The Works Of Horatio Walpole, Earl Of Orford

In Five Volumes

Walpole, Horace

London, 1798

Letters which passed between David Hume, Esq. and the Hon. Horace Walpole, relative to Rousseau

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LETTERS

Which paſſed between DAVID HUME, Eſq. and the Hon. HORACE WALPOLE, relative to ROUSSEAU.

LETTER I.

TO THE HON. HORACE WALPOLE.

DEAR SIR,

WHEN I came home laſt night, I found on my table a very long letter from D'Alembert, who tells me, that, on receiving from me an account of my affair with Rouſſeau, he ſummoned a meeting of all my literary friends at Paris, and found them all unanimouſly of the ſame opinion with himſelf, and of a contrary opinion to me, with regard to my conduct. They all think I ought to give to the public a narrative of the whole. However, I perſiſt ſtill more cloſely in my firſt opinion, eſpecially after receiving the laſt mad letter. D'Alembert tells me, that it is of great importance for me to juſtify myſelf from having any hand in the letter from the king of Pruſſia: I am told by Crawford, that you had wrote it a fortnight before I left Paris, but did not ſhow it to a mortal, for fear of hurting me; a delicacy of which I am very ſenſible. Pray recollect, if it was ſo. Though I do not intend to publiſh, I am collecting all the original pieces, and ſhall connect them by a conciſe narrative. It is neceſſary for me to have that letter and Rouſſeau's anſwer. Pray aſſiſt me in this work. About what time, do you think, were they printed?

I am, dear ſir,

Your moſt obedient humble ſervant,

DAVID HUME.

Saturday Forenoon.

LETTER II.

TO DAVID HUME, ESQ.

Arlington-ſtreet,
July 26, 1766.

DEAR SIR,

YOUR ſet of literary friends are what a ſet of literary men are apt to be, exceedingly abſurd. They hold a conſiſtory to conſult how to argue with a madman; and they think it very neceſſary for your character to give them the pleaſure of ſeeing Rouſſeau expoſed, not becauſe he has provoked you, but them. If Rouſſeau prints, you muſt; but I certainly would not till he does.

I cannot be preciſe as to the time of my writing the king of Pruſſia's letter, but I do aſſure you with the utmoſt truth that it was ſeveral days before you left Paris, and before Rouſſeau's arrival there, of which I can give you a ſtrong proof; for I not only ſuppreſſed the letter while you ſtaid there, out of delicacy to you; but it was the reaſon why, out of delicacy to myſelf, I did not go to ſee him, as you often propoſed to me, thinking it wrong to go and make a cordial viſit to a man, with a letter in my pocket to laugh at him. You are at full liberty, dear ſir, to make uſe of what I ſay in your juſtification, either to Rouſſeau or any body elſe. I ſhould be very ſorry to have you blamed on my account; I have a hearty contempt of Rouſſeau, and am perfectly indifferent what the literati of Paris think of the matter. If there is any fault, which I am far from thinking, let it lie on me. No parts can hinder my laughing at their poſſeſſor, if he is a mountebank. If he has a bad and moſt ungrateful heart, as Rouſſeau has ſhown in your caſe, into the bargain, he will have my ſcorn likewiſe, as he will of all good and ſenſible men. You may truſt your ſentence to ſuch, who are as reſpectable judges as any that have pored over ten thouſand more volumes.

Yours moſt ſincerely,

HOR. WALPOLE.

P. S. I will look out the letter and the dates as ſoon as I go to Strawberry-hill.

LETTER III.

To the Hon. HORACE WALPOLE.

DEAR SIR,

A FEW posts ago I had a letter from M. D'Alembert, by which I learn, that he and my other friends at Paris had determined to publish an account of my rupture with Rousseau, in consequence of a general discretionary power which I had given them. The narrative they publish is the same with that which I left with lord Hertford, and which I believe you have seen. It consists chiefly of original papers, connected by a short recital of facts. I made a few alterations, and M. D'Alembert tells me he has made a few more, with my permission and at my desire. Among the papers published is your letter to me, justifying my innocence with regard to the king of Prussia's letter. You permitted me to make what use of it I pleased for my own apology; and as I knew that you could have no reason for concealing it, I inserted it without scruple in the narrative. My Parisian friends are to accompany the whole with a preface, giving an account of my reluctance to this publication, but of the necessity which they found of extorting my consent. It appears particularly, that my antagonist had wrote letters of defiance against me all over Europe, and said, that the letter he wrote me was so confounding to me, that I would not dare to show it to any one without falsifying it. These letters were likely to make impression, and my silence might be construed into a proof of guilt. I am sure that my friends have judged impartially in this affair, and without being actuated by any prejudice or passion of their own; for almost all of them were at first as averse as I was to the publication, and only proceeded to it upon the apparent necessity which they discovered. I have not seen the preface; but the book will probably be soon in London, and I hope you will find that the reasons assigned by my friends are satisfactory. They have taken upon them the blame, if any appears to lie in this measure. I am, with great truth and sincerity,

Dear sir,

Your most obedient and most humble servant,

DAVID HUME.

Edinburgh,
30th of Oct. 1766.

LETTER IV.

To DAVID HUME, ESQ.

DEAR SIR, Nov. 6, 1766.

YOU have, I own, ſurpriſed me by ſuffering your quarrel with Rouſſeau to be printed, contrary to your determination when you left London, and againſt the advice of all your beſt friends here; I may add, contrary to your own nature, which has always inclined you to deſpiſe literary ſquabbles, the jeſt and ſcorn of all men of ſenſe. Indeed I am ſorry you have let yourſelf be over-perſuaded, and ſo are all that I have ſeen who wiſh you well: I ought rather to uſe your own word *extorted*. You ſay your Pariſian friends *extorted* your conſent to this publication. I believe ſo. Your good ſenſe could not approve what your good heart could not refuſe. You add, that they told you *Rouſſeau had ſent letters of defiance againſt you all over Europe*. Good God! my dear ſir, could you pay any regard to ſuch fuſtian? All Europe laughs at being dragged every day into theſe idle quarrels, with which Europe only wipes its backſide. Your friends talk as loftily as of a challenge between Charles the fifth and Francis the firſt. What are become of all the controverſies ſince the days of Scaliger and Scioppius of Billingſgate memory? Why, they ſleep in oblivion, till ſome Bayle drags them out of their duſt, and takes mighty pains to aſcertain the date of each author's death, which is of no more conſequence to the world than the day of his birth. Many a country ſquire quarrels with his neighbour about game and manors, yet they never print their wrangles, though as much abuſe paſſes between them as if they could quote all the Philippics of the learned.

You have acted, as I ſhould have expected if you *would* print, with ſenſe, temper, and decency, and, what is ſtill more uncommon, with your uſual modeſty. I cannot ſay ſo much for your editors. But editors and commentators are ſeldom modeſt. Even to this day that race ape the dictatorial tone of the commentators at the reſtoration of learning, when the mob thought that Greek and Latin could give men the ſenſe which they wanted in their native languages. But *Europe* is now grown a little wiſer, and holds theſe magnificent pretenſions in proper contempt.

What I have ſaid is to explain why I am ſorry my letter makes a part of this controverſy. When I ſent it to you, it was for your juſtification; and had

had it been neceſſary, I could have added much more, having been witneſs to your anxious and boundleſs friendſhip for Rouſſeau. I told you, you might make what uſe of it you pleaſed. Indeed at that time I did not, could not think of its being printed, you ſeeming ſo averſe to any publication on that head. However, I by no means take it ill, nor regret my part, if it tends to vindicate your honour.

I muſt confeſs that I am more concerned that you have ſuffered my letter to be curtailed; nor ſhould I have conſented to that if you had aſked me. I gueſſed that your friends conſulted your intereſt leſs than their own inclination to expoſe Rouſſeau; and I think their omiſſion of what I ſaid on that ſubject, proves I was not miſtaken in my gueſs. My letter hinted too my contempt of learned men and their miſerable conduct. Since I was to appear in print, I ſhould not have been ſorry that that opinion ſhould have appeared at the ſame time. In truth, there is nothing I hold ſo cheap as the generality of learned men; and I have often thought, that young men ought to be made ſcholars, leſt they ſhould grow to reverence learned blockheads, and think there is any merit in having read more fooliſh books than other folks, which, as there are a thouſand nonſenſical books for one good one, muſt be the caſe of any man who has read much more than other people.

Your friend D'Alembert, who I ſuppoſe has read a vaſt deal, is, it ſeems, offended with my letter to Rouſſeau. He is certainly as much at liberty to blame it, as I was to write it. Unfortunately he does not convince me; nor can I think but that if Rouſſeau may attack all governments and all religions, I might attack him: eſpecially on his affectation and affected misfortunes, which you and your editors have proved *are affected*. D'Alembert might be offended at Rouſſeau's aſcribing my letter to him; and he is in the right. I am a very indifferent author; and there is nothing ſo vexatious to an indifferent author as to be confounded with another of the ſame claſs. I ſhould be ſorry to have his eloges and tranſlations of ſcraps of Tacitus laid to me. However, I can forgive him any thing, provided he never tranſlates me. Adieu! my dear ſir; I am apt to laugh, you know, and therefore you will excuſe me, though I do not treat your friends up to the pomp of their claims. They may treat me as freely; I ſhall not laugh the leſs, and I promiſe you I will never enter into a controverſy with them.

Yours moſt ſincerely,

HORACE WALPOLE.

LETTER V.

To the Hon. HORACE WALPOLE.

DEAR SIR,

YESTERDAY I received by the poſt a copy of the edition, printed at Paris, of my narrative of this ridiculous affair between Rouſſeau and me. There is an introduction in the name of my friends, giving an account of the neceſſity under which they found themſelves to publiſh this narrative; and an appendix in D'Alembert's name, proteſting his innocence with regard to all the imputations thrown on him by Rouſſeau. I have no objection with regard to the firſt, but the ſecond contains a clauſe which diſpleaſes me very much, but which you will probably only laugh at: it is that where he blames the king of Pruſſia's letter as cruel. What could engage D'Alembert to uſe this freedom, I cannot imagine. Is it poſſible that a man of his ſuperior parts can bear you ill will becauſe you are the friend of his enemy, madame du Deffand? What makes me ſuſpect that there may be ſomething true of this ſuſpicion, is, that ſeveral paſſages in my narrative, in which I mention you and that letter, are all altered in the tranſlation, and rendered much leſs obliging than I wrote them: for my narrative ſent to Paris was an exact copy of that left in lord Hertford's hands. I would give any thing to prevent a publication in London (for ſurely the whole affair will appear perfectly ridiculous); but I am afraid that a book printed at Paris will be tranſlated in London, if there be hopes of ſelling a hundred copies of it. For this reaſon, I fancy it will be better for me to take care that a proper edition be publiſhed, in which caſe I ſhall give orders that all the paſſages altered in my narrative ſhall be reſtored.

Since I came here I have been told that you have had a ſevere fit of ſickneſs, but that you are now recovered: I hope you are perfectly ſo. I am anxious to hear of your welfare; being with great ſincerity,

Dear ſir,

Your moſt obedient and moſt humble ſervant,

DAVID HUME.

Edinburgh,
4th of Nov. 1766.

LETTER VI.

To DAVID HUME, Esq.

INDEED, dear ſir, it was not neceſſary to make me any apology. D'Alembert is certainly at liberty to ſay what he pleaſes of my letter; and undoubtedly you cannot think that it ſignifies a ſtraw to me what he ſays. But how can you be ſurpriſed at his printing a thing that he ſent you ſo long ago? All *my* ſurpriſe conſiſts in your ſuffering him to curtail my letter to you, when you might be ſure he would print his own at length. I am glad, however, that he has mangled mine: it not only ſhows his equity, but is the ſtrongeſt preſumption that he was conſcious I gueſſed right, when I ſuppoſed he urged you to publiſh, from his own private pique to Rouſſeau.

What you ſurmiſe of his cenſuring my letter becauſe I am a friend of madame du Deffand, is aſtoniſhing indeed, and not to be credited, unleſs you had ſuggeſted it. Having never thought him any thing like a *ſuperior genius* as you term him, I concluded his vanity was hurt by Rouſſeau's aſcribing my letter to him; but to carry reſentment to a woman, to an old and blind woman, ſo far, as to hate a friend of hers qui ne lui avoit point fait de mal, is ſtrangely weak and lamentable. I thought he was a philoſopher, and that philoſophers were virtuous, upright men, who loved wiſdom, and were above the little paſſions and foibles of humanity. I thought they aſſumed that proud title as an earneſt to the world that they intended to be ſomething more than mortal; that they engaged themſelves to be patterns of excellence, and would utter no opinion, would pronounce no deciſion, but what they believed the quinteſſence of truth; that they always acted without prejudice and reſpect of perſons. Indeed we know that the ancient philoſophers were a ridiculous compoſition of arrogance, diſputation, and contradictions; that ſome of them acted againſt all ideas of decency; that others affected to doubt of their own ſenſes; that ſome, for venting unintelligible nonſenſe, pretended to think themſelves ſuperior to kings; that they gave themſelves airs of accounting for all that we do and do not ſee—and yet, that no two of them agreed in a ſingle hypotheſis; that one thought fire, another water, the origin of all things; and that ſome were even ſo abſurd, and impious, as to diſplace God, and enthrone matter in his place. I do not mean to diſparage ſuch wiſe men, for we are

really obliged to them: they anticipated and helped us off with an exceeding deal of nonſenſe, through which we might poſſibly have paſſed, if they had not prevented us. But when in this enlightened age, as it is called, I ſaw the term *philoſophers* revived, I concluded the jargon would be omitted, and that we ſhould be bleſſed with only the cream of ſapience; and one had more reaſon ſtill to expect this from any *ſuperior genius*. But, alas! my dear ſir, what a tumble is here! Your D'Alembert is a mere mortal oracle. Who but would have laughed, if, when the buffoon Ariſtophanes ridiculed Socrates, Plato had condemned the former, not for making ſport with a great man in diſtreſs, but becauſe Plato hated ſome blind old woman with whom Ariſtophanes was acquainted!

D'Alembert's conduct is the more unjuſt, as I never heard madame du Deffand talk of him above three times in the ſeven months that I paſſed at Paris, and never, though ſhe does not love him, with any reflection to his prejudice. I remember, the firſt time I ever heard her mention his name, I ſaid I had been told he was a good mimic, but could not think him a good writer. (Crawford remembers this, and it is a proof that I always thought of D'Alembert as I do now). She took it up with warmth, defended his parts, and ſaid he was extremely amuſing. For her quarrel with him, I never troubled my head about it one way or other, which you will not wonder at. You know in England we read their works, but ſeldom or never take any notice of authors. We think them ſufficiently paid if their books ſell, and of courſe leave them to their colleges and obſcurity, by which means we are not troubled with their vanity and impertinence. In France they ſpoil us; but that was no buſineſs of mine. I who am an author muſt own this conduct very ſenſible; for in truth we are a moſt uſeleſs tribe.

That D'Alembert ſhould have omitted paſſages in which you was ſo good as to mention me with approbation, agrees with his peeviſhneſs, not with his philoſophy. However, for God's ſake, do not reinſtate the paſſages. I do not love compliments, and will never give my conſent to receive any. I have no doubt of your kind intentions to me, but beg they may reſt there. I am much more diverted with the philoſopher D'Alembert's underhand dealings, than I ſhould have been pleaſed with panegyric even from you.

Allow me to make one more remark, and I have done with this trifling buſineſs

ſineſs for ever. Your moral friend pronounces me ill-natured for laughing at an unhappy man who had never offended me. Rouſſeau certainly never did offend me. I believed from many ſymptoms in his writings, and from what I had heard of him, that his love of ſingularity made him chooſe to invite misfortunes, and that he hung out many more than he felt. I, who affect no philoſophy, nor pretend to more virtue than my neighbours, thought this ridiculous in a man who is really a *ſuperior genius*, and joked upon it in a few lines never certainly intended to appear in print. The ſage D'Alembert reprehends this—and where? In a book publiſhed to expoſe Rouſſeau, and which confirms by ſerious proofs what I had hinted at in jeſt. What! does a philoſopher condemn me, and in the very ſame breath, only with ten times more ill-nature, act exactly as I had done? Oh! but you will ſay, Rouſſeau had offended D'Alembert by aſcribing the king of Pruſſia's letter to him. Worſe and worſe: if Rouſſeau is unhappy, a philoſopher ſhould have pardoned. Revenge is ſo unbecoming the rex regum, the man who is præcipuè ſanus—niſi cum pituita moleſta eſt. If Rouſſeau's misfortunes are affected, what becomes of my ill-nature?—In ſhort, my dear ſir, to conclude as D'Alembert concludes his book, I do believe in the virtue of Mr. Hume, but not much in that of philoſophers. Adieu!

Yours ever,

H. WALPOLE.

Arlington-ſtreet,
Nov. 11th, 1766.

P. S. It occurs to me, that you may be apprehenſive of my being indiſcreet enough to let D'Alembert learn your ſuſpicions of him on madame du Deffand's account; but you may be perfectly eaſy on that head. Though I like ſuch an advantage over him, and ſhould be glad he ſaw this letter, and knew how little formidable I think him, I ſhall certainly not make an ill uſe of a private letter, and had much rather wave any triumph, than give a friend a moment's pain. I love to laugh at an impertinent ſçavant, but reſpect learning when joined to ſuch goodneſs as yours, and never confound oſtentation and modeſty.

I wrote to you laſt Thurſday; and, by lady Hertford's advice, directed my letter to Nine-Wells: I hope you will receive it.

LETTER VII.

TO THE HON. HORACE WALPOLE.

I READILY agree with you, my dear ſir, that it is a great misfortune to be reduced to the neceſſity of conſenting to this publication; but it had certainly become neceſſary. Even thoſe who at firſt joined me in rejecting all idea of it, wrote to me and repreſented, that this ſtrange man's defiances had made ſuch impreſſion, that I ſhould paſs univerſally for the guilty perſon, if I ſuppreſſed the ſtory. Some of his greateſt admirers and partiſans, who had read my manuſcript, concurred in the ſame ſentiments with the reſt. I never conſented to any thing with greater reluctance in my life. Had I found one man of my opinion, I ſhould have perſevered in my refuſal. One reaſon of my reluctance was, that I ſaw this publication, if neceſſary at Paris, was yet ſuperfluous, not to ſay worſe, at London. But I hope it will be conſidered that the publication is not, properly ſpeaking, my deed, but that of my friends, in conſequence of a diſcretionary power which I gave them, and which it was natural for me to give them, as I was at too great a diſtance to form a judgment in the caſe.

I am as ſenſible as you are of the ridicule to which men of letters have expoſed themſelves, by running every moment to the public with all their private ſquabbles and altercations; but ſurely there has been ſomething very unexpected and peculiar in this affair. My antagoniſt, by his genius, his ſingularities, his quackery, his misfortunes, and his adventures, had become more the ſubject of general converſation in Europe (for I venture again on the word) than any perſon in it. I do not even except Voltaire, much leſs the king of Pruſſia and Mr. Pitt. How elſe could it have happened, that a clauſe of a private letter, which I wrote ſomewhat thoughtleſsly to a private gentleman at Paris, ſhould in three days time have been the only ſubject of converſation in that capital, and ſhould thence have propagated itſelf every where as faſt as the poſt could carry it? You know, that at firſt I was ſo little inclined to make a noiſe about this ſtory, that I had entertained thoughts of giving no reply at all to the inſult, which was really ſo ridiculous: but you very properly diſſuaded me from this reſolution; and by your advice I wrote that letter, which certainly nobody will find fault with.

Having made this apology for myſelf (where, however, I expect to be abſolved as much by your compaſſion as your judgment), I proceed to ſay ſomething in favour of my friends. Allow me then to inform you, that it was not D'Alembert who ſuppreſſed that clauſe of your letter, but me, who did not tranſcribe it in the copy I ſent to Paris. I was afraid of engaging you needleſsly in a quarrel with theſe literati; and as that clauſe had no reference to the buſineſs in hand, I thought I might fairly ſecrete it. I wiſh I could excuſe him as well on another head. He ſent me above two months ago ſomething like that declaration, and deſired me to convey it to Rouſſeau; which I refuſed to do, and gave him ſome reaſons of my refuſal: but he replied to me, that he was ſure my true ſecret reaſon was my regard to you. He ought thence to have known, that it would be diſagreeable to me to ſee ſuch a piece annexed to mine. I have remarked alſo the omiſſion of a phraſe in the tranſlation; and this omiſſion could not be altogether by accident: it was where I mention your ſuppreſſing the king of Pruſſia's letter, while we lived together at Paris. I ſaid it was *agreeable to your uſual politeneſs and humanity*. I have wrote to Becket the bookſeller to reſtore this paſſage, which is ſo conformable to my real ſentiments: but whether my orders have come in time, I do not know as yet. Before I ſaw the Paris edition, I had deſired Becket to follow it wherever it departed from my original. The difference, I find, was in other reſpects but inconſiderable.

It is only by conjecture I imagine, that D'Alembert's malevolence to you (if he has any malevolence) proceeds from your friendſhip with madame du Deffand; becauſe I can find no other ground for it. I ſee alſo, that in his declaration there is a ſtroke obliquely levelled at her, which perhaps you do not underſtand, but I do; becauſe he wrote me that he heard ſhe was your corrector. I found theſe two perſons in great and intimate friendſhip when I arrived at Paris: but it is ſtrange how intemperate they are both become in their animoſity; though perhaps it is more excuſable in her, on account of her age, ſex, and bodily infirmities. I am very ſenſible of your diſcretion in not citing me on this occaſion; I might otherwiſe have a new quarrel on my hands.

With regard to D'Alembert, I believe I ſaid he was a man of *ſuperior parts*, not a *ſuperior genius*; which are words, if I miſtake not, of a very different import. He is ſurely entitled to the former character, from the works which

you and I have read: I do not mean his tranſlation of Tacitus, but his other pieces. But I believe he is more entitled to it from the works which I ſuppoſe neither you nor I have read, his Geometry and Algebra. I agree with you, that in ſome reſpects Rouſſeau may more properly be called a ſuperior genius; yet is he ſo full of extravagance, that I am inclined to deny even him that appellation. I fancy D'Alembert's talents and Rouſſeau's united might fully merit ſuch a eulogy.

In other reſpects, D'Alembert is a very agreeable companion, and of irreproachable morals. By refuſing great offers from the Czarina and the king of Pruſſia, he has ſhewn himſelf above intereſt and vain ambition. He lives in an agreeable retreat at Paris, ſuitable to a man of letters. He has five penſions: one from the king of Pruſſia, one from the French king, one as member of the academy of ſciences, one as member of the French academy, and one from his own family. The whole amount of theſe is not 6000 livres a year; on the half of which he lives decently, and gives the other half to poor people with whom he is connected. In a word, I ſcarce know a man, who, with ſome few exceptions (for there muſt always be ſome exceptions), is a better model of a *virtuous* and *philoſophical* character.

You ſee I venture ſtill to join theſe two epithets as inſeparable and almoſt ſynonymous; though you ſeem inclined to regard them almoſt as incompatible. And here I have a ſtrong inclination to ſay a few words in vindication both of myſelf and of my friends, venturing even to comprehend you in the number. What new prepoſſeſſion has ſeized you to beat in ſo outrageous a manner your nurſes of mount Helicon, and to join the outcry of the ignorant multitude againſt ſcience and literature? For my part, I can ſcarce acknowledge any other ground of diſtinction between one age and another, between one nation and another, than their different progreſs in learning and the arts. I do not ſay between one man and another; becauſe the qualities of the heart and temper and natural underſtanding are the moſt eſſential to the perſonal character; but being, I ſuppoſe, almoſt equal among nations and ages, do not ſerve to throw a peculiar luſtre on any. You blame France for its fond admiration of men of genius; and there may no doubt be, in particular inſtances, a great ridicule in theſe affectations: but the ſentiment in general was equally conſpicuous in ancient Greece, in Rome during its flouriſhing period, in modern Italy, and even perhaps in England about the beginning of this century.

If the caſe be now otherwiſe, it is what we are to lament and be aſhamed of. Our enemies will only infer, that we are a nation which was once at beſt but half civilized, and is now relapſing faſt into barbariſm, ignorance, and ſuperſtition. I beg you alſo to conſider the great difference in point of morals between uncultivated and civilized ages.—But I find I am launching out inſenſibly into an immenſe ocean of common-place; I cut the matter therefore ſhort, by declaring it as my opinion, that if you had been born a barbarian, and had every day cooked your dinner of horſefleſh by riding on it fifty miles between your breech and the ſhoulder of your horſe, you had certainly been an obliging, good-natured, friendly man; but at the ſame time, that reading, converſation, and travel have detracted nothing from thoſe virtues, and have made a conſiderable addition of other valuable and agreeable qualities to them. I remain, not with ancient ſincerity, which was only roguery and hypocriſy, but very ſincerely, dear ſir,

Your moſt obedient and moſt humble ſervant,

DAVID HUME.

Edinburgh,
20th of Nov. 1766.

P. S. The French tranſlation of this ſtrange piece of mine (for I muſt certainly give it that epithet) was not made by D'Alembert, but by one under his direction.