find myself almost as young as when I came hither first in the last century. In spite of my whims, and delicacy, and laziness, none of my grievances have been mortal: I have borne them as well as if I set up for a philosopher, like the sages of this town. Indeed I have found my dear old woman so well, and looking so much better than she did four years ago, that I am transported with pleasure, and thank your ladyship and Mr. Conway for driving me hither. Madame du Deffand came to me the instant I arrived, and sat by me whilst I stripped and dressed myself; for, as she said, since she cannot see, there was no harm in my being stark. She was charmed with your present, but was so kind as to be so much more charmed with my arrival, that she did not think of it a moment. I sat with her till half an hour after two in the morning, and had a letter from her before my eyes were open again. In short, her soul is immortal, and forces her body to bear it company.

¹ Madame du Deffand.

This

TO THE COUNTESS OF AILESBUURY. 569

This is the very eve of madame Clotilde's wedding; but monsieur Turgot, to the great grief of lady M——, will suffer no cost, but one banquet, one ball, and a play at Versailles. Count Virri gives a banquet, a *bal masqué*, and a firework. I think I shall see little but the last, from which I will send your ladyship a rocket in my next letter. Lady M——, I believe, has had a private audience of the ambassador's leg¹, but *en tout bien & honneur*, and only to satisfy her ceremonious curiosity about any part of royal nudity. I am just going to her, as she is to Versailles; and I have not time to add a word more to the vows of your ladyship's

Most faithful

HOR. WALPOLE.

LETTER XIII.

Arlington-street, Dec. 12, 1775.

DID you hear that scream?—Don't be frightened, madam; it was only the duchess of Kingston last Sunday was sevennight at chapel: but it is better to be prepared; for she has sent word to the house of lords, that her nerves are so bad she intends to scream for these two months, and therefore they must put off her trial. They are to take her throes into consideration to-day; and, that there may be sufficient room for the length of her veil and train, and attendants, have a mind to treat her with Westminster-hall. I hope so, for I should like to see this comedie larmoyante; and besides, I conclude, it would bring your ladyship to town. You shall have timely notice.

There is another comedy infinitely worth seeing, monsieur le Teflier. He is Preville, and Caillaud, and Garrick, and Weston, and Mrs. Clive, all together; and as perfect in the most insignificant part as in the most difficult. To be sure, it is hard to give up loo in such fine weather, when one can play from morning till night. In London, Pam can scarce get a house till ten o'clock. If you happen to see the general your husband, make my compliments to him, madam: his friend the king of Prussia is going to the devil and Alexander the Great.

¹ He alludes to the ceremony of the marriages of princesses by proxy. E.

LETTER XIV.

Strawberry-hill, June 25, 1778.

I AM quite astonished, madam, at not hearing of Mr. Conway's being returned! What is he doing? Is he revolting and setting up for himself, like our nabobs in India? or is he forming Jersey, Guernsey, Alderney, and Sark, into the united provinces in the compass of a silver penny? I should not wonder if this was to be the fate of our distracted empire, which we seem to have made so large, only that it might afford to split into separate kingdoms. I told Mr. C. I should not write any more, concluding he would not stay a twinkling; and your ladyship's last encouraged my expecting him. In truth, I had nothing to tell him if I had written.

I have been in town but one single night this age, as I could not bear to throw away this phoenix June. It has rained a good deal this morning, but only made it more delightful. The flowers are all Arabian. I have found but one inconvenience, which is the hosts of cuckoos: one would not think one was in Doctors Commons. It is very disagreeable, that the nightingales should sing but half a dozen songs, and the other beasts squall for two months together.

Poor Mrs. Clive has been robbed again in her own lane, as she was last year, and has got the jaundice, she thinks, with the fright. I don't make a visit without a blunderbuss; so one might as well be invaded by the French. Though I live in the centre of ministers, I do not know a syllable of politics; and though within hearing of lady ———, who is but two miles off, I have not a word of news to send your ladyship. I live like Berecynthia, surrounded by nephews and nieces: big and little, I have fifteen near me: yet Park-place is full as much in my mind, and I beg for its history.

Your most faithful

HOR. WALPOLE.

LETTER

LETTER XV.

Saturday night, July 10, 1779.

I COULD not thank your ladyship before the post went out to-day, as I was getting into my chaise to go and dine at Carshalton with my cousin T. Walpole when I received your kind enquiry about my eye. It is quite well again, and I hope the next attack of the gout will be any where rather than in that quarter.

I did not expect Mr. Conway would think of returning just now. As you have lost both Mrs. D—— and lady William Campbell, I do not see why your ladyship should not go to Goodwood.

The Baroness's increasing peevishness does not surprise me. When people will not weed their own minds, they are apt to be overrun with nettles. She knows nothing of politics, and no wonder talks nonsense about them. It is silly to wish three nations had but one neck; but it is ten times more absurd to act as if it was so, which the government has done;—aye, and forgetting, too, that it has not a scymitar large enough to sever that neck, which they have in effect made *one*. It is past the time, madam, of making conjectures. How can one guess whither France and Spain will direct a blow that is in their option? I am rather inclined to think that they will have patience to ruin us in detail. Hitherto France and America have carried their points by that manœuvre. Should there be an engagement at sea, and the French and Spanish fleets, by their great superiority, should have the advantage, one knows not what might happen. Yet, though there are such large preparations making on the French coast, I do not much expect a serious invasion, as they are sure they can do us more damage by a variety of other attacks, where we can make little resistance. Gibraltar and Jamaica can but be the immediate objects of Spain. Ireland is much worse guarded than this island:—nay, we must be undone by our expence, should the summer pass without any attempt. My cousin thinks they will try to destroy Portsmouth and Plymouth—but I have seen nothing in the present French ministry that looks like bold enterprise. We are much more adventurous, that set every thing to the hazard: but there are such numbers of *baronesses* that both talk and act with passion, that one would think the nation had lost its senses. Every thing has miscarried that has been undertaken, and the worse we succeed,

the more is risked;—yet the nation is not angry! How can one conjecture during such a delirium? I sometimes almost think I must be in the wrong to be of so contrary an opinion to most men:—yet, when every misfortune that has happened had been foretold by a few, why should I not think I have been in the right? Has not almost every single event that has been announced as prosperous proved a gross falsehood, and often a silly one? Are we not at this moment assured that Washington cannot possibly amass an army of above 8000 men! and yet Clinton, with 20,000 men, and with the hearts, as we are told, too, of three parts of the colonies, dares not show his teeth without the walls of New York!—Can I be, in the wrong in not believing what is so contradictory to my senses? We could not conquer America when it stood alone; then France supported it, and we did not mend the matter. To make it still easier, we have driven Spain into the alliance. Is this wisdom? Would it be presumption, even if one were single, to think that we must have the worst in such a contest? Shall I be like the mob, and expect to conquer France and Spain, and then thunder upon America?—Nay, but the higher mob do not expect such success. They would not be so angry at the house of Bourbon, if not morally certain that those kings destroy all our passionate desire and expectation of conquering America. We bullied, and threatened, and begged, and nothing would do. Yet independence was still the word. Now we rail at the two monarchs—and when they have banged us, we shall sue to them as humbly as we did to the Congress. All this my senses, such as they are, tell me has been and will be the case. What is worse, all Europe is of the same opinion; and though forty thousand *baronesses* may be ever so angry, I venture to prophesy that we shall make but a very foolish figure whenever we are so lucky as to obtain a peace; and posterity, that may have prejudices of its own, will still take the liberty to pronounce that its ancestors were a woful set of politicians from the year 1774 to — I wish I knew when.

If I might advise, I would recommend Mr. B—— to command the fleet in the room of sir Charles Hardy. The fortune of the B——s is powerful enough to baffle calculation. Good night, madam!

P. S. I have not written to Mr. Conway since this day sevensight, not having a teaspoonful of news to send him. I will beg your ladyship to tell him so.

LETTER

LETTER XVI.

Strawberry-hill, Friday night, 1779.

I AM not at all surpris'd, my dear madam, at the intrepidity of Mrs. D——; she always was the heroic daughter of a hero. Her sense and coolness never forsake her. I, who am not so firm, shuddered at your ladyship's account. Now that she has stood fire for four hours, I hope she will give as clear proofs of her understanding, of which I have as high opinion as of her courage, and not return in any danger.

I am to dine at Ditton to-morrow, and will certainly talk on the subject you recommend—yet I am far, till I have heard more, from thinking with your ladyship, that more troops and artillery at Jersey would be desirable. Any considerable quantity of either, especially of the former, cannot be spared at this moment, when so big a cloud hangs over this island, nor would any number avail if the French should be masters at sea. A large garrison would but tempt the French thither, were it but to distress this country; and, what is worse, would encourage Mr. Conway to make an impracticable defence. If he is to remain in a situation so unworthy of him, I confess I had rather he was totally incapable of making any defence. I love him enough not to murmur at his exposing himself where his country and his honour demand him—but I would not have him measure himself in a place untenable against very superior force. My present comfort is, as to him, that France at this moment has a far vaster object. I have good reason to believe the government knows that a great army is ready to embark at St. Maloes, but will not stir till after a sea-fight, which we do not know but may be engaged at this moment. Our fleet is allowed to be the finest ever set forth by this country—but it is inferior in number by seventeen ships to the united squadron of the Bourbons. France, if successful, means to pour in a vast many thousands on us, and has threatened to burn the capital itself. Jersey, my dear madam, does not enter into a calculation of such magnitude. The moment is singularly awful—yet the vaunts of enemies are rarely executed successfully and ably. Have we trampled America under our foot?

The packet in which she was crossing from Dover to Ostend was taken by a French frigate after a running fight of several hours. E.

You

You have too good sense, madam, to be imposed upon by my arguments, if they are insubstantial. You do know that I have had my terrors for Mr. Conway; but at present they are out of the question, from the insignificance of his island. Do not listen to rumours, nor believe a single one till it has been canvassed over and over. Fear, folly, fifty motives, will coin new reports every hour at such a conjuncture. When one is totally void of credit and power, patience is the only wisdom. I have seen dangers still more imminent. They were dispersed. Nothing happens in proportion to what is meditated. Fortune, whatever fortune is, is more constant than is the common notion. I do not give this as one of my solid arguments, but I have always encouraged myself in being superstitious on the favourable side. I never, like most superstitious people, believe auguries against my wishes. We have been fortunate in the escape of Mrs. D—, and in the defeat at Jersey even before Mr. Conway arrived; and thence I depend on the same future prosperity. From the authority of persons who do not reason on such airy hopes, I am seriously persuaded, that if the fleets engage, the enemy will not gain advantage without deep-felt loss, enough probably to dismay their invasion. Coolness may succeed, and then negotiation.—Surely, if we can weather the summer, we shall, obstinate as we are against conviction, be compelled by the want of money to relinquish our ridiculous pretensions, now proved to be utterly impracticable; for, with an inferior navy at home, can we assert sovereignty over America? It is a contradiction in terms and in fact. It may be hard of digestion to relinquish it, but it is impossible to pursue it. Adieu, my dear madam! I have not left room for a line more.

 LETTER XVII.

Strawberry-hill, Tuesday night, June 8, 1779.

YOU frightened me for a minute, my dear madam; but every letter since has given me pleasure, by telling me how rapidly you recovered, and how perfectly well you are again. Pray, however, do not give me any more such joys. I shall be quite content with your remaining immortal, without the foil of any alarm. You gave all your friends a panic, and may trust their attachment without renewing it. I received as many inquiries the next day as if an archbishop was in danger, and all the bench hoped he was going to heaven.

O

Mr.

Mr. Conway wonders I do not talk of Voltaire's Memoirs.—Lord blefs me ! I ſaw it two months ago ; the Lucan's brought it from Paris and lent it to me ; nay, and I have ſeen moſt of it before ; and I believe this an imperfect copy, for it ends no how at all. Beſides, it was quite out of my head. Lord Melcombe's Diary put that and every thing elſe out of my mind. I wonder much more at Mr. Conway's not talking of this ! It gossiſs about the living as familiarly as a modern newspaper. I long to hear what ——— ſays about it. I wiſh the newspapers were as accurate ! They have been circumſtantial about *lady Walsingham's* birth-day clothes, which to be ſure one is glad to know, only unluckily there is no ſuch perſon ! However, I dare to ſay that her dreſs was very becoming, and that ſhe looked charmingly.

The month of June, according to cuſtom immemorial, is as cold as Chriſtmas. I had a fire laſt night, and all my roſebuds, I believe, would have been very glad to ſit by it. I have other grievances to boot ; but as they are annuals too, videlicet,—people to ſee my houſe,—I will not torment your ladyſhip with them : yet I know nothing elſe. None of my neighbours are come into the country yet: one would think all the dowagers were elected into the new parliament. Adieu, my dear madam !

* The title of Walsingham was not revived in the family of de Grey till the year 1780. E.

L E T T E R S

FROM

THE HON. HORACE WALPOLE

TO

MRS. H. MORE,

From the Year 1784 to the Year 1796.

VOL. V.

4 E



Hosk. sculp.

Hannah More.

Pub^d as the Act direct. May 1st 1792 by G.C. & J. Robinson. Paternoster Row London.

L E T T E R S ,
FROM
THE HON. HORACE WALPOLE .

TO
MRS. H. MORE,
From the Year 1784 to the Year 1796.

LETTER I.
TO MRS. H. MORE.

Strawberry-hill, November 13, 1784.

THANK you a thousand times, dear madam, for your obliging letter and the new *Bristol Stones* you have sent me, which would pass on a more skilful lapidary than I am for having been brillianced by a professed artist, if you had not told me that they came shining out of a native mine, and had no foreign diamond-dust to polish them. Indeed can one doubt any longer that Bristol is as rich and warm a soil as India? I am convinced it has been so of late years, though I question its having been so luxuriant in alderman Canning's days; and I have MORE reasons for thinking so, than from the marvels of Chatterton.—But I will drop metaphors, lest some nabob should take me *au pié de la lettre*, fit out an expedition, plunder your city, and massacre you for weighing *too many* carats.

Serioussly, madam, I am surpris'd—and chiefly at the kind of genius of this unhappy female! Her ear, as you remark, is perfect—but that being a

Mrs. Yearley, the milkwoman of Bristol.

gift of nature, amazes me less. Her expressions are more exalted than poetic; and discover taste, as you say, rather than discover flights of fancy and wild ideas, as one should expect. I should therefore advise her quitting blank verse, which wants the highest colouring to distinguish it from prose; whereas her taste, and probably good sense, might give sufficient beauty to her rhymes.

Her not being learned is another reason against her writing in blank verse. Milton employed all his reading, nay all his geographic knowledge, to enrich his language—and succeeded. They who have imitated him in that particular, have been mere monkeys; and they who neglected it, flat and poor.

Were I not persuaded by the samples you have sent me, madam, that this woman has talents, I should not advise her encouraging her propensity, lest it should divert her from the care of her family, and, after the novelty is over, leave her worse than she was. When the late queen patronised Stephen Duck, who was only a wonder at first, and had not genius enough to support the character he had promised, twenty artisans and labourers turned poets, and starved. Your poets can scarce be more miserable than she is, and even the reputation of being an authoress may procure her customers: but as poetry is one of your least excellencies, madam (your virtues will forgive me), I am sure you will not only give her councils for her works, but for her conduct; and your gentleness will blend them so judiciously, that she will mind the friend as well as the mistress. She must remember that she is a Lactilla, not a Pastora; and is to tend real cows, not Arcadian sheep.

What! if I should go a step farther, dear madam, and take the liberty of reproving you for putting into this poor woman's hands such a frantic thing as the Castle of Otranto? It was fit for nothing but the age in which it was written; an age in which much was known; that required only to be amused, nor cared whether its amusements were conformable to truth and the models of good sense; that could not be spoiled; was in no danger of being too credulous; and rather wanted to be brought back to imagination, than to be led astray by it:—but you will have made a hurly-burly in this poor woman's head, which it cannot develop and digest.

I will not reprove, without suggesting something in my turn. Give her
Dryden's

Dryden's Cock and Fox, the standard of good sense, poetry, nature, and ease. I would recommend others of his tales: but her imagination is already too gloomy, and should be enlivened; for which reason I do not name Mr. Gray's Eton Ode and Church-yard. Prior's Solomon (for I doubt his Alma, though far superior, is too learned for her limited reading) would be very proper. In truth, I think the cast of the Age (I mean in its compositions) is too sombre. The flimsy giantry of Ossian has introduced mountainous horrors. The exhibitions at Somerset-house are crowded with Brobdignag ghosts. Read and explain to her a charming poetic familiarity called the Blue-Stocking Club. If she has not your other pieces, might I take the liberty, madam, of begging you to buy them for her, and let me be in your debt? And that your lessons may win their way more easily, even though her heart be good, will you add a guinea or two, as you see proper?—And though I do not love to be named, yet, if it would encourage a subscription, I should have no scruple. It will be best to begin moderately; for, if she should take Hippocrene for Pactolus, we may hasten her ruin, not contribute to her fortune.

On recollection, you had better call me Mr. any-body, than name my name, which I fear is in bad odour at Bristol, on poor Chatterton's account; and it may be thought that I am atoning his ghost: though, if his friends would show my letters to him, you would find that I was as tender to him as to your milkwoman: but *that* they have never done, among other instances of their injustice. However, I beg you to say nothing on that subject, as I have declared I would not.

I have seen our excellent friend in Clarges-street: she complains as usual of her deafness; but I assure you it is at least not worse, nor is her weakness. Indeed I think both her and Mr. Vesey better than last winter. When will you *blue-stock* yourself and come amongst us? Consider how many of us are veterans; and though we do not trudge on foot according to the institution, we may be out at heels—and the heel, you know, madam, has never been privileged. I am, with the sincerest regard, madam,

Your much obliged and obedient humble servant,

HOR. WALPOLE.

Mrs. Vesey.

LETTER