

I know nothing of the war, but that we catch little French ships like crawfish. They have taken one of ours with governor — going to —. He is a very worthy young man, but so stiffened with fir —'s old fustian, that I am persuaded he is at this minute in the citadel of Nantes comparing himself to Regulus.

Gray has lately been here. He has begun an ode, which if he finishes equally, will, I think, inspirit all your drawing again. It is founded on an old tradition of Edward I. putting to death the Welsh bards. Nothing but you, or Salvator Rosa, and Nicolo Poussin, can paint up to the expressive horror and dignity of it. Don't think I mean to flatter you; all I would say is, that now the two latter are dead, you must of necessity be Gray's painter. In order to keep your talent alive, I shall next week send you flake white, brushes, oil, and the inclosed directions from Mr. Müntz, who is still at the Vine, and whom, for want of you, we labour hard to form. I shall put up in the parcel two or three prints of my eagle, which, as you never would draw it, is very moderately performed; and yet the drawing was much better than the engraving. I shall send you too a trifling snuff-box, only as a sample of the new manufacture at Battersea, which is done with copper-plates. Mr. Chute is at the Vine, where I cannot say any works go on in proportion to my impatience. I have left him an *inventory* of all I want to have done there; but I believe it may be bound up with the century of projects of that foolish marquis of Worcester, who printed a catalogue of titles of things, which he gave no directions to execute, nor I believe could. Adieu!

Yours ever,

HOR. WALPOLE.

---

LETTER XXX.

Arlington-street, September 30, 1755.

SOLOMON says, somewhere or other, I think it is in Castelvetro's, or Castelnovo's, edition—is not there such a one?—that the infatuation of a nation for a foolish minister is like that of a lover for an ugly woman: when once he opens his eyes, he wonders what the devil bewitched him.

This

This is the text to the present sermon in politics, which I shall not divide under three heads, but tell you at once, that no minister was ever nearer the precipice than ours has been. I did tell you, I believe, that Legge had refused to sign the warrant for the Hessian subsidy: in short, he heartily repented the quick coldness that followed his exaltation, waited for an opportunity of revenge, found this; and to be sure no vengeance ever took speedier strides. All the world revolted against subsidiary treaties; nobody was left to defend them but Murray, and he did not care to venture. Offers of graciousness, of cabinet counsellor, of chancellor of the exchequer, were made to right and left. Dr. Lee was conscientious; Mr. Pitt might be brought in compliment to his M. to digest one—But a system of subsidies!—Impossible! In short, the very first ministership was offered to be made over to my lord Granville—He begged to be excused—he was not fit for it.—Well! you laugh: all this is fact. At last we were forced to strike sail to Mr. Fox: he is named for secretary of state, with not only the lead, but the power of the house of commons. You ask, in the room of which secretary? What signifies of which? Why, I think of sir Thomas Robinson, who returns to his wardrobe, and lord Barrington comes into the war-office. This is the present state of things in this grave reasonable island: the union hug like two cats over a string; the rest are arming for opposition—But I will not promise you any more warlike winters; I remember how soon the campaign of the last was addled.

In Ireland, Mr. Conway has pacified all things: the Irish are to get as drunk as ever to the glorious and immortal memory of king George, and the prerogative is to be exalted as high as ever, by being obliged to give up the primate.—There! I think I have told you volumes: yet I know you will not be content; you will want to know something of the war and of America: but I assure you it is not the bon-ton to talk of either this week. We think not of the former, and of the latter we should think to very little purpose, for we have not heard a syllable more; Braddock's defeat still remains in the situation of the longest battle that ever was fought with nobody. Content your English spirit with knowing that there are very near three thousand French prisoners in England, taken out of several ships.

Yours ever,

HOR. WALPOLE.

## L E T T E R   XXXI.

Arlington-street, October 19, 1753.

DO you love royal quarrels? You may be served—I know you don't love an invasion—nay, that even passes my taste; *it will make too much party*. In short, the lady dowager Prudence begins to step a little over the threshold of that discretion which she has always hitherto so sanctimoniously observed. She is suspected of strange whims; so strange, as neither to like more German subsidies or more German matches. A strong faction, professedly against the treaties<sup>1</sup>, openly against Mr. Fox, and covertly under the banners of the aforesaid *lady Prudence*, arm from all quarters against the opening of the session. Her ladyship's eldest boy declares violently against being *bewolfenbutted*—a word which I don't pretend to understand, as it is not in Mr. Johnson's new dictionary. There! now I have been as enigmatic as ever I have accused you of being; and hoping you will not be able to expound my German hieroglyphics, I proceed to tell you in plain English that we are going to be invaded. I have within this day or two seen grandees of ten, twenty, and thirty thousand pounds a year, who are in a mortal fright: consequently, it would be impertinent in much less folk to tremble—and accordingly they don't. At court there is no doubt but an attempt will be made before Christmas.—I find valour is like virtue: impregnable as they boast themselves, it is discovered that on the first attack both lie strangely open! They are raising more ~~men~~, camps are to be formed in Kent and Suffex, the duke of Newcastle is frightened out of his wits, which though he has lost so often you know he always recovers, and as fresh as ever. Lord E. despairs of the commonwealth; and I am going to fortify my castle of Strawberry, according to an old charter I should have had, for embattling and making a deep ditch—But here am I laughing, when I really ought to cry both with my public eye and my private one. I have told you what I think ought to sluice my public eye: and your private eye too will moisten, when I tell you that poor miss Harriet Montagu<sup>2</sup> is

<sup>1</sup> Treaties of subsidy with the landgrave of Hesse and the empress of Russia for the defence of Hanover. E.

<sup>2</sup> Sister to Mr. George Montagu.

dead.



dead. She died about a fortnight ago; but having nothing else to tell you, I would not send a letter so far with only such melancholy news—and so, you will say, I staid till I could tell still more bad news. The truth is, I have for some time had two letters of yours to answer: it is three weeks since I wrote to you, and one begins to doubt whether one shall ever be to write again. I will hope all my best hopes, for I have no sort of intention at this time of day of finishing either as a martyr or a hero.—I rather intend to live and record both those professions, if need be—and I have no inclination to scuttle barefoot after a duke of Wolfenbottle's army, as Philip de Comines says he saw their graces of Exeter and Somerset trudge after the duke of Burgundy's. The invasion, though not much in fashion yet, begins like Moses's rod to swallow other news, both political and *suicidal*. Our politics I have sketched out to you, and can only add, that Mr. Fox's ministry does not as yet promise to be of long duration. When it was first thought that he had got the better of the duke of Newcastle, Charles Townshend said admirably, that he was sure the duchess, like the old cavaliers, would make a vow not to shave her beard till the restoration.

I can't recollect the least morsel of a fess or chevron of the Boynets: they did not happen to enter into any extinct genealogy for whose welfare I interest myself. I sent your letter to Mr. Chute, who is still under his own vine: Mr. Müntz is still with him, recovering of a violent fever.—Adieu! If memoirs don't grow too memorable, I think this season will produce a large crop.

Yours ever,

HOR. WALPOLE.

P. S. I believe I scarce ever mentioned to you last winter the follies of the opera: the impertinences of a great singer were too old and too common a topic. I must mention them now, when they rise to any improvement in the character of national folly. The Mingotti, a noble figure, a great mistress of music, and a most incomparable actress, surpassed any thing I ever saw for the extravagance of her humours. She never sung above one night in three, from a fever upon her temper; and never would act at all when Ricciarelli, the first man, was to be in dialogue with her. Her fevers grew so high, that the audience caught them, and hissed her more than once: she herself once turned and hissed again—*Tit pro tat geminat τον δαπαμειβομένην*.

—Well,



—Well, among the treaties which a secretary of state has negotiated this summer, he has contracted for a *succedaneum* to the Mingotti. In short, there is a woman hired to sing when the other shall be out of humour!

Here is a *World* by lord Chesterfield<sup>1</sup>: the first part is very pretty, till it runs into witticism. I have marked the passages I particularly like.

You would not draw Henry IV. at a siege for me: pray don't draw Louis XV.\*

---

LETTER XXXII.

Strawberry-hill, October 31, 1755.

AS the invasion is not ready, we are forced to take up with a victory. An account came yesterday, that general Johnson had defeated the French near the lake St. Sacrement, had killed one thousand, and taken the lieutenant-general who commanded them prisoner; his name is Diefkau, a Saxon, an esteemed sieve of marshal Saxe. By the printed account, which I inclose, Johnson showed great generalship and bravery. As the whole business was done by irregulars, it does not lessen the faults of Braddock, and the panic of his troops. If I were so disposed, I could conceive that there are heroes in the world who are not quite pleased with this extra-martinette success<sup>2</sup>—but we won't blame those Alexanders, till they have beaten the French in Kent! You know, it will be time enough to abuse them, when they have done all the service they can! The other inclosed paper is another *World*<sup>4</sup>, by my lord Chesterfield; not so pretty, I think, as the last; yet it has merit. While England and France are at war, and Mr. Fox and Mr. Pitt going to war, his lordship is coolly amusing himself at picquet at Bath with a Moravian baron, who would be in prison, if his creditors did not occasionally release him to play with and cheat my lord Chesterfield, as the only chance they have for recovering their money!

We expect the parliament to be thronged, and great animosities. I will

<sup>1</sup> Number 146, of the fifth volume.

England by Louis XV.

<sup>2</sup> Alluding to the subject Mr. Walpole had proposed to him for a picture, in Letter XXVII. and to the then expected invasion of

<sup>3</sup> Alluding to William duke of Cumberland.

<sup>4</sup> Number 148, of the fifth volume.

not send you one of the eggs that are laid; for so many political ones have been addled of late years, that I believe all the state game-cocks in the world are impotent.

I did not doubt but you would be struck with the death of poor B. I, t'other night, at White's, found a very remarkable entry in our very—very remarkable wager-book: "Lord — bets fir — twenty guineas that Nash outlives Cibber!" How odd that these two old creatures, selected for their antiquities, should live to see both their wagers put an end to their own lives! Cibber is within a few days of eighty-four, still hearty, and clear, and well. I told him I was glad to see him look so well: "'Faith," said he, "it is very well that I look at all!"—I' shall thank you for the Ormer shells and roots; and shall desire your permission to finish my letter already. As the parliament is to meet so soon, you are likely to be overpowered with my dispatches.—I have been thinning my wood of trees, and planting them out more into the field: I am fitting up the old kitchen for a china-room: I am building a bed-chamber for myself over the old blue-room, in which I intend to die, though not yet; and some trifles of this kind, which I do not specify to you, because I intend to reserve a little to be quite new to you. Adieu!

Yours ever,

HOR. WALPOLE.

---

LETTER XXXII.

Arlington-street, November 16, 1755.

NEVER was poor invulnerable immortality so soon brought to shame! Alack! I have had the gout! I would fain have persuaded myself that it was a sprain; and, then, that it was only the gout come to look for Mr. Chute at Strawberry-hill: but none of my evasions will do! I was, certainly, lame for two days; and though I repelled it—first, by getting wet-shod, and then by spirits of camphire; and though I have since tamed it more rationally by leaving off the little wine I drank, I still know where to look for it whenever I have an occasion for a political illness.—Come, my

constitution is not very much broken, when in four days after such a mortifying attack, I could sit in the house of commons, full as possible, from two at noon till past five in the morning, as we did but last Thursday. The new opposition attacked the address.—Who are the new opposition?—Why, the old opposition: Pitt and the Grenvilles; indeed, with Legge instead of sir George Lyttelton. Judge how entertaining it was to me, to hear Lyttelton answer Grenville, and Pitt Lyttelton! The debate, long and uninterrupted as it was, was a great deal of it extremely fine: the numbers did not answer to the merit: the new friends, the duke of Newcastle and Mr. Fox, had 311 to 105. The bon-mot in fashion is, that the staff was very good, but they wanted private men. Pitt surpassed himself, and then I need not tell you that he surpassed Cicero and Demosthenes. What a figure would they, with their formal, laboured, cabinet orations, make vis-à-vis his manly vivacity and dashing eloquence at one o'clock in the morning, after sitting in that heat for eleven hours! He spoke above an hour and a half, with scarce a bad sentence: the most admired part was a comparison he drew of the two parts of the new administration, to the conflux of the Rhône and the Saone; “the latter a gentle, feeble, languid stream, languid but not deep; the other a boisterous and overbearing torrent: but they join at last; and long may they continue united, to the comfort of each other, and to the glory, honour and happiness of this nation!” I hope you are not mean-spirited enough to dread an invasion, when the senatorial contests are reviving in the temple of Concord.—*But will it make a party?* Yes, truly; I never saw so promising a prospect. Would not it be cruel, at such a period, to be laid up?

I have only had a note from you to promise me a letter; but it is not arrived:—but the partridges are, and well; and I thank you.

*England seems returning*: for those who are not in parliament, there are nightly riots at Drury-lane, where there is an anti-Gallican party against some French dancers. The young men of quality have protected them till last night, when, being opera night, the galleries were victorious.

Montagu writes me many kind things for you: he is in Cheshire, but

<sup>1</sup> He means the disposition towards mobs and rioting at public places, which was then common among young men, and had been a sort of fashion in his early youth. E.



TO RICHARD BENTLEY, Esq.

347

comes to town this winter. Adieu ! I have so much to say, that I have time to say but very little.

Yours ever,

HOR. WALPOLE.

P. S. G. Selwyn hearing much talk of a sea-war or a continent, said, "I am for a sea-war and a *continent* admiral."

---

L E T T E R XXXIV.

Arlington-street, December 17, 1755.

AFTER an immense interval, I have at last received a long letter from you, of a very old date (November 5th), which amply indemnifies my patience; nay, almost makes me amends for your blindness; for I think, unless you had totally lost your eyes, you would not refuse me a pleasure so easy to yourself, as now and then sending me a drawing.—I can't call it laziness—one may be too idle to amuse one's self; but sure one is never so fond of idleness as to prefer it to the power of obliging a person one loves! And yet I own your letter has made me amends; the wit of your pen recompenses the stupidity of your pencil; the *causus* you have taken up supplies a little the *artem* you have relinquished. I could quote twenty passages that have charmed me: the picture of lady Prudence and her family; your idol that gave you hail when you prayed for sunshine; misfortune the teacher of superstition; unmarried people being the fashion in heaven; the *Spectator*-hacked phrases; Mr. Spence's blindness to Pope's mortality; and above all, the criticism on the queen in Hamlet is most delightful. There never was so good a ridicule of all the formal commentators on Shakespear, nor so artful a banter on him himself for so improperly making her majesty deal in doubles entendres at a funeral! In short, I never heard as much wit except in a speech with which Mr. Pitt concluded the debate t'other day on the treaties. His antagonists endeavour to disarm him; but as fast as they deprive him of one weapon, he finds a better—I never suspected him of such an universal armoury—I knew he had a Gorgon's head composed of bayonets and pistols, but little thought that he could tickle to death with a feather. Oh the first debate on these famous treaties, last Wednesday,

Y y 2

Hume

Hume Campbell, whom the duke of N. had retained as the most abusive counsel he could find against Pitt (and hereafter perhaps against Fox), attacked the former for *eternal invectives*. Oh! since the last Philippic of Billingsgate memory, you never heard such an invective as Pitt returned—Hume Campbell was annihilated! Pitt like an angry wasp seems to have left his sting in the wound—and has since assumed a style of delicate ridicule and repartee—But think how charming a ridicule must that be that lasts and rises, flash after flash, for an hour and a half! Some day or other perhaps you will see some of the glittering splinters that I gathered up. I have written under his print these lines, which are not only full as just as the original, but have not the tautology of *loftiness* and *majesty*:

Three orators in distant ages born,  
Greece, Italy, and England did adorn:  
The first in loftiness of thought surpass'd,  
The next in language, but in both the last:  
The pow'r of nature could no farther go;  
To make a third, she join'd the former two.

Indeed we have wanted such an entertainment to enliven and make the fatigue supportable. We sat on Wednesday till ten at night; on Friday till past three in the morning; on Monday till between nine and ten. We have profusion of orators, and many very great, which is surprising so soon after the leaden age of the late right honourable Henry Saturnus! The majorities are as great as in Saturnus's *golden age*.

Our changes are begun; but not being made at once, our very changes change! Lord Duplin and lord Darlington are made joint pay-masters: George Selwyn says, that no act ever showed so much the duke of Newcastle's absolute power, as his being able to make lord Darlington a *pay-master*. That so often *repatriated* and *reprostituted* prostitute Doddington is again to be treasurer of the navy: and he again drags out Harry Furnese into the treasury. The duke of Leeds is to be cofferer, and lord Sandwich emerges so far as to be chief justice in Eyre.—The other parts by the comedians—I don't repeat their names, because perhaps the fellow that to-day is designed to act Guildenstern, may to-morrow be destined to play

*half* the part of the second grave-digger. However, they are all to kiss hands on Saturday. Mr. Pitt told me to-day that he should not go to Bath till next week. I fancy, said I, you scarce stay to kiss hands.

With regard to the invasion, which you are so glad to be allowed to fear, I must tell you that it is quite gone out of fashion again, and I really believe was dressed up for a vehicle (as the apothecaries call it) to make us swallow the treaties. All along the coast of France they are much more afraid of an invasion than we are!

As obliging as you are in sending me plants, I am determined to thank you for nothing but drawings. I am not to be bribed to silence, when you really disoblige me. Mr. Müntz has ordered more cloths for you. I even shall send you books unwillingly; and indeed why should I? As you are stone blind, what can you do with them? The few I shall send you, for there are scarce any new, will be a pretty dialogue by Crebillon; a strange imperfect poem, written by Voltaire when he was very young, which with some charming strokes has a great deal of humour manqué and of impiety estropiée; and an historical romance, by him too, of the last war, in which is so outrageous a lying anecdote of old Marlborough, as would have convinced her, that when poets write history they stick as little to truth in prose as in verse. Adieu!

Yours ever,

HOR. WALPOLE.

---

LETTER XXXV.

Strawberry-hill, January 6, 1756.

I AM quite angry with you; you write me letters so entertaining, that they make me almost forgive your not drawing: now, you know, next to being disagreeable there is nothing so shocking as being too agreeable. However, as I am a true philosopher, and can resist any thing I like, when it is to obtain any thing I like better, I declare, that if you don't coin the vast ingot of colours and cloth that I have sent you, I will burn your letters unopened.



Thank you for all your concern about my gout—but I shall not mind you; it shall appear in my stomach, before I attempt to keep it out of it by a fortification of wine: I only drank a little two days after being very much fatigued in the house, and the worthy pioneer began to cry *swear* from my foot the next day. However, though I am determined to feel young still, I grow to take the hints age gives me—I come hither oftener, I leave the town to the young; and though the busy turn that the world has taken draws me back into it, I excuse it to myself, and call it retiring into politics. From hence I must retire, or I shall be drowned; my cellars are four feet under water, the Thames gives itself Rhone airs, and the meadows are more flooded than when you first saw this place and thought it so dreary. We seem to have taken out our earthquake in rain: since the third week in June, there have not been five days together of dry weather. They tell us that at Colnbrook and Staines they are forced to live in the first floor. Mr. Chute is at the Vine, but I don't expect to hear from him; no post but a dove can get from thence. Every post brings new earthquakes; they have felt them in France, Sweden, and Germany:—what a convulsion there has been in nature! Sir Isaac Newton, somewhere in his works, has this beautiful expression, The globe will want *manum emendatricem*.

I have been here this week with only Mr. Müntz; from whence you may conclude I have been employed—Memoires thrive apace. He seems to wonder (for he has not a little of your indolence, I am not surprised you took to him) that I am continually occupied every minute of the day, reading, writing, forming plans: in short, you know me. He is an inoffensive good creature, but had rather ponder over a foreign gazette than a pallet.

I expect to find George Montagu in town to-morrow: his brother has at last got a regiment. Not content with having deserved it, before he got it, by distinguished bravery and indefatigable duty, he persists in meriting it still. He immediately, unasked, gave the chaplainship (which others always sell advantageously) to his brother's parson at Greatworth. I am almost afraid it will make my commendation of this really handsome action look interested, when I add, that he has obliged me in the same way, by making Mr. Mann his clothier, before I had time to apply for it. Adieu! I find no news in town.

Yours ever,

HOR. WALPOLE.

L E T T E R S

FROM

THE HON. HORACE WALPOLE

TO

THOMAS GRAY,

From the Year 1753 to the Year 1768 :

WITH

SOME LETTERS IN ANSWER

FROM MR. GRAY.



*Reynolds pinx.*

*Heath Sculp.*

*Thomas Gray.*

*Pub<sup>d</sup> as the Act directs May 2<sup>d</sup> 1798. by G.G. & J. Robinson Paternoster Row London.*



# LETTERS

BETWEEN

THE HON. HORACE WALPOLE

AND

THOMAS GRAY,

From the Year 1753 to the Year 1768.

---

LETTER I.

TO THOMAS GRAY.

Arlington-street, Feb. 20, 1753.

I AM very sorry that the haste I made to deliver you from your uneasiness the first moment after I received your letter, should have made me express myself in a manner to have the quite contrary effect from what I intended. You well know how rapidly and carelessly I always write my letters: the note you mention was written in a still greater hurry than ordinary, and merely to put you out of pain. I had not seen Doddsley, consequently could only tell you that I did not doubt but he would have no objection to satisfy you, as you was willing to prevent his being a loser by the plate<sup>1</sup>. Now, from this declaration, how is it possible for you to have for

<sup>1</sup> This was a print of Mr. Gray, after the portrait of him by Eckardt, at Strawberry-hill, from which the print prefixed to these letters is taken. It was intended to have been prefixed to Doddsley's 4th edition of his Odes, with Mr. Bentley's designs; but Mr. Gray's extreme repugnance to the proposal obliged his friends to drop it. E.



one moment put such a construction upon my words, as would have been a downright stupid brutality, unprovoked? It is impossible for me to recollect my very expression, but I am confident that I have repeated the whole substance.

How the bookseller would be less a loser by being at more expence, I can easily explain to you. He feared the price of half-a-guinea would seem too high to most purchasers. If by the expence of ten guineas more he could make the book appear so much more rich and showy as to induce people to think it cheap, the profits from selling many more copies would amply recompense him for his additional disbursement.

The thought of having the head engraved was entirely Dodsley's own, and against my opinion, as I concluded it would be against yours; which made me determine to acquaint you with it before its appearance.

When you reflect on what I have said now, you will see very clearly, that I had and could have no other possible meaning in what I wrote last. You might justly have accused me of neglect, if I had deferred giving you all the satisfaction in my power, as soon as ever I knew your uneasiness.

The head I give up. The title I think will be wrong, and not answer your purpose; for, as the drawings are evidently calculated for the poems, why will the improper disposition of the word *designs* before *poems* make the edition less yours? I am as little convinced that there is any affectation in leaving out the *Mr.* before your names: it is a barbarous addition: the other is simple and classic; a rank I cannot help thinking due to both the poet and painter. Without ranging myself among classics, I assure you, were I to print any thing with my name, it should be plain Horace Walpole: *Mr.* is one of the Gothicisms I abominate<sup>1</sup>. The explanation<sup>2</sup> was certainly added for people who have not eyes:—such are almost all who have seen Mr. Bentley's drawings, and think to compliment him by mistaking them for prints. Alas! the generality want as much to have the words a man,

<sup>1</sup> By Mr. Walpole's having prefixed this "Gothicism" to his name in several works published subsequent to the date of this letter, it is to be supposed that Mr. Gray's opinion on this point had converted Mr. Walpole. E.

<sup>2</sup> Of Mr. Bentley's design.

a cock, written under his drawings, as under the most execrable hieroglyphics of Egypt, or of sign-post painters!

I will say no more now, but that you must not wonder if I am partial to you and yours, when you can write as you do and yet feel so little vanity. I have used freedoms enough with your writings to convince you I speak truth: I praise and scold Mr. Bentley immoderately, as I think he draws well or ill: I never think it worth my while to do either, especially to blame, where there are not generally vast excellencies.—Good-night!—Don't suspect me when I have no fault but impatience to make you easy.

Yours ever,

HOR. WALPOLE.

## LETTER II.

Arlington-street, Feb. 15, 1759.

THE enclosed, which I have this minute received from Mr. Bentley, explains much that I had to say to you—yet I have a question or two more.

Who and what sort of man is a Mr. Sharp of Benet? I have received a most obliging and genteel letter from him, with the very letter of Edward VI. which you was so good as to send me. I have answered his, but should like to know a little more about him. Pray thank the dean of Lincoln too for me: I am much obliged to him for his offer, but had rather draw upon his *Lincolnship* than his *Cambridgehood*. In the library of the former are some original letters of Tiptoft, as you will find in my catalogue. When Dr. Greene is there, I shall be glad if he will let me have them copied.

I will thank you if you will look in some provincial history of Ireland for Odo (Hugh) Oneil king of Ulster. When did he live? I have got a most curious seal of his, and know no more of him than of Ouacraw king of the Pawwaws.

<sup>1</sup> He was master of Benet-college, Cambridge.

Z z z

I wanted



# 356. LETTERS BETWEEN THE HON. HORACE WALPOLE

I wanted to ask you, whether you, or any body that you believe in, believe in the queen of Scots' letter to queen Elizabeth'.—If it is genuine, I don't wonder she cut her head off—but I think it must be some forgery that was not made use of.

Now to my distress.—You must have seen an advertisement, perhaps the book itself, the villainous book itself, that has been published to defend me against the Critical Review<sup>2</sup>. I have been childishly unhappy about it, and had drawn up a protestation or affidavit of my knowing nothing of it; but my friends would not let me publish it. I sent to the printer, who would not discover the author—nor could I guess. They tell me nobody can suspect my being privy to it: but there is an intimacy affected that I think will deceive many—and yet I must be the most arrogant fool living, if I could know and suffer any body to speak of me in that style. For God's sake, do all you can for me, and publish my abhorrence. To-day I am told that it is that puppy doctor Hill, who has chosen to make war with the magazines through my sides. I could pardon him any abuse, but I never can forgive this *friendship*. Adieu!

Yours ever,

HOR. WALPOLE.

## LETTER III.

Paris, Nov. 19, 1765.

YOU are very kind to enquire so particularly after my gout. I wish I may not be too circumstantial in my answer: but you have tapped a dangerous topic; I can talk gout by the hour. It is my great mortification, and has disappointed all the hopes that I had built on temperance and hardiness. I have resisted like a hermit, and exposed myself to all weathers and seasons like a smuggler; and in vain. I have however still so much of the obsti-

<sup>1</sup> See Murden's State Papers, page 58, for this curious letter. E.

<sup>2</sup> It was called "Observations on the account given of the Catalogue of Royal and Noble Authors of England, &c. &c. in article vi. of the

Critical Review, N<sup>o</sup> 25, for December 1758, where the unwarrantable liberties taken with that work and the honourable author of it are examined and exposed."

nacy of both professions left, that I think I shall continue, and cannot obey you in keeping myself warm. I have gone through my second fit under one blanket, and already go about in a silk waistcoat with my bosom unbuttoned. In short, I am as prejudiced to my regimen, though so ineffectual, as I could have been to all I expected from it. The truth is, I am almost as willing to have the gout as to be liable to catch cold ; and must run up stairs and down, in and out of doors, when I will, or I cannot have the least satisfaction. This will convince you how readily I comply with another of your precepts, walking as soon as I am able.—For receipts, you may trust me for making use of none : I would not see a physician at the worst, but have quacked myself as boldly as quacks treat others. I laughed at your idea of quality-receipts, it came so à-propos. There is not a man or woman here that is not a perfect old nurse, and who does not talk gruel and anatomy with equal fluency and ignorance. • One instance shall serve : madame de Bouzols, marshal Berwick's daughter, assured me there was nothing so good for the gout, as to preserve the parings of my nails in a bottle close stopped. When I try any illustrious nostrum, I shall give the preference to this.

So much for the gout ! I told you what was coming. As to the ministry, I know and care very little about them. I told you and told ~~them~~ long ago, that if ever a change happened I would bid adieu to politics for ever. Do me the justice to allow that I have not altered with the times. I was so impatient to put this resolution in execution, that I hurried out of England before I was sufficiently recovered. I shall not run the same hazard again in haste ; but will stay here till I am perfectly well, and the season of warm weather coming on or arrived ; though the charms of Paris have not the least attraction for me, nor would keep me here an hour on their own account. For the city itself, I cannot conceive where my eyes were : it is the ugliest, beastly town in the universe. I have not seen a mouthful of verdure out of it, nor have they any thing green but their treillage and window-shutters. Trees cut into fire-shovels, and stuck into pedestals of chalk, compose their country. Their boasted knowledge of society is reduced to talking of their suppers, and every malady they have about them, or know of. The dauphin is at the point of death : every morning the physicians frame an account of him ; and happy is he or she who can produce a copy of this lie, called a *bulletin*. The night before last, one of these was produced at supper where I was : it was read, and said he had had *une evacuation fatide*.

I beg

## 358 LETTERS BETWEEN THE HON. HORACE WALPOLE

I beg your pardon, though you are not at supper. The old lady of the house (who by the way is quite blind, was the regent's mistress for a fortnight, and is very agreeable) called out, Oh! they have forgot to mention that he threw down his chamber-pot, and was forced to change his bed. There were present several women of the first rank; as madame de la Valiere, whom you remember duchesse de Vaujour, and who is still miraculously pretty though fifty-three; a very handsome madame de Forcalquier, and others—nor was this conversation at all particular to that evening.

Their gaiety is not greater than their delicacy—but I will not expatiate. In short, they are another people from what they were. They may be growing wise, but the intermediate passage is dulness. Several of the women are agreeable, and some of the men; but the latter are in general vain and ignorant. The *scavants*—I beg their pardons, the *philosophes*—are insupportable, superficial, overbearing and fanatic: they preach incessantly, and their avowed doctrine is atheism; you would not believe how openly—Don't wonder therefore if I should return a Jesuit. Voltaire himself does not satisfy them. One of their lady-devotes said of him, *Il est bigot, c'est un dèiste*.

I am as little pleased with their taste in trifles. Crebillon is entirely out of fashion, and Marivaux a proverb: *marivauder* and *marivaudage* are established terms for being prolix and tiresome.—I thought that we were fallen, but they are ten times lower.

Notwithstanding all I have said, I have found two or three societies that please me; am amused with the novelty of the whole, and should be sorry not to have come. The Dumenil is, if possible, superior to what you remember. I am sorry not to see the Clairon; but several persons whose judgments seem the soundest prefer the former. Preville is admirable in low comedy. The mixture of Italian comedy and comic operas prettily written, and set to Italian music, at the same theatre, is charming, and gets the better both of their operas and French comedy; the latter of which is seldom full, with all its merit. *Petit-mâtres* are obsolete, like our lords Fop-pington—*Tout le monde est philosophe*—When I grow very sick of this last nonsense, I go and compose myself at the Chartreuse, where I am almost tempted to prefer Le Sœur to every painter I know—Yet what new old treasures



treasures are come to light, routed out of the Louvre, and thrown into new lumber-rooms at Versailles!—But I have not room to tell you what I have seen! I will keep this and other chapters for Strawberry. Adieu! and thank you.

Yours ever,

HOR. WALPOLE.

Old Mariette has shown me a print by Diepenbecke of the duke and duchess of Newcastle at dinner with their family. You would oblige me, if you would look into all their graces' folios, and see if it is not a frontispiece to some one of them. Then he has such a Petitot of madame d'Olonne! The Pompadour offered him fifty louis for it—Alack, so would I!

---

#### LETTER IV.

Cambridge, December 13, 1765.

I AM very much obliged to you for the detail you enter into on the subject of your own health: in this you cannot be too circumstantial for me, who had received no account of you, but at second hand—such as, that you were dangerously ill, and therefore went to France; that you meant to try a better climate, and therefore staid at Paris; that you had relapsed, and were confined to your bed, and extremely in vogue, and supped in the best company, and were at all public diversions. I rejoice to find (improbable as it seemed) that all the wonderful part of this is strictly true, and that the serious part has been a little exaggerated. This latter I conclude not so much from your own account of yourself, as from the spirits in which I see you write; and long may they continue to support you! I mean in a reasonable degree of elevation: but if (take notice) they are so volatile, so flippant, as to suggest any of those doctrines of health, which you preach with all the zeal of a French atheist; at least, if they really do influence your practice; I utterly renounce them and all their works. They are *evil spirits*, and will lead you to destruction.—You have long built your hopes on temperance, you say, and hardiness. On the first point we are agreed. The second has totally disappointed you, and therefore

you

I must tell you, that upon cleaning an old picture here at St. John's Lodge, which I always took for a Holbein; on a ring, which the figure wears, they have found H. H. It has been always called B. V. Fisher; but is plainly a layman, and probably sir Anthony Denny, who was a benefactor to the college.

What is come of your Sevigné-curiosity? I should be glad of a line now and then, when you have leisure. I wish you well, and am ever

Yours,

T. GRAY.

---

LETTER V.

Paris, January 25, 1766.

I AM much indebted to you for your kind letter and advice; and though it is late to thank you for it, it is at least a stronger proof that I do not forget it. However, I am a little obstinate, as you know, on the chapter of health, and have persisted through this Siberian winter in not adding a grain to my clothes, and in going open-breasted without an under-waistcoat. In short, though I like extremely to live, it must be in my own way, as long as I can: it is not youth I court, but liberty; and I think making one's self tender, is issuing a *general warrant* against one's own person. I suppose I shall submit to confinement, when I cannot help it; but I am indifferent enough to life not to care if it ends soon after my prison begins.

I have not delayed so long to answer your letter, from not thinking of it, or from want of matter, but from want of time. I am constantly occupied, engaged, amused, till I cannot bring a hundredth part of what I have to say into the compass of a letter. You will lose nothing by this: you know my volubility, when I am full of new subjects; and I have at least many hours of conversation for you at my return. One does not learn a whole nation in four or five months; but, for the time, few, I believe, have seen, studied, or got so much acquainted with the French as I have.

I must tell you, that upon cleaning an old picture here at St. John's Lodge, which I always took for a Holbein; on a ring, which the figure wears, they have found H. H. It has been always called B. V. Fisher; but is plainly a layman, and probably sir Anthony Denny, who was a benefactor to the college.

What is come of your Sevigné-curiosity? I should be glad of a line now and then, when you have leisure. I wish you well, and am ever

Yours,

T. GRAY.

#### LETTER V.

Paris, January 25, 1766.

I AM much indebted to you for your kind letter and advice; and though it is late to thank you for it, it is at least a stronger proof that I do not forget it. However, I am a little obstinate, as you know, on the chapter of health, and have persisted through this Siberian winter in not adding a grain to my clothes, and in going open-breasted without an under-waistcoat. In short, though I like extremely to live, it must be in my own way, as long as I can: it is not youth I court, but liberty; and I think making one's self tender, is issuing a *general warrant* against one's own person. I suppose I shall submit to confinement, when I cannot help it; but I am indifferent enough to life not to care if it ends soon after my prison begins.

I have not delayed so long to answer your letter, from not thinking of it, or from want of matter, but from want of time. I am constantly occupied, engaged, amused, till I cannot bring a hundredth part of what I have to say into the compass of a letter. You will lose nothing by this: you know my volubility, when I am full of new subjects; and I have at least many hours of conversation for you at my return. One does not learn a whole nation in four or five months; but, for the time, few, I believe, have seen, studied, or got so much acquainted with the French as I have.



## 362. LETTERS BETWEEN THE HON. HORACE WALPOLE

By what I said of their religious or rather irreligious opinions, you must not conclude their people of quality, atheists—at least not the men—Happily for them, poor souls! they are not capable of going so far into thinking. They assent to a great deal, because it is the fashion, and because they don't know how to contradict. They are ashamed to defend the Roman catholic religion, because it is quite exploded; but I am convinced they believe it in their hearts. They hate the parliaments and the philosophers, and are rejoiced that they may still idolize royalty. At present too they are a little triumphant: the court has shown a little spirit, and the parliaments much less: but as the duc de Choiseul, who is very fluttering, unsettled, and inclined to the philosophers, has made a compromise with the parliament of Bretagne, the parliaments might venture out again, if, as I fancy will be the case, they are not glad to drop a cause, of which they began to be a little weary of the inconveniencies.

The generality of the men, and more than the generality, are dull and empty. They have taken up gravity, thinking it was philosophy and English, and so have acquired nothing in the room of their natural levity and cheerfulness. However, as their high opinion of their own country remains, for which they can no longer assign any reason, they are contemptuous and reserved, instead of being ridiculously, consequently pardonably, impertinent. I have wondered, knowing my own countrymen, that we had attained such a superiority.—I wonder no longer, and have a little more respect for English *heads* than I had.

The women do not seem of the same country: if they are less gay than they were, they are more informed, enough to make them very conversable. I know six or seven with very superior understandings; some of them with wit, or with softness, or very good sense.

Madame Geoffrin, of whom you have heard much, is an extraordinary woman, with more common sense than I almost ever met with. Great quickness in discovering characters, penetration in going to the bottom of them, and a pencil that never fails in a likeness—seldom a favourable one. She exacts and preserves, spite of her birth and their nonsensical prejudices about nobility, great court and attention. This she acquires by a thousand little arts and offices of friendship; and by a freedom and severity, which

which seems to be her sole end of drawing a concourse to her; for she insists on scolding those she inveigles to her. She has little taste and less knowledge, but protects artisans and authors, and courts a few people to have the credit of serving her dependents. She was bred under the famous madame Tencin, who advised her never to refuse any man; for, said her mistress, though nine in ten should not care a farthing for you, the tenth may live to be an useful friend. She did not adopt or reject the whole plan, but fully retained the purport of the maxim. In short, she is an epitome of empire, subsisting by rewards and punishments. Her great enemy, madame du Deffand, was for a short time mistress of the regent, is now very old and stone blind, but retains all her vivacity, wit, memory, judgment, passions and agreeableness. She goes to operas, plays, suppers, and Versailles; gives suppers twice a week; has every thing new read to her; makes new songs and epigrams; aye, admirably, and remembers every one that has been made these fourscore years. She corresponds with Voltaire, dictates charming letters to him, contradicts him, is no bigot to him or any body, and laughs both at the clergy and the philosophers. In a dispute, into which she easily falls, she is very warm, and yet scarce ever in the wrong: her judgment on every subject is as just as possible; on every point of conduct as wrong as possible: for she is all love and hatred, passionate for her friends to enthusiasm, still anxious to be loved, I don't mean by lovers, and a vehement enemy, but openly. As she can have no amusement but conversation, the least solitude and ennui are insupportable to her, and put her into the power of several worthless people, who eat her suppers when they can eat nobody's of higher rank; wink to one another and laugh at her; hate her because she has forty times more parts—and venture to hate her because she is not rich. She has an old friend whom I must mention, a monsieur Pondeville, author of the *Fat puni*, and the *Complaisant*, and of those pretty novels, the *Comte de Cominge*, the *Siege of Calais*, and *les Malheurs de l'Amour*. Would not you expect this old man to be very agreeable? He can be so, but seldom is: yet he has another very different and very amusing talent, the art of parody, and is unique in his kind. He composes tales to the tunes of long dances: for instance, he has adapted the Regent's *Daphnis and Chloe* to one, and made it ten times more indecent; but is so old and sings it so well, that it is permitted in all companies. He has succeeded still better in *les caractères de la danse*, to which he has adapted words that express all the characters

## 364. LETTERS BETWEEN THE HON. HORACE WALPOLE

of love. With all this, he has not the least idea of cheerfulness in conversation; seldom speaks but on grave subjects, and not often on them; is a humourist, very supercilious, and wrapt up in admiration of his own country, as the only judge of his merit. His air and look are cold and forbidding; but ask him to sing, or praise his works, his eyes and smiles open and brighten up. In short, I can show him to you: the self-applauding poet in Hogarth's *Rake's Progress*, the second print, is so like his very features and very wig, that you would know him by it, if you came hither—for he certainly will not go to you.

Madame de Mirepoix's understanding is excellent of the useful kind, and can be so when she pleases of the agreeable kind. She has read, but seldom shows it, and has perfect taste. Her manner is cold, but very civil; and she conceals even the blood of Lorrain, without ever forgetting it. Nobody in France knows the world better, and nobody is personally so well with the king. She is false, artful, and insinuating beyond measure when it is her interest, but indolent and a coward. She never had any passion but gaming, and always loses. For ever paying court, the sole produce of a life of art is to get money from the king to carry on a course of paying debts or contracting new ones, which she discharges as fast as she is able. She advertised devotion to get made dame du palais to the queen; and the very next day this princess of Lorrain was seen riding backwards with madame Pompadour in the latter's coach. When the king was stabbed and heartily frightened, the mistress took a panic too, and consulted d'Argenson, whether she had not best make off in time. He hated her, and said, By all means. \* Madame de Mirepoix advised her to stay. The king recovered his spirits, d'Argenson was banished, and la marechale inherited part of the mistress's credit.—I must interrupt my history of illustrious women with an anecdote of monsieur de Maurepas, with whom I am much acquainted, and who has one of the few heads that approach to good ones, and who luckily for us was disgraced, and the marine dropped, because it was his favourite object and province. He employed Pondeville to make a song on the Pompadour: it was clever and bitter, and did not spare even majesty. This was Maurepas absurd enough to sing at supper at Versailles. Banishment ensued; and lest he should ever be restored, the mistress persuaded the king that he had poisoned her predecessor madame de Chateauroux. Maurepas is very agreeable, and exceedingly cheerful;



cheerful ; yet I have seen a transient silent cloud when politics are talked of.

Madame de Boufflers, who was in England, is a *çavante*, mistress of the prince of Conti, and very desirous of being his wife. She is two women, the upper and the lower. I need not tell you that the lower is galant, and still has pretensions. The upper is very sensible too, and has a measured eloquence that is just and pleasing—but all is spoiled by an unrelaxed attention to applause. You would think she was always sitting for her picture to her biographer.

Madame de Rochfort is different from all the rest. Her understanding is just and delicate; with a finesse of wit that is the result of reflection. Her manner is soft and feminine, and, though a *çavante*, without any declared pretensions. She is the *decent* friend of monsieur de Nivernois, for you must not believe a syllable of what you read in their novels. It requires the greatest curiosity, or the greatest habitude, to discover the smallest connection between the sexes here. No familiarity, but under the veil of friendship, is permitted, and love's dictionary is as much prohibited, as at first sight one should think his ritual was. All you hear, and that pronounced with nonchalance, is, that *monsieur un tel* has had *madame une telle*. The duc de Nivernois has parts, and writes at the top of the mediocre, but, as madame Geoffrin says, is *manqué par tout*; *guerrier manqué*, *ambassadeur manqué*, *homme d'affaires manqué*, and *auteur manqué*—no, he is not *homme de naissance manqué*. He would think freely, but has some ambition of being governor to the dauphin, and is more afraid of his wife and daughter, who are ecclesiastic fagots. The former cut-chatters the duke of Newcastle; and the latter, madame de Gisors, exhausts Mr. Pitt's eloquence in defence of the archbishop of Paris. Monsieur de Nivernois lives in a small circle of dependent admirers, and madame de Rochfort is high priestess for a small salary of credit.

The duchess of Choiseul, the only young one of these heroines, is not very pretty, but has fine eyes, and is a little model in wax-work, which not being allowed to speak for some time as incapable, has a hesitation and modesty, the latter of which the court has not cured, and the former of which is atoned for by the most interesting sound of voice, and forgotten

in the most elegant turn and propriety of expression. Oh! it is the gentlest, amiable, civil, little creature that ever came out of a fairy egg! So just in its phrases and thoughts, so attentive and good-natured! Every body loves it, but its husband, who prefers his own sister the duchesse de Grammont, an amazonian, fierce, haughty dame, who loves and hates arbitrarily, and is detested. Madame de Choiseul, passionately fond of her husband, was the martyr of this union, but at last submitted with a good grace; has gained a little credit with him, and is still believed to idolize him—But I doubt it—she takes too much pains to profess it.

I cannot finish my list without adding a much more common character—but more complete in its kind than any of the foregoing, the marechale de Luxembourg. She has been very handsome, very abandoned, and very mischievous. Her beauty is gone, her lovers are gone, and she thinks the devil is coming. This dejection has softened her into being rather agreeable, for she has wit and good-breeding; but you would swear, by the restlessness of her person and the horrors she cannot conceal, that she had signed the compact, and expected to be called upon in a week for the performance.

I could add many pictures, but none so remarkable. In those I send you, there is not a feature bestowed gratis or exaggerated. For the beauties, of which there are a few considerable, as mesdames de Brionne, de Monaco, et d'Egmont, they have not yet lost their characters, nor got any.

You must not attribute my intimacy with Paris to curiosity alone. An accident unlocked the doors for me. That *passé-par-tout*, called the fashion, has made them fly open—and what do you think was that fashion?—I myself—Yes, like queen Elinor in the ballad, I sunk at Charing-cross, and have risen in the fauxbourg St. Germain. A *plaisanterie* on Rousseau, whose arrival here in his way to you brought me acquainted with many anecdotes conformable to the idea I had conceived of him, got about, was liked much more than it deserved, spread like wild-fire, and made me the subject of conversation. Rousseau's devotees were offended. Madame de Boufflers, with a tone of sentiment, and the accents of lamenting humanity, abused me heartily, and then complained to myself with the utmost softness. I acted contrition, but had like to have spoiled all, by growing dreadfully tired of a  
second

second lecture from the prince of Conti, who took up the ball, and made himself the hero of a history wherein he had nothing to do. I listened, did not understand half he said (nor he neither), forgot the rest, said Yes when I should have said No, yawned when I should have smiled, and was very penitent when I should have rejoiced at my pardon. Madame de Boufflers was more distressed, for he owned twenty times more than I had said: she frowned, and made him signs; but she had wound up his clack, and there was no stopping it. The moment she grew angry, the house of the lord grew charmed, and it has been my fault if I am not at the head of a numerous sect:—but when I left a triumphant party in England, I did not come hither to be at the head of a fashion. However, I have been sent for about like an African prince or a learned canary-bird, and was, in particular, carried by force to the princess of Talmond, the queen's cousin, who lives in a charitable apartment in the Luxembourg, and was sitting on a small bed hung with faints and Sobieskis, in a corner of one of those vast chambers, by two blinking tapers. I stumbled over a cat, a foot-stool, and a chamber-pot in my journey to her presence. She could not find a syllable to say to me, and the visit ended with her begging a lap-dog. Thank the Lord! though this is the first month, it is the last week, of my reign; and I shall resign my crown with great satisfaction to a bouillie of chesnuts, which is just invented, and whose annals will be illustrated by so many indigestions, that Paris will not want any thing else these three weeks. I will enclose the fatal letter<sup>\*</sup> after I have finished this enormous one; to which I will only add, that nothing has interrupted my Seigné-researches but the frost. The abbé de Malesherbes has given me full power to ransack Livry. I did not tell you, that by great accident, when I thought on nothing less, I stumbled on an original picture of the comte de Grammont. Adieu! You are generally in London in March: I shall be there by the end of it.

Yours ever,

HOR. WALPOLE.

\* The letter from the king of Prussia to Rousseau.



## LETTER VI.

Feb. 14, 1768. Pembroke College.

I RECEIVED the book<sup>1</sup> you were so good to send me, and have read it again (indeed I could hardly be said to have read it before) with attention and with pleasure. Your second edition is so rapid in its progress, that it will now hardly answer any purpose to tell you either my own objections, or those of other people. Certain it is, that you are universally read here; but what *we* think, is not so easy to come at. We stay as usual to see the success, to learn the judgment of the town, to be directed in our opinions by those of more competent judges. If they like you, we shall; if any one of name write against you, we give you up: for we are modest and diffident of ourselves, and not without reason. History in particular is not our *fort*; for (the truth is) we read only modern books and the pamphlets of the day. I have heard it objected, that you raise doubts and difficulties, and do not satisfy them by telling us what was *really* the case. I have heard you charged with disrespect to the king of Prussia; and above all to king William, and the revolution. These are seriously the most sensible things I have heard said, and all that I can recollect. If you please to justify yourself, you may.

My own objections are little more essential: they relate chiefly to inaccuracies of style, which either debase the expression or obscure the meaning. I could point out several small particulars of this kind, and will do so, if you think it can serve any purpose after publication. When I hear you read, they often escape me, partly because I am attending to the subject, and partly because from habit I understand you where a stranger might often be at a loss.

As to your arguments, most of the principal points are made out with a clearness and evidence that no one would expect where materials are so scarce. Yet I still suspect Richard of the murder of Henry VI. The chronicler of Croyland charges it full on him, though without a name or any mention of circumstances. The interests of Edward were the interests of Richard too, though the throne were not then in view; and that Henry still stood in their way, they might well imagine, because, though deposed

<sup>1</sup> The Historic Doubts.

and

and imprisoned once before, he had regained his liberty, and his crown; and was still adored by the people. I should think, from the word *tyranni*, the passage was written after Richard had assumed the crown: but, if it was earlier, does not the bare imputation imply very early suspicions at least of Richard's bloody nature, especially in the mouth of a person that was no enemy to the house of York, nor friend to that of Beaufort?

That the duchess of Burgundy, to try the temper of the nation, should set up a false pretender to the throne (when she had the true duke of York in her hands), and that the queen mother (knowing her son was alive) should countenance that design, is a piece of policy utterly incomprehensible; being the most likely means to ruin their own scheme, and throw a just suspicion of fraud and falsehood on the cause of truth, which Henry could not fail to seize, and turn to his own advantage.

Mr. Hume's first query, as far as relates to the queen-mother, will still have some weight. Is it probable, she should give her eldest daughter to Henry, and invite him to claim the crown, unless she had been sure that her sons were then dead? As to her seeming consent to the match between Elizabeth and Richard, she and her daughters were in his power, which appeared now well fixed, his enemies' designs within the kingdom being every where defeated, and Henry unable to raise any considerable force abroad. She was timorous and hopeless; or she might dissemble, in order to cover her secret dealings with Richmond; and if this were the case, she hazarded little, supposing Richard to dissemble too, and never to have thought seriously of marrying his niece.

Another unaccountable thing is, that Richard, a prince of the house of York, undoubtedly brave, clear-sighted, artful, attentive to business; of boundless generosity, as appears from his grants; just and merciful, as his laws and his pardons seem to testify; having subdued the queen and her hated faction, and been called first to the protectorship and then to the crown by the body of the nobility and by the parliament; with the common people to friend (as Carte often asserts), and having nothing against him but the illegitimate family of his brother Edward, and the attainted house of Clarence (both of them within his power);—that such a man should see within a few months Buckingham, his best friend, and almost all the southern and

western countries on one day in arms against him ; that, having seen all these insurrections come to nothing, he should march with a gallant army against a handful of needy adventurers, led by a fugitive, who had not the shadow of a title, nor any virtues to recommend him, nor any foreign strength to depend on ; that he should be betrayed by almost all his troops, and fall a sacrifice ;—all this is to me utterly improbable, and I do not ever expect to see it accounted for.

I take this opportunity to tell you, that Algarotti (as I see in the new edition of his works printed at Leghorn) being employed to buy pictures for the king of Poland, purchased among others the famous Holbein, that was at Venice. It don't appear that he knew any thing of your book : yet he calls it the *consul Meyer and his family*, as if it were then known to be so in that city.

A young man here, who is a diligent reader of your books, an antiquary, and a painter, informs me, that at the Red-lion inn at Newmarket is a piece of tapestry containing the very design of your marriage of Henry the sixth, only with several more figures in it, both men and women ; that he would have bought it of the people, but they refused to part with it.

Mr. Mason, who is here, desires to present his respects to you. He says, that to efface from our annals the history of any tyrant is to do an essential injury to mankind : but he forgives it, because you have shown Henry the seventh to be a greater devil than Richard.

Pray do not be out of humour. When you first commenced an author, you exposed yourself to pit, box and gallery. Any coxcomb in the world may come in and hiss, if he pleases ; aye, and (what is almost as bad) clap too, and you cannot hinder him. I saw a little squib fired at you in a newspaper by some of the *house of York*, for speaking lightly of chancellors. Adieu !

I am ever yours,

T. GRAY.

LETTER



## LETTER VII.

Arlington-street, February 18, 1768.

YOU have sent me a long and very obliging letter, and yet I am extremely out of humour with you. I saw *poems* by Mr. Gray advertised: I called directly at Doddsley's to know if this was to be more than a new edition? He was not at home himself, but his foreman told me he thought there were some new pieces, and notes to the whole. It was very unkind, not only to go out of town without mentioning them to me, without showing them to me, but not to say a word of them in this letter. Do you think I am indifferent, or not curious, about what you write? I have ceased to ask you, because you have so long refused to show me any thing. You could not suppose I thought that you never write. No; but I concluded you did not intend, at least yet, to publish what you had written. As you did intend it, I might have expected a month's preference. You will do me the justice to own that I had always rather have seen your writings than have shown you mine; which you know are the most hasty trifles in the world, and which, though I may be fond of the subject when fresh, I constantly forget in a very short time after they are published. This would sound like affectation to others, but will not to you. It would be affected, even to you, to say I am indifferent to fame—I certainly am not, but I am indifferent to almost any thing I have done to acquire it. The greater part are mere compilations; and no wonder they are, as you say, incorrect, when they are commonly written with people in the room, as Richard and the Noble Authors were. But I doubt there is a more intrinsic fault in them; which is, that I cannot correct them. If I write tolerably, it must be at once; I can neither mend nor add. The articles of lord Capel and lord Peterborough, in the second edition of the Noble Authors, cost me more trouble than all the rest together: and you may perceive that the worst part of Richard, in point of ease and style, is what relates to the papers you gave me on Jane Shore, because it was tacked on so long afterwards, and when my impetus was chilled. If some time or other you will take the trouble of pointing out the inaccuracies of it, I shall be much obliged to you: at present I shall meddle no more with it. It has taken its fate; nor did I mean to complain. I found it was condemned indeed before

B b b 2

hand,

hand, which was what I alluded to. Since publication (as has happened to me before) the success has gone beyond my expectation.

Not only at Cambridge, but here, there have been people wise enough to think me too free with the king of Prussia! A newspaper has talked of my known inveteracy to him.—Truly, I love him as well as I do most kings. The greater offence is my reflection on lord Clarendon. It is forgotten that I had overpraised him before. Pray turn to the new State Papers, from which, *it is said*, he composed his history. You will find they are the papers from which he did *not* compose his history. And yet I admire my lord Clarendon more than these pretended admirers do. But I do not intend to justify myself. I can as little satisfy those who complain that I do not let them know what *really did* happen. If this inquiry can ferret out any truth, I shall be glad. I have picked up a few more circumstances. I now want to know what Perkin Warbeck's proclamation was, which Speed in his history says is preserved by bishop Leslie. If you look in Speed, perhaps you will be able to assist me.

The duke of Richmond and lord Lyttelton agree with you, that I have not discoloured Richard of the murder of Henry VI. I own to you, it is the crime of which in my own mind I believe him most guiltless. Had I thought he committed it, I should never have taken the trouble to apologize for the rest. I am not at all positive or obstinate on your other objections, nor know exactly what I believe on many points of this story. And I am so sincere, that, except a few notes hereafter, I shall leave the matter to be settled or discussed by others. As you have written much too little, I have written a great deal too much, and think only of finishing the two or three other things I have begun—and of those, nothing but the last volume of painters is designed for the present public. What has one to do when turned fifty, but really think of *finishing*?

I am much obliged and flattered by Mr. Mason's approbation, and particularly by having had almost the same thought with him. I said, "People need not be angry at my excusing Richard; I have not diminished their fund of hatred, I have only transferred it from Richard to Henry."—Well, but I have found you close with Mason—No doubt, cry prating I, something

thing will come out'.——Oh! no—leave us, both of you, to Annabellas and Epistles to Ferney, that give Voltaire an account of his own tragedies, to Macarony fables that are more unintelligible than Pilpay's are in the original, to Mr. Thornton's hurdy-gurdy poetry, and to Mr. ——, who has imitated himself worse than any fop in a magazine would have done. In truth, if you should abandon us, I could not wonder—When Garrick's prologues and epilogues, his own Cymons and farces, and the comedies of the fools that pay court to him, are the delight of the age, it does not deserve any thing better.

Pray read the new account of Corsica. What relates to Paoli will amuse you much. There is a deal about the island and its divisions that one does not care a straw for. The author, Boswell, is a strange being, and, like ——, has a rage of knowing any body that ever was talked of. He forced himself upon me at Paris in spite of my teeth and my doors, and I see has given a foolish account of all he could pick up from me about king Theodore. He then took an antipathy to me on Rousseau's account, abused me in the newspapers, and exhorted Rousseau to do so too: but as he came to see me no more, I forgave all the rest. I see he now is a little sick of Rousseau himself, but I hope it will not cure him of his anger to me. However, his book will I am sure entertain you.

I will add but a word or two more. I am criticized for the expression *tinker up* in the preface. Is this one of those that you object to? I own I think such a low expression, placed to ridicule an absurd instance of wise folly, very forcible. Replace it with an elevated word or phrase, and to my conception it becomes as flat as possible.

George Selwyn says I may, if I please, write historic doubts on the present duke of G—— too. Indeed they would be doubts, for I know nothing certainly.

"I found him close with Swift—Indeed?—  
No doubt,  
(Cries praising Balbus) something will come  
out." *Pope's Epistle to Arbuthnot.*

"The want of records, of letters, of print-

ing, of cities; wars, revolutions, factions, and other causes occasioned these defects in ancient history. Chronology and astronomy are forced to *tinker up* and reconcile as well as they can those uncertainties."

*Preface to Historic Doubts, vol. ii. p. 106.*

Will



# 374. LETTERS BETWEEN THE HON. HORACE WALPOLE

Will you be so kind as to look into *Leslie de rebus Scotorum*, and see if Perkin's proclamation is there, and if there, how authenticated. You will find in Speed my reason for asking this.

I have written in such a hurry, I believe you will scarce be able to read my letter—and as I have just been writing French, perhaps the sense may not be clearer than the writing. Adieu!

Yours ever,

HOR. WALPOLE.

## LETTER VIII.

Pembroke-college, Feb. 25, 1768.

TO your friendly accusation, I am glad I can plead not guilty with a safe conscience. Doddsley told me in the spring that the plates from Mr. Bentley's designs were worn out, and he wanted to have them copied and reduced to a smaller scale for a new edition. I dissuaded him from so silly an expence, and desired he would put in no ornaments at all. The *Long Story* was to be totally omitted, as its only use (that of explaining the prints) was gone: but to supply the place of it in bulk, lest *my works* should be mistaken for the works of a flea, or a pismire, I promised to send him an equal weight of poetry or prose: so, since my return hither, I put up about two ounces of stuff; viz. The Fatal Sisters, The Descent of Odin (of both which you have copies), a bit of something from the Welch, and certain little notes, partly from justice (to acknowledge the debt, where I had borrowed any thing), partly from ill temper, just to tell the gentle reader, that Edward I. was not Oliver Cromwell, nor queen Elizabeth the witch of Endor. This is literally all; and with all this I shall be but a shrimp of an author. I gave leave also to print the same thing at Glasgow; but I doubt my packet has miscarried, for I hear nothing of its arrival as yet. To what you say to me so civilly, that I ought to write more, I reply in your own words (like the pamphleteer, who is going to confute you out of your own mouth), What has one to do, when *turned of fifty*, but really to think of finishing? However, I will be candid (for you seem to be so with me), and avow to you, that till fourscore-and-ten, whenever the humour takes me, I will write,

write, because I like it ; and because I like myself better when I do so. If I do not write much, it is because I cannot. As you have not this last plea, I see no reason why you should not continue as long as it is agreeable to yourself, and to all such as have any curiosity or judgment in the subjects you choose to treat. By the way let me tell you (while it is fresh) that lord Sandwich, who was lately dining at Cambridge, speaking (as I am told) handsomely of your book, said, it was pity you did not know that his cousin Manchester had a genealogy of the kings, which came down no lower than to Richard III. and at the end of it were two portraits of Richard and his son, in which that king appeared to be a handsome man. I tell you it as I heard it : perhaps you may think it worth enquiring into.

I have looked into Speed and Leslie. It appears very odd, that Speed in the speech he makes for P. Warbeck, addressed to James IV. of Scotland, should three times cite the *manuscript proclamation* of Perkin, then in the hands of sir Robert Cotton ; and yet when he gives us the proclamation afterwards (on occasion of the insurrection in Cornwall) he does not cite any such manuscript. In Casley's Catalogue of the Cotton Library you may see whether this manuscript proclamation still exists or not : if it does, it may be found at the Musæum. Leslie will give you no satisfaction at all : though no subject of England, he could not write freely on this matter, as the title of Mary his mistress to the crown of England was derived from that of Henry VII. Accordingly, he every where treats Perkin as an impostor ; yet drops several little expressions inconsistent with that supposition. He has preserved no proclamation : he only puts a short speech into Perkin's mouth, the substance of which is taken by Speed, and translated in the end of his, which is a good deal longer : the whole matter is treated by Leslie very concisely and superficially. I can easily transcribe it, if you please ; but I do not see that it could answer any purpose.

Mr. Boswell's book I was going to recommend to you, when I received your letter : it has pleased and moved me strangely, all (I mean) that relates to Paoli. He is a man born two thousand years after his time ! The pamphlet proves what I have always maintained, that any fool may write a most valuable book by chance, if he will only tell us what he heard and saw with veracity. Of Mr. Boswell's truth I have not the least suspicion, because I am sure he could invent nothing of this kind. The true title of this part of his work is, A Dialogue between a Green-goose and a Hero.

I had

I had been told of a manuscript in Benet-library: the inscription of it is *Itinerarium Fratris Simonis Simeonis et Hugonis Illuminatoris*, 1322. Would not one think this should promise something? They were two Franciscan friars that came from Ireland, and passed through Wales to London, to Canterbury, to Dover, and so to France in their way to Jerusalem. All that relates to our own country has been transcribed for me, and (sorry am I to say) signifies not a halfpenny: only this little bit might be inserted in your next edition of the Painters: Ad aliud caput civitatis (Londoniæ) est monasterium nigrorum monachorum nomine Westmonasterium, in quo constanter et communiter omnes reges Angliæ sepeliuntur——et eidem monasterio quasi immediatè conjungitur illud famosissimum palatium regis, in quo est illa vulgata camera, in cujus parietibus sunt omnes historiæ bellicæ totius Bibliæ ineffabiliter depictæ, atque in Gallico completissimè et perfectissimè conscriptæ, in non modicâ intuentium admiratione et maximâ regali magnificentiâ.

I have had certain observations on your Royal and Noble Authors given me to send you perhaps about three years ago: last week I found them in a drawer, and (my conscience being troubled) now enclose them to you. I have even forgot whose they are.

I have been also told of a passage in Ph. de Comines, which (if you know) ought not to have been passed over. The book is not at hand at present, and I must conclude my letter. Adieu!

I am ever yours,

T. GRAY.

---

#### LETTER IX.

Arlington-street, Friday night, February 26.

I PLAGUE you to death, but I must reply a few more words. I shall be very glad to see in print, and to have those that are worthy see your ancient odes; but I was in hopes there were some pieces too that I had not seen. I am sorry there are not.

I troubled you about Perkin's proclamation, because Mr. Hume lays great stress



strefs upon it, and insists, that if Perkin affirmed his brother was killed, it must have been true, if he was true duke of York. Mr. Hume would have persuaded me that the proclamation is in Stowe, but I can find no such thing there; nor, what is more, in Casley's catalogue, which I have twice looked over carefully. I wrote to sir David Dalrymple in Scotland, to enquire after it, because I would produce it if I could, though it should make against me: but he, I believe, thinking I enquired with the contrary view, replied very drily, that it was published at York, and was not to be found in Scotland. Whether he is displeased that I have plucked a hair from the tresses of their great historian; or whether, as I suspect, he is offended for king William; this reply was all the notice he took of my letter and book. I only smiled, as I must do when I find one party is angry with me on king William's, and the other on lord Clarendon's account.

The answer advertised is Guthrie's, who is furious that I have taken no notice of *his* History. I shall take as little of his pamphlet; but his end will be answered, if he sells that and one or two copies of his History. Mr. Hume, I am told, has drawn up an answer too, which I shall see, and, if I can, will get him to publish; for, if I should ever choose to say any thing more on this subject, I had rather reply to him than to hackney-writers:—to the latter, indeed, I never will reply. A few notes I have to add that will be very material; and I wish to get some account of a book that was once sold at Osborn's, that exists perhaps at Cambridge, and of which I found a memorandum t'other day in my note-book. It is called A paradox, or apology for Richard III. by sir William Cornwallis. If you could discover it, I should be much obliged to you.

Lord Sandwich, with whom I have not exchanged a syllable since the general warrants, very obligingly sent me an account of the roll at Kimbolton; and has since, at my desire, borrowed it for me and sent it to town\*. It is as long as my lord Lyttelton's History; but by what I can read of it (for it is both ill written and much decayed), it is not a roll of kings, but of all that have been possessed of, or been earls of Warwick: or have not—for one of the first earls is Æneas. How, or wherefore, I do not know, but amongst the first is Richard III. in whose reign it was finished, and with whom it

\* From this roll were taken the two plates of portraits in the Historic Doubts, now first published in this edition. E.

concludes. He is there again with his wife and son, and Edward IV. and Clarence and his wife, and Edward their son (who unluckily is a little old man), and Margaret countess of Salisbury, their daughter—But why do I say with these? There is every body else too—and what is most meritorious, the habits of all the times are admirably well observed from the most savage ages. Each figure is tricked with a pen, well drawn, but neither coloured nor shaded. Richard is straight, but thinner than my print; his hair short, and exactly curled in the same manner; not so handsome as mine, but what one might really believe intended for the same countenance, as drawn by a different painter, especially when so small; for the figures in general are not so long as one's finger. His queen is ugly, and with just such a square forehead as in my print, but I cannot say like it. Nor, indeed, where forty-five figures out of fifty (I have not counted the number) must have been imaginary, can one lay great stress on the five. I shall, however, have these figures copied, especially as I know of no other image of the son. Mr. Astle is to come to me to-morrow morning to explain the writing.

I wish you had told me in what age your Franciscan friars lived; and what the passage in Comines is. I am very ready to make amende honorable.

Thank you for the notes on the Noble Authors. They shall be inserted when I make a new edition, for the sake of the trouble the person has taken, though they are of little consequence. Doddsley has asked me for a new edition; but I have little heart to undertake such work, no more than to mend my old linen. It is pity one cannot be born an ancient, and have commentators to do such jobs for one! Adieu!

Yours ever,

HOR. WALPOLE.

Saturday morning.

ON reading over your letter again this morning, I do find the age in which the friars lived—I read and write in such a hurry, that I think I neither know what I read or say.

LETTER

## LETTER X.

Pembroke-hall, March 6, 1768.

HERE is fir William Cornwallis, entitled *Essayes of certaine Paradoxes*.  
2d Edit. 1617, Lond.

King Richard III.	} praised.
The French Pockes	
Nothing	
Good to be in debt	
Sadnesse	
Julian the Apostate's vertues	

The title-page will probably suffice you; but if you would know any more of him, he has read nothing but the common chronicles, and those without attention: for example, speaking of Anne the queen, he says, she was *barren*, of which Richard had often complained to Rotheram. He extenuates the murder of Henry VI. and his son: the first, he says, might be a malicious accusation, for that many did suppose he died of mere melancholy and grief: the latter cannot be proved to be the action of Richard (though executed in his presence); and if it were, he did it out of love to his brother Edward. He justifies the death of the lords at Pomfret, from reasons of state, for his own preservation, the safety of the commonwealth, and the ancient nobility. The execution of Hastings he excuses from necessity, from the dishonesty and sensuality of the man: what was his crime with respect to Richard, he does not say. Dr. Shaw's sermon was not by the king's command, but to be imputed to the preacher's own ambition: but if it was by order, *to charge his mother with adultery was a matter of no such great moment, since it is no wonder in that sex*. Of the murder in the Tower he doubts; but if it were by his order, the offence was to God, not to his people; and *how could he demonstrate his love more amply, than to venture his soul for their quiet?* Have you enough, pray? You see it is an idle declamation, the exercise of a school-boy that is to be bred a statesman.

I have looked in Stowe: to be sure there is no proclamation there. Mr. Hume, I suppose, means *Speed*, where it is given, how truly I know not;



but that he had seen the original is sure, and seems to quote the very words of it in the beginning of that speech which Perkin makes to James IV. and also just afterwards, where he treats of the Cornish rebellion.

Guthrie, 'you see, has vented himself in the Critical Review. His History I never saw, nor is it here, nor do I know any one that ever saw it. He is a rascal, but rascals may chance to meet with curious records; and that commission to sir J. Tyrrell (if it be not a lye) is such: so is the order for Henry the sixth's funeral. I would by no means take notice of him, write what he would. I am glad you have seen the Manchester-roll.

It is not I that talk of Phil. de Comines; it was mentioned to me as a thing that looked like a voluntary omission: but I see you have taken notice of it in the note to page 71, though rather too slightly. You have not observed that the same writer says, c. 55, *Richard tua de sa main, ou fit tuer en sa presence, quelque lieu apart, ce bon homme le roi Henry*. Another oversight I think there is at p. 43, where you speak of the roll of parliament and the contract with lady Eleanor Boteler; as things newly come to light; whereas Speed has given at large the same roll in his History. Adieu!

I am ever yours,

T. GRAY.

L E T T E R S

FROM

THOMAS GRAY

TO

THE HON. HORACE WALPOLE.

LETTERS

THE HON. HORACE WAVER

LETTERS

LETTERS

LETTERS

LETTERS



# L E T T E R S

FROM

THOMAS GRAY

TO

THE HON. HORACE WALPOLE.

---

## L E T T E R I.

Cambridge, February 3, 1746.

DEAR SIR,

**Y**OU are so good to enquire after my usual time of coming to town: it is at a season when even you, the perpetual friend of London, will, I fear, hardly be in it—the middle of June: and I commonly return hither in September; a month when I may more probably find you at home.

Our defeat to be sure is a rueful affair for the honour of the troops; but the Duke is gone it seems with the rapidity of a cannon-bullet to undefeat us again. The common people in town at least know how to be afraid: but we are such *uncommon* people here as to have no more sense of danger, than if the battle had been fought when and where the battle of Cannæ was. The perception of these calamities and of their consequences, that we are supposed to get from books, is so faintly impressed, that we talk of war, famine and pestilence with no more apprehension than of a broken head, or of a coach overturned between York and Edinburgh. I heard three people, sensible middle-aged men (when the Scotch were said to be at Stamford, and actually were at Derby), talking of hiring a chaise to go to Caxton (a place in the high road) to see the pretender and the highlanders as they passed.

I can say no more for Mr. Pope (for what you keep in reserve may be worse than all the rest). It is natural to wish the finest writer, one of them, we ever had, should be an honest man. It is for the interest even of that virtue, whose friend he professed himself, and whose beauties he sung, that he should not be found a dirty animal. But however, this is Mr. Warburton's business, not mine, who may scribble his pen to the stumps and all in vain, if these facts are so. It is not from what he told me about himself that I thought well of him, but from a humanity and goodness of heart, aye, and greatness of mind, that runs through his private correspondence, not less apparent than are a thousand little vanities and weaknesses mixed with those good qualities, for nobody ever took him for a philosopher.

If you know any thing of Mr. Mann's state of health and happiness, or the motions of Mr. Chute homewards, it will be a particular favour to inform me of them, as I have not heard this half-year from them.

I am sincerely yours,

T. GRAY.

---

LETTER II.

January, 1747.

IT is doubtless an encouragement to continue writing to you, when you tell me you answer me with pleasure: I have another reason which would make me very copious, had I any thing to say; it is, that I write to you with equal pleasure, though not with equal spirits, nor with like plenty of materials: please to subtract then so much for spirit, and so much for matter; and you will find me, I hope, neither so slow, nor so short, as I might otherwise seem. Besides, I had a mind to send you the remainder of Agrippina, that was lost in a wilderness of papers. Certainly you do her too much honour: she seemed to me to talk like an *Oldboy*, all in figures and mere poetry, instead of nature and the language of real passion. Do you remember *Approchez-vous, Neron*?—Who would not rather have thought of that half line than all Mr. Rowe's flowers of eloquence? However, you will find the remainder here at the end in an outrageous long speech: it was begun above four years ago (it is a misfortune you know my age, else I

<sup>1</sup> Agrippina, in Racine's tragedy of *Britannicus*.

might have added), when I was very young. Poor West put a stop to that tragic torrent he saw breaking in upon him:—have a care, I warn you, not to set open the flood-gate again, lest it drown you and me and the bishop and all.

I am very sorry to hear you treat philosophy and her followers like a parcel of monks and hermits, and think myself obliged to vindicate a profession I honour, *bien que je n'en tiennepas boutique* (as mad. Sevigné says). The first man that ever bore the name, if you remember, used to say, that life was like the Olympic games (the greatest public assembly of his age and country), where some came to show their strength and agility of body, as the champions; others, as the musicians, orators, poets and historians, to show their excellence in those arts; the traders, to get money; and the better sort, to enjoy the spectacle, and judge of all these. They did not then run away from society for fear of its temptations: they passed their days in the midst of it: conversation was their business: they cultivated the arts of persuasion, on purpose to show men it was their interest, as well as their duty, not to be foolish, and false, and unjust; and that too in many instances with success: which is not very strange; for they showed by their life that their lessons were not impracticable; and that pleasures were no temptations, but to such as wanted a clear perception of the pains annexed to them<sup>1</sup>. But I have done preaching à la Grecque. Mr. Ratcliffe<sup>2</sup> made a shift to behave very rationally without their instructions, at a season which they took a great deal of pains to fortify themselves and others against: one would not desire to lose one's head with a better grace. I am particularly satisfied with the humanity of that last embrace to all the people about him. Sure it must be somewhat embarrassing to die before so much good company!

You need not fear but posterity will be ever glad to know the absurdity of their ancestors: the foolish will be glad to know they were as foolish as they, and the wise will be glad to find themselves wiser. You will please all the world then; and if you recount miracles you will be believed so

<sup>1</sup> Never perhaps was a more admirable picture drawn of *true* philosophy and its real and important services; services not confined to the speculative opinions of the studios, but adapted to the common purposes of life, and promoting the general happiness of mankind; not upon the

chimerical basis of a system, but on the immutable foundations of truth and virtue. E.

<sup>2</sup> Brother to the earl of Derwentwater. He was executed at Tyburn, December 1746, for having been concerned in the rebellion in Scotland. E.



## 386    L E T T E R S   F R O M   T H O M A S   G R A Y

much the sooner. We are pleased when we wonder ; and we believe because we are pleased. Folly and wisdom, and wonder and pleasure, join with me in desiring you would continue to entertain them : refuse us, if you can. Adieu, dear sir !

T. GRAY.

## L E T T E R   I I I .

Stoke, June 12, 1750.

DEAR SIR,

AS I live in a place, where even the ordinary tattle of the town arrives not till it is stale, and which produces no events of its own, you will not desire any excuse from me for writing so seldom, especially as of all people living I know you are the least a friend to letters spun out of one's own brains, with all the toil and constraint that accompanies sentimental productions. I have been here at Stoke a few days (where I shall continue good part of the summer) ; and having put an end to a thing, whose beginning you have seen long ago, 'I immediately send it you'. You will, I hope, look upon it in the light of a *thing with an end to it* ; a merit that most of my writings have wanted, and are like to want, but which this epistle I am determined shall not want, when it tells you that I am ever

Yours,

T. GRAY.

Not that I have done yet ; but who could avoid the temptation of finishing so roundly and so cleverly in the manner of good queen Anne's days ? Now I have talked of writings ; I have seen a book, which is by this time in the press, against Middleton (though without naming him), by Asheton. As far as I can judge from a very hasty reading, there are things in it new and ingenious, but rather too prolix, and the style here and there favouring too strongly of sermon. I imagine it will do him credit. So much for other people, now to *self* again. You are desired to tell me your opinion, if you can take the pains, of these lines. I am once more

Ever yours.

\* This was the Elegy in the church-yard.

LETTER

TO THE HON. HORACE WALPOLE. 387

LETTER IV.

Ash-Wednesday, Cambridge, 1751.

MY DEAR SIR,

YOU have indeed conducted with great decency my little *misfortune*: you have taken a paternal care of it, and expressed much more kindness than could have been expected from so near a relation. But we are all frail; and I hope to do as much for you another time. Nurse Doddsley has given it a pinch or two in the cradle, that (I doubt) it will bear the marks of as long as it lives. But no matter: we have ourselves suffered under her hands before now; and besides, it will only look the more careless, and by *accident* as it were. I thank you for your advertisement, which saves my honour, and in a manner *bien flatteuse pour moi*, who should be put to it even to make myself a compliment in good English.

You will take me for a mere poet, and a fetcher and carrier of sing-song, if I tell you that I intend to send you the beginning of a drama<sup>1</sup>, not mine, thank God, as you'll believe, when you hear it is finished, but wrote by a person whom I have a very good opinion of. It is (unfortunately) in the manner of the ancient drama, with choruses, which I am, to my shame, the occasion of; for, as great part of it was at first written in that form, I would not suffer him to change it to a play fit for the stage, as he intended, because the lyric parts are the best of it, and they must have been lost. The story is Saxon, and the language has a tang of Shakespear, that suits an old-fashioned fable very well. In short, I don't do it merely to amuse you, but for the sake of the author, who wants a judge, and so I would lend him *mine*: yet not without your leave, lest you should have us up to dirty our stockings at the bar of your house for wasting the time and politics of the *nation*. Adieu, sir!

I am ever yours,

T. GRAY.

---

LETTER V.

Cambridge, March 3, 1751.

ELFRIDA (for that is the fair one's name) and her author are now in town together. He has promised me, that he will send a part of it to you

<sup>1</sup> This was the Elfrida of Mr. Mason.

some morning while he is there; and (if you shall think it worth while to descend to particulars) I should be glad you would tell me very freely your opinion about it; for he shall know nothing of the matter, that is not fit for the ears of a *tender* parent—though, by the way, he has ingenuity and merit enough (whatever his drama may have) to bear hearing his faults very patiently. I must only beg you not to show it, much less let it be copied; for it will be published, though not as yet.

I do not expect any more editions<sup>1</sup>, as I have appeared in more magazines than one. The chief errata were *sacred bower* for *secret*; *hidden* for *kindred* (in spite of dukes and classics); and *frowning* as in scorn for *smiling*. I humbly propose, for the benefit of Mr. Doddsley and his matrons, that take *awake* for a verb, that they should read *asleep*, and all will be right<sup>2</sup>. Gil Blas is the Lying Valet in five acts. The fine lady has half-a-dozen good lines dispersed in it. Pompey is the hasty production of a Mr. Coventry (cousin to him you knew), a young clergyman: I found it out by three characters, which once made part of a comedy that he showed me of his own writing. Has that miracle of *tenderness and sensibility* (as she calls it) lady Vane given you any amusement? Peregrine, whom she uses as a vehicle, is very poor indeed with a few exceptions. In the last volume is a character of Mr. Lyttelton, under the name of Gosling Scrag, and a parody of part of his Monody, under the notion of a pastoral on the death of his grandmother.

I am ever yours,

T. GRAY.

---

LETTER VI.

Nov. Tuesday, Cambridge.

IT is a misfortune to me to be at a distance from both of you at present. A letter can give one so little idea of such matters! \* \* \* \* I always believed well of his heart and temper, and would gladly do so still. If they are as they should be, I should have expected every thing from such an ex-

<sup>1</sup> Of the Elegy in the church-yard.

<sup>2</sup> The verse to which he alludes is this:

"Ev'n from the tomb the voice of nature cries;

"Ev'n in our ashes live their wonted fires."

The last line of which he had at first written thus:

"Awake and faithful to her wonted fires." E.

planation;



planation; for it is a tenet with me (a simple one, you'll perhaps say), that if ever two people, who love one another, come to breaking, it is for want of a timely eclaireissement, a full and precise one, without witnesses or mediators, and without reserving any one disagreeable circumstance for the mind to brood upon in silence.

I am not totally of your mind as to Mr. Lyttelton's Elegy, though I love kids and fawns as little as you do. If it were all like the fourth stanza, I should be excessively pleased. Nature and sorrow, and tenderness, are the true genius of such things; and something of these I find in several parts of it (not in the orange-tree); poetical ornaments are foreign to the purpose, for they only show a man is not sorry;—and devotion worse; for it teaches him, that he ought not to be sorry, which is all the pleasure of the thing. I beg leave to turn your weathercock the contrary way. Your Epistle<sup>1</sup> I have not seen a great while, and doctor M. is not in the way to give me a sight of it: but I remember enough to be sure all the world will be pleased with it, even with all its *faults upon its head*, if you don't care to mend them. I would try to do it myself (however hazardous), rather than it should remain unpublished. As to my Eton Ode, Mr. Doddsley is *padrone*<sup>2</sup>. The second<sup>3</sup> you had, I suppose you do not think worth giving him: otherwise, to me it seems not worse than the former. He might have Selima<sup>4</sup> too, unless she be of too little importance for his patriot-collection; or perhaps the *connections* you had with her may interfere. *Che so io?* Adieu!

I am yours ever,

T. G.

LETTER VII.

Cambridge, Dec. Monday.

THIS comes du fond de ma cellule to salute Mr. H. W. not so much him that visits and votes, and goes to White's and to court; as the H. W.

<sup>1</sup> From Florence to Thomas Asheton.

<sup>2</sup> The Ode to Spring.

<sup>3</sup> To publish in his collection of poems.

<sup>4</sup> The Ode on Mr. Walpole's cat drowned in the tub of gold-fish.

in his rural capacity, snug in his tub on Windsor-hill, and brooding over folios of his own creation: him that can slip away, like a pregnant beauty (but a little oftener), into the country, be brought to bed perhaps of twins, and whisk to town again the week after with a face as if nothing had happened. Among all the little folks, my godsons and daughters, I can not choose but enquire more particularly after the health of one; I mean (without a figure) the *Memoires*<sup>1</sup>: Do they grow? Do they unite, and hold up their heads, and dress themselves? Do they begin to think of making their appearance in the world, that is to say, fifty years hence, to make posterity stare, and all good people cross themselves? Has Asheton (who will be then lord bishop of Killaloe,\* and is to publish them) thought of an *aviso al lettore* to prefix to them yet, importing, that if the words church, king, religion, ministry, &c. be found often repeated in this book, they are not to be taken literally, but poetically, and as may be most strictly reconcileable to the faith then established;—that he knew the author well when he was a young man; and can testify upon the honour of his function, that he said his prayers regularly and devoutly, had a profound reverence for the clergy, and firmly believed every thing that was the fashion in those days?

When you have done impeaching my lord Lovat, I hope to hear *de vos nouvelles*, and moreover, whether you have got colonel Conway yet? Whether sir C. Williams is to go to Berlin? What sort of a prince Mitrirate may be?—and whatever other tidings you choose to refresh an anchoret with. *Frattanto* I send you a scene in a tragedy<sup>2</sup>: if it don't make you cry, it will make you laugh; and so it moves some passion, that I take to be enough. "Adieu, dear sir!" I am

Sincerely yours,

T. GRAY.

---

LETTER VIII.

Cambridge, October 8, 1751.

I SEND you this<sup>3</sup> (as you desire) merely to make up half-a-dozen; though it will hardly answer your end in furnishing out either a head or

<sup>1</sup> *Memoires* of his own time, which Mr. Walpole was then writing.

<sup>2</sup> The first scene in Mr. Gray's unfinished

tragedy of Agrippina, published in Mr. Mason's edition of his works.

<sup>3</sup> The Hymn to Adversity.

tail-piece. But your own fable <sup>1</sup> may much better supply the place. You have altered it to its advantage ; but there is still something a little embarrassed here and there in the expression. I rejoice to find you apply (pardon the use of so odious a word) to the history of your own times. Speak, and spare not. Be as impartial as you can ; and after all, the world will not believe you are so, though you should make as many protestations as bishop Burnet. They will feel in their own breast, and find it very possible to hate fourscore persons, yea, ninety and nine : so you must rest satisfied with the testimony of your own conscience. Somebody has laughed at Mr. Doddsley, or at me, when they talked of the *bat* : I have nothing more, either nocturnal or diurnal, to deck his miscellany with. We have a man here that writes a good hand ; but he has little failings that hinder my recommending him to you <sup>2</sup>. He is lousy, and he is mad : he sets out this week for Bedlam ; but if you insist upon it, I don't doubt he will pay his respects to you. I have seen two of Dr. Middleton's unpublished works. One is about 44 pages in 4to against Dr. Waterland, who wrote a very orthodox book on the Importance of the Doctrine of the Trinity, and insisted, that christians ought to have no communion with such as differ from them in fundamentals. Middleton enters no farther into the doctrine itself than to show that a mere speculative point can never be called a fundamental ; and that the earlier fathers, on whose concurrent tradition Waterland would build, are so far, when they speak of the three persons, from agreeing with the present notion of our church, that they declare for the inferiority of the son, and seem to have no clear and distinct idea of the holy ghost at all. The rest is employed in exposing the folly and cruelty of stiffness and zealotism in religion, and in showing that the primitive ages of the church, in which tradition had its rise, were (even by confession of the best scholars and most orthodox writers) the *era of nonsense and absurdity*. It is finished, and very well wrote ; but has been mostly incorporated into his other works, particularly the Enquiry : and for this reason I suppose he has writ upon it, *This wholly laid aside*. The second is in Latin, on Miracles ; to show, that of the two methods of defending christianity, one from its intrinsic evidence, the holiness and purity of its doctrines, the other from its external, the miracles said to be wrought to confirm it ; the first has been little attended to by reason of its difficulty ; the second much insisted upon, because it appeared an easier task ; but that it can in reality prove nothing at all. "Nobilis illa

<sup>1</sup> The Entail.<sup>2</sup> As an amanuensis.



quidem defenfio (the firft) quam fi obtinere potuiffent, rem fimul omnem expediiffe, caufamque penitus viciffe viderentur. At caufæ hujus defendendæ labor cum tantâ argumentandi cavillandique moleftiâ conjunctus ad alteram, quam dixi, defenfionis viam, ut commodiorem longè et faciliorem, plerofque adegit—ego verò iftiusmodi defenfione religionem noftram non modo non confirmari, fed dubiam potiùs fufpectamque reddi exiftimo.” He then proceeds to confider miracles in general, and afterwards thofe of the Pagans, compared with thofe of Chrift. I only tell you the plan, for I have not read it out (though it is fhort) ; but you will not doubt to what conclufion it tends. There is another thing, I know, not what, I am to fee. As to the Treatife on Prayer ; they fay it is burnt indeed. Adieu !

I am ever yours,

T. GRAY.

#### LETTER IX.

YOUR pen was too rapid to mind the common form of a direction, and fo, by omitting the words *near Windfor*, your letter has been diverting itfelf at another Stoke near Ailefbury, and came not to my hands till to-day. The true original chairs were all fold, when the Huntingdons broke ; there are nothing now but Halfey-chairs, not adapted to the fquarenefs of a Gothic dowager’s rump. And by the way I do not fee how the uneafinefs and uncomfortablenefs of a coronation-chair can be any objection with you : every chair that is eafy is modern, and unknown to our ancestors. As I remember, there were certain low chairs, that looked like ebony, at Esher, and were old and pretty. Why fhould not Mr. Bentley improve upon them ?—I do not wonder at Dodfley. You have talked to him of fix *odes*, for fo you are pleafed to call every thing I write, though it be but a receipt to make apple-dumplings. He has reafon to gulp when he finds one of them only a long ftory. I don’t know but I may fend him very foon (by your hands) an ode to his own tooth, a high Pindarick upon ftilts, which one muft be a better fcholar than he is to underftand a line of, and the very beft fcholars will underftand but a little matter here and there. It wants but feventeen lines of having an end, I don’t fay of being finifhed. As it is fo unfortunate to come too late for Mr. Bentley, it may appear in the fourth volume of the Miscellanies, provided you don’t think it execrable, and fup-

press it. Pray, when the fine book is to be printed<sup>1</sup>, let me revise the press, for you know you can't; and there are a few trifles I could wish altered.

I know not what you mean by hours of love, and cherries, and pine-apples. I neither see nor hear any thing here, and am of opinion that is the best way. My compliments to Mr. Bentley, if he be with you.

I am yours ever,

T. GRAY.

I desire you would not show that epigram I repeated to you<sup>2</sup>, as mine. I have heard of it twice already as coming from you.

---

LETTER X.

I AM obliged to you for Mr. Doddsley's book<sup>3</sup>, and, having pretty well looked it over, will (as you desire) tell you my opinion of it. He might, methinks, have spared the Graces in his frontispiece, if he chose to be economical, and dressed his authors in a little more decent raiment—not in whited-brown paper and distorted characters, like an old ballad. I am ashamed to see myself; but the company keeps me in countenance: so to begin with Mr. Tickell. This is not only a state-poem (my ancient aversion), but a state-poem on the peace of Utrecht. If Mr. Pope had wrote a panegyric on it, one could hardly have read him with patience: but this is only a poor short-winded imitator of Addison, who had himself not above three or four notes in poetry, sweet enough indeed, like those of a German flute, but such as soon tire and satiate the ear with their frequent return. Tickell has added to this a great poverty of sense, and a string of transitions that hardly become a school-boy. However, I forgive him for the sake of his ballad<sup>4</sup>, which I always thought the prettiest in the world. All there is of M. Green here has been printed before: there is a profusion of wit every where; reading would have formed his judgment, and harmonized

<sup>1</sup> The edition of his Odes printed at Strawberry-hill. the epigram alluded to. E.

<sup>3</sup> His collection of Poems.

<sup>2</sup> The Editor much wishes he could repeat it to the public, but, has not been able to discover "Of Leinster fam'd for maidens fair."

<sup>4</sup> Colin and Lucy; beginning

his verse, for even his wood-notes often break out into strains of real poetry and music. The School-mistress is excellent in its kind, and masterly; and (I am sorry to differ from you, but) London is to me one of those few imitations, that have all the ease and all the spirit of an original. The same man's<sup>1</sup> verses at the opening of Garrick's theatre are far from bad. Mr. Dyer (here you will despise me highly) has more of poetry in his imagination, than almost any of our number; but rough and injudicious. I should range Mr. Bramston only a step or two above Dr. King, who is as low in my estimation as in yours. Dr. Evans is a furious madman; and Pre-existence is nonsense in all her altitudes.<sup>2</sup> Mr. Lyttelton is a gentle elegiac person: Mr. Nugent<sup>3</sup> sure did not write his own ode<sup>4</sup>. I like Mr. Whitehead's little poems, I mean the Ode on a tent, the Verses to Garrick, and particularly those to Charles Townshend, better than any thing I had seen before of him. I gladly pass over H. Brown, and the rest, to come at you. You know I was of the publishing side, and thought your reasons against it none; for though, as Mr. Chute said extremely well, the *still small voice* of Poetry was not made to be heard in a crowd; yet Satire will be heard, for all the audience are by nature her friends; especially when she appears in the spirit of Dryden, with his strength, and often with his versification; such as you have caught in those lines on the royal unction, on the papal dominion, and converts of both sexes, on Henry VIII. and Charles II. for these are to me the shining parts of your Epistle<sup>5</sup>. There are many lines I could wish corrected, and some blotted out, but beauties enough to atone for a thousand worse faults than these. The opinion of such as can at all judge, who saw it before in Dr. Middleton's hands, concurs nearly with mine. As to what any one says, since it came out; our people (you must know) are slow of judgement: they wait till some bold body saves them the trouble, and then follow his opinion; or stay till they hear what is said in town, that is, at some bishop's table, or some coffee-house about the Temple. When they are determined, I will tell you faithfully their verdict. As for the Beauties<sup>6</sup>, I am their most humble servant. What shall I say to Mr. Lowth, Mr. Ridley, Mr. Rolfe, the reverend Mr. Brown, Seward, &c.? If I say, Messieurs! this is not the thing; write prose, write sermons, write nothing at all; they will disdain me, and my advice. What then would

<sup>1</sup> Doctor Samuel Johnson.

<sup>2</sup> Afterwards earl Nugent.

<sup>3</sup> That addressed to Mr. Pulteney.

<sup>4</sup> Epistle from Florence to Thomas Asheton, tutor to the earl of Plymouth.

<sup>5</sup> The epistle to Mr. Eckardt the painter.



the sickly peer<sup>1</sup> have done, that spends so much time in admiring every thing that has four legs, and fretting at his own misfortune, in having but two; and cursing his own politic head and feeble constitution, that won't let him be such a beast as he would wish? Mr. S. Jenyns now and then can write a good line or two—such as these—

Snatch us from all our little sorrows here,  
Calm every grief, and dry each childish tear, &c.

I like Mr. Aston Hervey's fable; and an ode (the last of all) by Mr. Mason, a new acquaintance of mine, whose Musæus too seems to carry with it the promise at least of something good to come. I was glad to see you distinguished who poor West was, before his charming ode<sup>2</sup>, and called it any thing rather than a Pindaric. The town is an owl, if it don't like lady Mary<sup>3</sup>, and I am surpris'd at it: we here are owls enough to think her eclogues very bad; but that I did not wonder at. Our present taste is sir T. Fitz-Osborne's Letters. I send you a bit of a thing for two reasons: first, because it is of one of your favourites, Mr. M. Green; and next, because I would do justice. The thought on which my second ode<sup>4</sup> turns, is manifestly stole from hence:—not that I knew it at the time, but, having seen this many years before, to be sure it imprinted itself on my memory, and, forgetting the author, I took it for my own. The subject was the Queen's Hermitage.

\* \* \* \* \*

Thought yet no palace grace the shore  
To lodge the pair you<sup>5</sup> should adore;  
Nor abbeys great in ruins rise,  
Royal equivalents for vice:  
Behold a grot in Delphic grove  
The Graces and the Muses love,  
A temple from vain-glory free;  
Whose goddess is Philosophy;  
Whose sides such licens'd idols<sup>6</sup> crown,  
As Superstition would pull down:

<sup>1</sup> Lord Hervey.

<sup>2</sup> Monody on the death of queen Caroline.

<sup>3</sup> Lady Mary W. Montagu's Poems.

<sup>4</sup> The Ode to Spring.

<sup>5</sup> Speaking to the Thames.

<sup>6</sup> The four busts.

The only pilgrimage I know,  
 That men of sense would choose to go.  
 Which sweet abode, her wisest choice,  
 Urania cheers with heavenly voice :  
 While all the Virtues gather round  
 To see her consecrate the ground.

If thou, the god with winged feet,  
 In council talk of this retreat ;  
 And jealous gods resentment show  
 At altars rais'd to men below :  
 Tell those proud lords of heaven, 'tis fit  
 Their house our heroes should admit.  
 While each exists (as poets sing)  
 A lazy, lewd, immortal, thing ;  
 They must, or grow in disrepute,  
 With earth's first commoners recruit.

Needless it is in terms unskill'd  
 To praise, whatever Boyle shall build.  
 Needless it is the busts to name  
 Of men, monopolists of fame ;  
 Four chiefs adorn the modest stone  
 For virtue, as for learning, known.  
 The thinking sculpture helps to raise  
 Deep thoughts, the genii of the place :  
 To the mind's ear, and inward sight,  
 There silence speaks, and shade gives light :  
 While insects from the threshold preach,  
 And minds dispos'd to musing teach ;  
 Proud of strong limbs and painted hues,  
 They perish by the slightest bruise,  
 Or maladies begun within  
 Destroy more slow life's frail machine :  
 From maggot-youth thro' change of state  
 They feel like us the turns of fate :  
 Some born to creep have lived to fly,  
 And changed earth's cells for dwellings high :

And some, that did their fix wings keep,  
 Before they died, been forced to creep.  
 They politics, like ours, profess :  
 The greater prey upon the less.  
 Some strain on foot huge loads to bring,  
 Some toil incessant on the wing :  
 Nor from their vigorous schemes desist  
 Till death ; and then are never mist.  
 Some frolick, toil, marry, increase,  
 Are sick and well, have war and peace,  
 And broke with age in half a day  
 Yield to successors, and away.

\* \* \* \*

Adieu ! I am yours ever,

T. GRAY.

LETTER XI.

Stoke, July 12, 1757.

I WILL not give you the trouble of sending your chaise for me. I intend to be with you on Wednesday in the evening. If the press stands still all this time for me, to be sure it is dead in child-bed.

I do not love notes, though you see I had resolved to put two or three<sup>1</sup>. They are signs of weakness and obscurity. If a thing cannot be understood without them, it had better be not understood at all. If you will be vulgar, and pronounce it *Lunnon*, instead of *London*<sup>2</sup>, I can't help it. Caradoc I have private reasons against ; and besides it is in reality Caradoc, and will not stand in the verse.

I rejoice you can fill all your *vuides* : the Maintenon could not, and that was her great misfortune. Seriously though, I congratulate you on your

<sup>1</sup> To the Bard.

<sup>2</sup> "Ye tow'rs of Julius ! London's lasting shame." Bard, verse 87.

happiness,



## 398      LETTERS FROM THOMAS GRAY

happiness, and seem to understand it. The receipt is obvious: it is only, Have something to do; but how few can apply it!—Adieu!

I am ever yours,

T. GRAY.

### LETTER XII.

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

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

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

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

<sup>1</sup> It has been supposed the work of a lady of the name of Wardlaw, who died in Scotland not many years ago, but upon no better evidence, that I could ever learn, than that a copy of the poem with some erasures was found among her papers after her death.—No proof surely of its original composition, as few but persons of business, which women seldom are, take the precaution of docketing, or writing "Copy" upon every thing they may transcribe. E.

LETTER

## LETTER XIII.

I HAVE been very ill this week with a great cold and a fever, and though now in a way to be well, am like to be confined some days longer: whatever you will send me that is new, or old, and *long*, will be received as a charity. Rousseau's people do not interest me; there is but one character and one style in them all, I do not know their faces afunder. I have no esteem for their persons or conduct, am not touched with their passions; and as to their story, I do not believe a word of it—not because it is improbable, but because it is absurd. If I had any little propensity, it was to Julie; but now she has gone and (so hand over head) married that monsieur de Wolmar, I take her for a *vraie Suisse*, and do not doubt but she had taken a cup too much, like her lover. All this does not imply that I will not read it out, when you can spare the rest of it.

## LETTER XIV.

Sunday, February 28, 1762.

I RETURN you my best thanks for the copy of your book<sup>1</sup>, which you sent me, and have not at all lessened my opinion of it since I read it in print, though the press has in general a bad effect on the completion of one's works. The engravings look, as you say, better than I had expected, yet not altogether so well as I could wish. I rejoice in the good dispositions of our court, and in the propriety of their application to you: the work is a thing so much to be wished; has so near a connection with the turn of your studies and of your curiosity; and might find such ample materials among your hoards and in your head; that it will be a sin if you let it drop

<sup>1</sup> Were not the public already in possession of Mr. Gray's opinion of the *Nouvelle Heloise*, in his letters published by Mr. Maçon—how would such a criticism, from such a critic, astonish all those more happily constituted readers, who, capable of appreciating varied excellence, have

perhaps read with equal delight the exquisite odes of the one author, and the extraordinary and (with all its faults) inimitable romance of the other! E.

<sup>2</sup> The Anecdotes of Painting.

and