The Works Of Horatio Walpole, Earl Of Orford

In Five Volumes

Walpole, Horace

London, 1798

Letters from the Hon. Horace Walpole to the Hon. Henry Seymour Conway, from the Year 1740 to the Year 1795

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LETTERS

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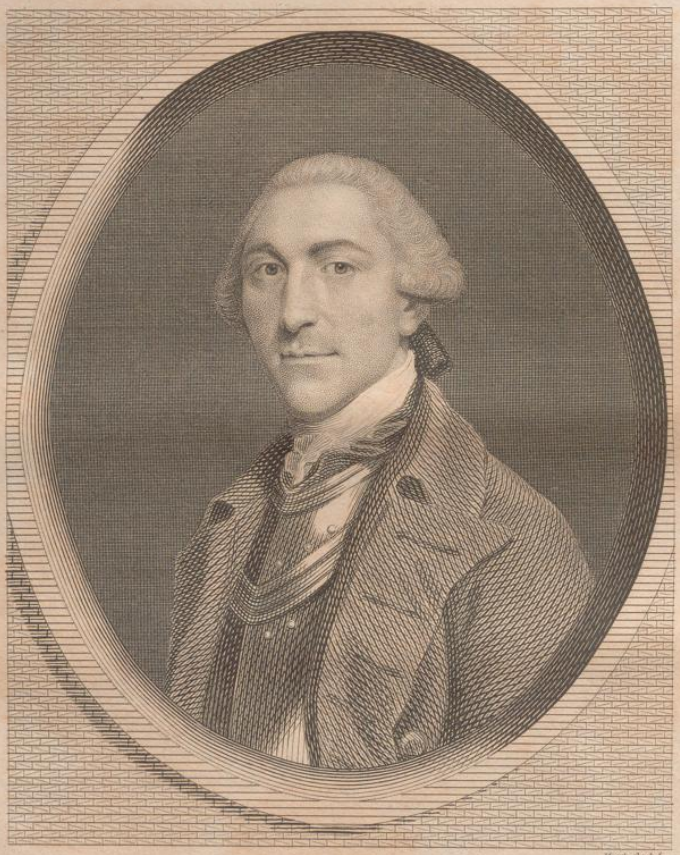

Heath Sculp.t

Field Marshal Conway.

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and destructive

LETTERS

Lieut James Canfield FROM Bengal Cavalry 1811

THE HON. HORACE WALPOLE

TO

THE HON. HENRY SEYMOUR CONWAY,

From the Year 1740 to the Year 1795.

LETTER I.

To the Hon. HENRY SEYMOUR CONWAY [1].

Florence, March 6, 1740 N. S.

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

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

He was afterwards ſecretary in Ireland during the viceroyalty of William fourth duke of Devonſhire; groom of the bed-chamber to George II. and to George III.; ſecretary of ſtate in the year 1765; lieutenant general of the ordnance in 1770; commander in chief in 1782; and a field-marſhal in 1793.

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

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

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

Yours ever,

HOR. WALPOLE.

LETTER III.

DEAR HAL,

Florence, March 25, 1741 N.S.

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

Your account of sir Robert's victory [1] was so extremely well told, that I made Gray translate it into French, and have showed it to all that could taste it, or were inquisitive on the occasion. I have received a print by this post that diverts me extremely; *the Motion*. Tell me, dear now, who made the design, and who took the likenesses; they are admirable: the lines are as good as one sees on such occasions. I wrote last post to sir Robert, to wish him joy; I hope he received my letter.

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

I won't make you any excuse for sending you the following lines; you have prejudice enough for me to read with patience any of my idlenesses [2].

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

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

I receive with great pleasure any remembrances of my lord and your sisters; I long to see all of you. Patapan [3] is so handsome that he has been named the silver fleece; and there is a new order of knighthood to be erected to his honour, in opposition to the golden. Precedents are searching, and plans drawing up for that purpose. I hear that the natives pretend to be companions, upon the authority of their dog-skin waistcoats; but a council that has been held on purpose has declared their pretensions impertinent. Patapan has lately taken wife unto him, as ugly as he is genteel, but of a very great family, being the direct heiress of Canis Scaliger, lord of

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

[2] Here follows the inscription for the neglected column in the place of St. Mark, at Florence, afterwards printed in the Fugitive Pieces.

[3] A dog of Mr. Walpole's.

Verona:

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

Yours ever,

HOR. WALPOLE.

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

LETTER IV.

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

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

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

Florence, July 9.

MY DEAR HARRY,

WE are come hither, and I have received another letter from you with Hoſier's Ghoſt. Your laſt put me in pain for you, when you talked of going to Ireland; but now I find your brother and ſiſter go with you, I am not much concerned. Should I be? You have but to ſay, for my feelings are extremely at your ſervice to diſpoſe as you pleaſe. Let us ſee: you are to come back to ſtand for ſome place; that will be about April. 'Tis a ſort of thing I ſhould do too; and then we ſhould ſee one another, and that would be charming: but it is a ſort of thing I have no mind to do; and then we ſhall not ſee one another, unleſs you would come hither—but that you cannot do: nay, I would not have you, for then I ſhall be gone.—So! there are many *ifs* that juſt ſignify nothing at all. Return I muſt ſooner than I ſhall like. I am happy here to a degree. I'll tell you my ſituation. I am lodged with Mr. Mann[1], the beſt of creatures. I have a terreno all to myſelf, with an open gallery on the Arno, where I am now writing to you. Over againſt me is the famous Gallery; and, on either hand, two fair bridges. Is not this charming and cool? The air is ſo ſerene, and ſo ſecure, that one ſleeps with all the windows and doors thrown open

[1] Afterwards ſir Horace Mann. He was at this time reſident at Florence from George II.

to the river, and only covered with a ſlight gauze to keep away the gnats. Lady Pomfret[1] has a charming converſation once a week. She has taken a vaſt palace and a vaſt garden, which is vaſtly commode, eſpecially to the cicisbeo-part of mankind, who have free indulgence to wander in pairs about the arbours. You know her daughters: lady Sophia[2] is ſtill, nay ſhe muſt be, the beauty ſhe was: lady Charlotte[3] is much improved, and is the cleverest girl in the world; ſpeaks the pureſt Tuſcan like any Florentine. The princeſs Craon[4] has a conſtant pharaoh and ſupper every night, where one is quite at one's eaſe. I am going into the country with her and the prince for a little while, to a villa of the great duke's. The people are good-humoured here and eaſy; and what makes me pleaſed with them, they are pleaſed with me. One loves to find people care for one, when they can have no view in it.

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

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

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

[1] Henrietta Louiſa, wife of Thomas earl of Pomfret.

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

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

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

have

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

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

I perceive miſs Jenny[1] would not venture to Ireland, nor ſtray ſo far from London; I am glad I ſhall always know where to find her within three-ſcore miles. I muſt ſay a word to my lord[2], which, Harry, be ſure you don't read. ["My dear lord, I don't love troubling you with letters, becauſe I know you don't love the trouble of anſwering them; not that I ſhould inſiſt on that ceremony, but I hate to burthen any one's conſcience. Your brother tells me he is to ſtand member of parliament: without telling me ſo, I am ſure he owes it to you. I am ſure you will not repent ſetting him up; nor will he be ungrateful to a brother who deſerves ſo much, and whoſe leaſt merit is not the knowing how to employ ſo great a fortune."]

There, Harry, I have done. Don't ſuſpect me: I have ſaid no ill of you behind your back. Make my beſt compliments to miſs Conway[3].

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

[1] Miſs Jane Conway, half ſiſter to Henry Seymour Conway. She died unmarried in 1749.

[2] Francis lord Conway, afterwards earl and marquis of Hertford, elder brother to H. Seymour Conway.

[3] Afterwards married to John Harris, eſq. of Hayne in Devonſhire.

is here?—Even Mr. More! our Rheims Mr. More[1]! the fortification, hornwork, ravelin, baſtion Mr. More! *which is very pleaſant ſure.* At the end of the eighth ſide, I think I need make no excuſe for leaving off; but I am going to write to Selwyn, and to the lady of the mountain; from whom I have had a very kind letter. She has at laſt received the Chantilly braſs. Good night: write to me from one end of the world to t'other.

Yours ever,

HOR. WALPOLE.

LETTER V.

Florence, September 25, 1740 N.S.

MY DEAR HAL,

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

[1] See a letter to Mr. Weſt, dated Rheims, 20th July, 1739.

ſhould

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

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

Inſanam vatem aſpicies.

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

For our moſt religious and gracious ———

— Dii, talem terris avertite peſtem.

For one that would be our moſt religious and gracious ———

Purpureus veluti cum flos ſucciſus aratro
Langueſcit moriens, laſſove papavera collo
Demiſere caput, pluviâ cum fortè gravantur.

For

For his ſon.

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

For ſir Robert.

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

I will ſhew you the reſt when I ſee you.

HOR. WALPOLE.

LETTER VI.

London, 1741.

MY DEAREST HARRY,

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

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

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

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

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

My dear Harry, will you take care and make my compliments to that charming lady Conway [1], who I hear is ſo charming, and to miſs Jenny, who I know is ſo? As for miſs Anne [2], and her love *as far as it is decent*; tell her, decency is out of the queſtion between us, that I love her without any reſtriction. I ſettled it yeſterday with miſs Conway, that you three are brothers and ſiſter to me, and that if you had been ſo, I could not love you better. I have ſo many couſins, and uncles and aunts, and bloods that grow in Norfolk, that if I had portioned out my affections to them, as they ſay I ſhould, what a modicum would have fallen to each!—So, to avoid fractions, I love my family in you three, their repreſentatives [3].

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

Yours ever,

HOR. WALPOLE.

LETTER VII.

Arlington-ſtreet, July 20, 1744.

MY DEAREST HARRY,

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

[1] Iſabella Fitzroy, daughter of Charles duke of Grafton.

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

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

It

It was moſt agreeable to me to receive a letter of confidence from you, at the time I expected a very different one from you; though, by the date of your laſt, I perceive you had not then received ſome letters, which though I did not ſee I muſt call ſimple, as they could only tend to make you uneaſy for ſome months. I ſhould not have thought of communicating a quarrel to you at this diſtance; and I don't conceive the ſort of friendſhip of thoſe that thought it neceſſary. When I heard it had been wrote to you, I thought it right to myſelf to give you my account of it—but, by your brother's deſire, ſuppreſſed my letter, and left it to be explained by him, who wrote to you ſo ſenſibly on it, that I ſhall ſay no more; but that I think myſelf ſo ill uſed, that it will prevent my giving you thoroughly the advice you aſk of me; for how can I be ſure that my reſentment might not make me ſee in a ſtronger light the reaſons for your breaking off an affair [1], which you know before I never approved?

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

[1] This was an early attachment of Mr. Conway's. By his having complied with the wiſhes and advice of his friend on this ſubject, and got the better of his paſſion, he probably felt that he, in ſome meaſure, owed to Mr. Walpole the ſubſequent happineſs of his life in his marriage with another perſon. E.

out

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

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

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

[The reſt of this letter is wanting.]

LETTER VIII.

Houghton, Oct. 6, 1744.

MY DEAREST HARRY,

MY lord [1] bids me tell you how much he is obliged to you for your letter, and hopes you will accept my anſwer for his. I'll tell you what, we ſhall both be obliged to you if you will incloſe a magnifying glaſs in your next letters; for your two laſt were in ſo diminutive a character, that we were forced to employ all Mrs. Leneve's ſpectacles, beſides an ancient family reading-glaſs with which my grandfather uſed to begin the pſalm, to diſcover what you ſaid to us. Beſides this, I have a piece of news for you: ſir Robert Walpole, when he was made earl of Orford, left the miniſtry, and with it the palace in Downing-ſtreet; as numbers of people found out three years ago, who not having your integrity were quick in perceiving the change of his ſituation. Your letter was full as honeſt as you; for, though directed to Downing-ſtreet, it would not, as other letters would have done, addreſs itſelf to the preſent poſſeſſor. Do but think if it had! The ſmallneſs of the hand would have immediately ſtruck my lord Sandys [2] with the idea of a plot; for what he could not read at firſt ſight, he would certainly have concluded muſt be cypher.

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

[1] Sir Robert Walpole, firſt earl of Orford.

[2] Samuel Sandys, made chancellor of the exchequer on the reſignation of ſir Robert Walpole in February 1741, and afterwards created lord Sandys.

linen;

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

My dear Harry, this is all I have to tell you, and to my great joy, which you muſt forgive me, is full as memorable as any part of the Flanders campaign [1]. I do not deſire to have you engaged in the leaſt more glory than you have been. I ſhould not love the remainder of you the leaſt better for your having loſt an arm or a leg; and have as full perſuaſion of your courage as if you had contributed to the ſlicing off twenty pair from French officers. Thank God, you have ſenſe enough to content yourſelf without being a hero; though I don't quite forget your expedition a huſſar-hunting the beginning of this campaign.—Pray, no more of thoſe jaunts! I don't know any body you would oblige with a preſent of ſuch game: for my part, a fragment of the oldeſt huſſar on earth ſhould never have a place in my muſeum; they are not antique enough: and for a live one, I muſt tell you I like my racoon infinitely better.

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

Yours ever,

HOR. WALPOLE.

LETTER IX.

Arlington-ſtreet, May 27, 1745.

MY DEAR HARRY,

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

[1] Mr. Conway was now with the allied army in Flanders.

character. You write as coolly after behaving well in a battle, as you fought in it. Can your friends flatter themſelves with ſeeing you one day or other be the death of thouſands, when you wiſh for peace in three weeks after your firſt engagement [1], and laugh at the ambition of thoſe men who have given you this opportunity of diſtinguiſhing yourſelf? With the perſon of an Orondates, and the courage, you have all the compaſſion, the reaſon, and the reflection, of one that never read a romance. Can one ever hope you will make a figure, when you only fight becauſe it was right you ſhould, and not becauſe you hated the French, or loved deſtroying mankind? This is ſo un-Engliſh, or ſo un-heroic, that I deſpair of you!

Thank Heaven, you have one ſpice of madneſs! Your admiration of your maſter [2] leaves me a glimmering of hope that you will not be always ſo unreaſonably reaſonable. Do you remember the humorous lieutenant, in one of Beaumont and Fletcher's plays, that is in love with the king? Indeed your maſter is not behind hand with you; you ſeem to have agreed to puff one another.

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

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

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

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

[3] A celebrated apothecary in Pall-mall.

chaplets

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

HOR. WALPOLE.

LETTER X.

Arlington-ſtreet, July 1, 1745.

MY DEAR HARRY,

IF it were not for that one ſlight inconvenience, that I ſhould probably be dead now, I ſhould have liked much better to have lived in the laſt war than in this; I mean as to the pleaſantneſs of writing letters. Two or three battles won, two or three towns taken, in a ſummer, were pretty objects to keep up the livelineſs of a correſpondence. But now it hurts one's dignity to be talking of Engliſh and French armies, at the firſt period of our hiſtory in which the tables are turned. After having learnt to ſpell out of the reigns of Edward the third and Harry the fifth, and begun liſping with Agincourt and Creſſy, one uſes one's ſelf but awkwardly to the ſounds of Tournay and Fontenoy. I don't like foreſeeing the time ſo near, when all the young orators in parliament will be haranguing out of Demoſthenes upon the imminent danger we are in from the overgrown power of king Philip. As becoming as all that public ſpirit will be, which to be ſure will now come forth, I can't but think we were at leaſt as happy and as great when all the young Pitts and Lytteltons were pelting oratory at my father for rolling out a twenty years peace, and not envying the trophies which he paſſed by every day in Weſtminſter-hall. But one muſt not repine; rather reflect on the glories which they have drove the nation headlong into. One muſt think all our diſtreſſes and dangers well laid out, when they have purchaſed us Glover's [1] Oration for the merchants, the admiralty for the duke of Bedford, and the reverſion of ſecretary at war for Pitt, which he will certainly have, unleſs the French king ſhould happen to have the nomination; and then I fear, as much obliged as that court is to my lord Cobham and his nephews, they would be ſo partial as to prefer ſome

[1] The author of Leonidas.

illiterate

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

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

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

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

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

[*] Mr. Conway was ſtill with the army in Flanders.

your

your own hand [1]. Lady Mary [2] ſends you her compliments; ſhe is going to paſs a week with miſs Townſhend [3] at Muffits; I don't think you will be forgot. Your ſiſter Anne has got a new diſtemper, which ſhe ſays feels like ſomething *jumping* in her. You know my ſtyle on ſuch an occaſion, and may be ſure I have not ſpared this diſtemper. Adieu!

Yours ever,

HOR. WALPOLE.

LETTER XI.

Windſor ſtill [4], Oct. 3, 1746.

MY DEAR HARRY,

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

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

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

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

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

ance,

ance, lives at the foot of that hill which you mention with a melancholy ſatisfaction that always attends the reflection. Apropos, here is an ode on the very ſubject, which I deſire you will pleaſe to like exceſſively [1]:

* *

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

Your humble ſervant's,

HOR. WALPOLE.

LETTER XII.

Windſor, October 24, 1746.

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

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

love,

love, rather than a natural amorous languiſh. His exploits in war, where he always fought by the ſide of the renowned Paladine William of England, have endeared his memory to all admirers of true chivalry, as the mournful elegies which he poured out among the deſert rocks of Caledonia[1] in honour of the peerleſs lady and his heart's idol, the incomparable Cynthia, will for ever preſerve his name in the flowery annals of poeſy.

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

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

Yours ever,

HOR. WALPOLE.

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

"In trim gardens taking pleaſure."

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

LETTER XIII.

Arlington-ſtreet, April 16, 1747.

DEAR HARRY,

WE are all ſkyrockets and bonfires to-night for your laſt year's victory [1]; but if you have a mind to perpetuate yourſelves in the calendar, you muſt take care to refreſh your conqueſts. I was yeſterday out of town, and the very ſigns as I paſſed through the villages made me make very quaint reflections on the mortality of fame and popularity. I obſerved how the duke's head had ſucceeded almoſt univerſally to admiral Vernon's, as his had left but few traces of the duke of Ormond's. I pondered theſe things in my heart, and ſaid unto myſelf, Surely all glory is but as a ſign [2]!

You have heard that old Lovat's [3] tragedy is over: it has been ſucceeded by a little farce, containing the humours of the duke of Newcaſtle and his man Stone. The firſt event was a ſquabble between his grace and the ſheriff about holding up the head on the ſcaffold—a cuſtom that has been diſuſed, and which the ſheriff would not comply with, as he received no order in writing. Since that the duke has burſt ten yards of breeches ſtrings [4] about the body, which was to be ſent into Scotland; but it ſeems it is cuſtomary for vaſt numbers to riſe to attend the moſt trivial burial. The duke, who is always at leaſt as much frightened at doing right as at doing wrong, was three days before he got courage enough to order the burying in the Tower. I muſt tell you an exceſſive good ſtory of George Selwyn: Some women were ſcolding him for going to ſee the execution, and aſked him, how he could be ſuch a barbarian to ſee the head cut off? "Nay," ſays he, "if that was ſuch a crime, I am ſure I have made amends, for I went to ſee it ſewed on again." When he was at the undertaker's, as ſoon as they had ſtitched him together, and were going to put the body into the coffin, George, in my lord chancellor's voice, ſaid, "My lord Lovat, your lordſhip may riſe." My lady T——— has picked up a little ſtable-boy in the Tower,

[1] The battle of Culloden.

[2] Soon after Mr. Walpole publiſhed a paper in The World upon this ſubject.

[3] Simon Frazer lord Lovat, beheaded on Tower-hill the 9th of April 1747.

[4] Alluding to a trick of the duke of Newcaſtle's.

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

We have had a great and fine day in the houſe on the ſecond reading the bill for taking away the heritable juriſdictions in Scotland. Lyttelton [1] made the fineſt oration imaginable; the ſolicitor general [2], the new advocate [3], and Hume Campbell [4], particularly the laſt, ſpoke exceſſively well for it, and Oſwald [5] againſt it. The majority was 233 againſt 102. Pitt [6] was not there; the ducheſs of Queenſberry had ordered him to have the gout.

I will give you a commiſſion once more to tell lord Bury [7] that he has quite dropped me: if I thought he would take me up again, I would write to him; a meſſage would encourage me. Adieu!

Yours ever,

HOR. WALPOLE.

LETTER XIV.

Twickenham, June 8, 1747.

YOU perceive by my date that I am got into a new camp, and have left my tub at Windſor. It is a little play-thing-houſe that I got out of Mrs. Chenevix's [8] ſhop, and is the prettieſt bawble you ever ſaw. It is ſet in enamelled meadows, with philigree hedges:

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

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

[1] Sir George, afterwards created lord Lyttelton.
[2] William Murray, afterwards earl of Manſfield.
[3] William Grant, lord advocate of Scotland.
[4] Only brother to the earl of Marchmont.
[5] James Oſwald, afterwards a lord of trade, and vice-treaſurer of Ireland.
[6] William Pitt, afterwards earl of Chatham.
[7] George Keppel, eldeſt ſon of William earl of Albemarle, whom he ſucceeded in the title in 1755. He was now, together with Mr. Conway, aide-du-camp to the duke of Cumberland.
[8] A famous toy-ſhop.

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

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

I make no remarks on your campaign [1], becauſe, as you ſay, you do nothing at all; which, though very proper nutriment for a thinking head, does not do quite ſo well to write upon. If any one of you can but contrive to be ſhot upon your poſt, it is all we deſire, ſhall look upon it as a great curioſity, and will take care to ſet up a monument to the perſon ſo ſlain, as we are doing by vote to captain ———, who was killed at the beginning of the action in the Mediterranean four years ago. In the preſent dearth of glory, he is canonized, though, poor man! he had been tried twice the year before for cowardice.

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

[1] Mr. Conway was in Flanders with William duke of Cumberland.

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

Yours ever,

HOR. WALPOLE.

LETTER XV.

Strawberry-hill, Auguſt 29, 1748.

DEAR HARRY,

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

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

viſits, and led captains for toad-eaters, and the life is the very ſame. In ſhort, theſe are the people I live in the midſt of, though not with; and it is for want of more important hiſtories that I have wrote to you ſo ſeldom; not, I give you my word, from the leaſt negligence. My preſent and ſole occupation is planting, in which I have made great progreſs, and talk very learnedly with the nurſerymen, except that now and then a lettuce run to ſeed overturns all my botany, as I have more than once taken it for a curious Weſt-Indian flowering ſhrub. Then the deliberation with which trees grow, is extremely inconvenient to my natural impatience. I lament living in ſo barbarous an age, when we are come to ſo little perfection in gardening. I am perſuaded that a hundred and fifty years hence it will be as common to remove oaks a hundred and fifty years old, as it is now to tranſplant tulip-roots. I have even begun a treatiſe or panegyric on the great diſcoveries made by poſterity in all arts and ſciences; wherein I ſhall particularly deſcant on the great and cheap convenience of making trout-rivers—one of the improvements which Mrs. Kerwood wondered Mr. Hedges would not make at his country-houſe, but which was not then quite ſo common as it will be. I ſhall talk of a ſecret for roaſting a wild boar and a whole pack of hounds alive, without hurting them, ſo that the whole chace may be brought up to table; and for this ſecret, the duke of Newcaſtle's grandſon, if he can ever get a ſon, is to give a hundred thouſand pounds. Then the delightfulneſs of having whole groves of humming-birds, tame tigers taught to fetch and carry, pocket ſpying-glaſſes to ſee all that is doing in China, with a thouſand other toys, which we now look upon as impracticable, and which pert poſterity would laugh in one's face for ſtaring at, while they are offering rewards for perfecting diſcoveries, of the principles of which we have not the leaſt conception! If ever this book ſhould come forth, I muſt expect to have all the learned in arms againſt me, who meaſure all knowledge backward: ſome of them have diſcovered ſymptoms of all arts in Homer; and Pineda[1] had ſo much faith in the accompliſhments of his anceſtors, that he believed Adam underſtood all ſciences but politics. But as theſe great champions for our forefathers are dead, and Boileau not alive to hitch me into a verſe with Perrault, I am determined to admire the learning of poſterity, eſpecially being convinced that half our

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

preſent

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

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

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

Yours ever,

HOR. WALPOLE.

LETTER XVI.

Strawberry-hill, Oct. 6, 1748.

DEAR HARRY,

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

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

I am going to dinner with lady Sophia Thomas at Hampton-court, where I was to meet the Cardigans; but I this minute receive a meſſage that the ducheſs of Montagu [1] is extremely ill, which I am much concerned for on lady Cardigan's [2] account, whom I grow every day more in love with; you may imagine, not her perſon, which is far from improved lately: but ſince I have been here, I have lived much with them; and, as George Montagu [3] ſays, *in all my practice* I never met a better underſtanding, nor more really eſtimable qualities; ſuch a dignity in her way of thinking, ſo little idea of any thing mean or ridiculous, and ſuch proper contempt for both!

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

[2] Lady Mary Montagu, third daughter of John duke of Montagu and wife of George Brudenell earl of Cardigan, afterwards created duke of Montagu.

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

Adieu!

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

Yours ever,

HOR. WALPOLE.

LETTER XVII.

Strawberry-hill, May 5, 1753.

THOUGH my letter bears a country date, I am only a paſſenger here, juſt come to overlook my workmen, and repoſe myſelf upon ſome ſhavings, after the fatigues of the ſeaſon. You know balls and maſquerades always abound as the weather begins to be too hot for them, and this has been quite a ſpring-tide of diverſion. Not that I am ſo abandoned as to have partaken of all; I neither made the Newmarket campaign under the duke [1], nor danced at any ball, nor *looked well* at any maſquerade: I begin to ſubmit to my years, and amuſe myſelf—only juſt as much as I like. Indeed, when parties and politics are at an end, an Engliſhman may be allowed not to be always grave and out of humour. His royal highneſs has won as many hearts at Newmarket as he loſt in Scotland; he played deep, and handſomely; received every body at his table with the greateſt good humour, and permitted the familiarities of the place with eaſe and ſenſe.

There have been balls at the ducheſs of Norfolk's, at Holland-houſe, and lord Granville's, and a ſubſcription maſquerade: the dreſſes were not very fine, not much invention, nor any very abſurd. I find I am telling you extreme trifles; but you deſired me to write, and there literally happens nothing of greater moment. If I can fill out a ſheet even in this way, I will; for at Sligo [2] perhaps I may appear a journaliſt of conſequence.

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

[1] William duke of Cumberland.

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

thouſand impertinent things to my lady Albemarle, on my lord's not letting her come to Paris[1]. I ſhould not repeat this to you, only to introduce George Selwyn's account of this woman, who, he ſays, is mother to the princeſs of Montauban, grandmother to madame de Brionne, ſiſter to general Oglethorpe, and was laundreſs to the ducheſs of Portſmouth.

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

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

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

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

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

[1] Lord Albemarle was then embaſſador at Paris.

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

Your ſincere friend,

HOR. WALPOLE.

LETTER XVIII.

Strawberry-hill, May 24, 1753.

IT is well you are married! How would my lady A—— have liked to be aſked in a pariſh-church for three Sundays running? I really believe ſhe would have worn her weeds for ever, rather than have paſſed through ſo impudent a ceremony! What do *you* think?—But you will want to know the interpretation of this preamble. Why, there is a new bill, which, under the notion of preventing clandeſtine marriages, has made ſuch a general rummage and reform in the office of matrimony, that every Strephon and Chloe, every dowager and her H——, will have as many impediments and formalities to undergo as a treaty of peace. Lord Bath invented this bill, but had drawn it ſo ill, that the chancellor [1] was forced to draw a new one—

[1] Philip Yorke earl of Hardwicke.

and then grew ſo fond of his own creature, that he has crammed it down the throats of both houſes—though they gave many a gulp before they could ſwallow it. The duke of Bedford attacked it firſt with great ſpirit and maſtery, but had little ſupport, though the duke of Newcaſtle did not vote. The lawyers were all ordered to nurſe it through our houſe; but, except the poor attorney general[1], who is nurſe indeed to all intents and purpoſe, and did amply goſſip over it, not one of them ſaid a word. Nugent[2] ſhone extremely in oppoſition to the bill, and, though every now and then on the precipice of abſurdity, kept clear of it, with great humour and wit and argument, and was unanſwered—Yet we were beat. Laſt Monday it came into the committee: Charles Townſhend acted a very good ſpeech with great cleverneſs, and drew a picture of his own ſtory and his father's tyranny, with at leaſt as much parts as modeſty. Mr. Fox[3] mumbled the chancellor and his lawyers, and pinned the plan of the bill upon a pamphlet he had found of Dr. Gally's, where the doctor, recommending the French ſcheme of matrimony, ſays, *It was found that fathers were too apt to forgive.* The goſpel, I thought, ſaid Mr. Fox, enjoined forgiveneſs; but pious Dr. Gally thinks fathers are too apt to forgive. Mr. Pelham, extremely in his opinion againſt the bill, and in his inclination too, was forced to rivet it, and, without ſpeaking one word for it, taught the houſe how to vote for it; and it was carried againſt the chairman's leaving the chair by 165 to 84.

This is all the news I know, or at leaſt was all when I came out of town; for I left the tinkering of the bill, and came hither laſt Tueſday to my workmen. I flatter myſelf I ſhall get into tolerable order to receive my lady A—— and you at your return from Sligo, from whence I have received your letter, and where I hope you have had my firſt. I ſay nothing of the exile of the parliament of Paris, for I know no more than you will ſee in the public papers; only, as we are going to chooſe a new parliament, we could not do better than chooſe the exiles: we could ſcarce chooſe braver or honeſter men. I ſay as little of mademoiſelle Murphy[4], for I conclude you hear nothing but her health drank in whiſky. Don't all the

[1] Sir Dudley Ryder.
[2] Robert Nugent, afterwards created lord Clare and earl Nugent.
[3] Henry Fox, afterwards created lord Holland.
[4] An Iriſh woman who was for a ſhort time miſtreſs to Louis XV.

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

Arlington-ſtreet, May 29.

I AM come to town for a day or two, and find that the marriage bill has not only laſted till now in the committee, but has produced, or at leaſt diſcloſed, extreme heats. Mr. Fox and Mr. Pelham have had very high words on every clauſe, and the former has renewed his attacks on the chancellor under the name of Dr. Gally. Yeſterday on the nullity clauſe they ſat till half an hour after three in the morning, having juſt then had a diviſion on adjournment, which was rejected by the miniſtry by above 80 to 70. The ſpeaker [1], who had ſpoken well againſt the clauſe, was ſo miſrepreſented by the attorney general, that there was danger of a ſkimmington between the great wig and the coif, the former having given a flat lye to the latter. Mr. Fox, I am told, outdid himſelf for ſpirit, and ſeverity on the chancellor and the lawyers. I ſay I am told; for I was content with having been beat twice, and did not attend. The heats between the two miniſters were far from cooling by the length of the debate. Adieu! You did little expect in theſe times, and at this ſeaſon, to have heard ſuch a parliamentary hiſtory! The bill is not near finiſhed; Mr. Fox has declared he will diſpute every inch of ground. I hope he won't be baniſhed to Pontoiſe [2]. I ſhall write to you no more, ſo pray return. I hear moſt favourable accounts of my lady A——.

Yours ever,

HOR. WALPOLE.

[1] Arthur Onſlow.

[2] The parliament of Paris having eſpouſed the cauſe of religious liberty, and apprehended ſeveral prieſts who by the authority of the archbiſhop of Paris and other prelates had refuſed the ſacraments to thoſe who would not ſubſcribe to the bull Unigenitus, were baniſhed by the king, Louis XV. to Pontoiſe. E.

LETTER

LETTER XIX.

Strawberry-hill, Saturday July 6, 1754.

YOUR letter certainly ſtopped to drink ſomewhere by the way, I ſuppoſe with the hearty hoſteſs at the Windmill; for, though written on Wedneſday, it arrived here but this morning: it could not have travelled more deliberately in the ſpeaker's body-coach. I am concerned, becauſe, your fiſhmonger not being arrived, I fear you have ſtaid for my anſwer. The fiſh[1] are apprized that they are to *ride* over to Park-place, and are ready booted and ſpurred; and the moment their pad arrives, they ſhall ſet forth. I would accompany them on a pillion, if I were not waiting for lady Mary[2], who has deſired to bring her poor little ſick girl here for a few days to try the air. You know how courteous a knight I am to diſtreſt virgins of five years old, and that my caſtle-gates are always open to them[3]. You will, I am ſure, accept this excuſe for ſome days; and as ſoon as ever my hoſpitality is completed, I will be ready to obey your ſummons, though you ſhould ſend a water-pot for me. I am in no fear of not finding you in perfect verdure; for the ſun, I believe, is gone a great way off to ſome races or other, where his horſes are to run for a king's plate: we have not heard of him in this neighbourhood. Adieu!

Yours ever,

HOR. WALPOLE.

[1] Gold fiſh.
[2] Lady Mary Churchill.
[3] Mr. Conway's only daughter had been left with Mr. Walpole at Strawberry-hill, when he and lady Aileſbury went to Ireland with his regiment.

LETTER

LETTER XX.

Strawberry-hill, Sept. 23, 1755.

DEAR HARRY,

NEVER make me excuſes for a letter that tells me ſo many agreeable things as your laſt; that you are got well to Dublin[1]; that you are all well, and that you have accommodated all your politics to your ſatisfaction —and I may be allowed to ſay, greatly to your credit. What could you tell me that would pleaſe me ſo much?

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

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

When

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

I have been roving about Hampſhire, have been at Wincheſter and Southampton and twenty places, and have been but one day in London—conſequently know as little news as if I had been ſhut up in Bungey caſtle. Rumours there are of great bickerings and uneaſineſſes; but I don't believe there will be any bloodſhed of places, except Legge's[1], which nobody ſeems willing to take—I mean as a ſinecure. His majeſty of Cockney is returned exceedingly well, but grown a little out of humour at finding that we are not ſo much pleaſed with all the Ruſſians and Heſſians that he has hired to recover the Ohio. We are an ungrateful people!

Make a great many compliments for me to my lady A——. I own I am in pain about Miſſy[2]. As my lady is a little coquette herſelf, and loves crowds and admiration and a court life, it will be very difficult for her to keep a ſtrict eye upon Miſſy. The Iriſh are very forward and bold:—I ſay no more; but it would hurt you both extremely to have her marry herſelf idly; and I think my lord chancellor has not extended his matrimonial foreſight to Ireland. However, I have much confidence in Mrs. Elizabeth Jones[3]: I am ſure, when they were here, ſhe would never let Miſſy whiſper with a boy that was old enough to ſpeak.

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

Yours ever,

HOR. WALPOLE.

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

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

[3] Miſs Conway's nurſe.

LETTER XXI.

Arlington-ſtreet, Nov. 15, 1755.

I PROMISED you hiſtories, and there are many people that take care I ſhould have it in my power to keep my word. To begin in order, I ſhould tell you, that there were 289 members at the Cockpit meeting, the greateſt number ever known there: but Mr. Pitt, who is too great a general to regard numbers, eſpecially when there was a probability of no great harmony between the commanders, did not however poſtpone giving battle. The engagement was not more deciſive than long: we ſat till within a quarter of five in the morning; an uninterrupted ſerious debate from before two. Lord Hillſborough moved the addreſs, and very injudiciouſly ſuppoſed an oppoſition. Martin, Legge's ſecretary, moved to omit in the addreſs the indirect approbation of the treaties, and the direct aſſurances of protection to Hanover. Theſe queſtions were at length divided; and againſt Pitt's inclination, the laſt, which was the leaſt unpopular, was firſt decided by a majority of 311 againſt 105. Many then went away; and on the next diviſion the numbers were 290 to 89. Theſe are the general outlines. The detail of the ſpeeches, which were very long, and ſome extremely fine, it would be impoſſible to give you in any compaſs. On the ſide of the oppoſition (which I muſt tell you by the way, though it ſet out decently, ſeems extremely reſolved) the ſpeakers (I name them in their order) were: the 3d Colebrook, Martin, Northey, ſir Richard Lyttelton, Doddington, George Grenville, ſir F. Daſhwood, Beckford, ſir G. Lee, Legge, Potter, Dr. Hay, Geo. Townſhend, lord Egmont, Pitt, and admiral Vernon: on the other ſide were, lord Hillſborough, Obrien, young Stanhope, Hamilton, Alſtone, Ellis, lord Barrington, ſir G. Lyttelton, Nugent, Murray, ſir T. Robinſon, my uncle, and Mr. Fox. As ſhort as I can, I will give you an account of them. Sir Richard, Beckford, Potter, G. Townſhend, the admiral of courſe, Martin, and Stanhope were very bad: Doddington was well, but very *acceding:* Dr. Hay by no means anſwers his reputation; it was eaſy, but not ſtriking. Lord Egmont was doubling, abſurd, and obſcure. Sir G. Lee and lord Barrington were much diſliked; I don't think, ſo deſervedly. Poor A—— was mad, and ſpoke ten times to order. Sir George [1], our friend, was dull and timid. Legge was the latter. Nu-

[1] Sir George Lyttelton.

gent roared, and ſir Thomas rumbled. Mr. Fox was extremely fatigued, and did little. Geo. Grenville's was very fine and much beyond himſelf, and very pathetic. The attorney general [1] in the ſame ſtyle, and very artful, was ſtill finer. Then there was a young Mr. Hamilton [2] who ſpoke for the firſt time, and was at once perfection: his ſpeech was ſet, and full of antitheſis, but thoſe antitheſes were full of argument: indeed his ſpeech was the moſt argumentative of the whole day; and he broke through the regularity of his own compoſition, anſwered other people, and fell into his own track again with the greateſt eaſe. His figure is advantageous, his voice ſtrong and clear, his manner ſpirited, and the whole with the eaſe of an eſtabliſhed ſpeaker. You will aſk, what could be beyond this? Nothing, but what was beyond what ever was, and that was Pitt! He ſpoke at paſt one, for an hour and thirty-five minutes: there was more humour, wit, vivacity, finer language, more boldneſs, in ſhort, more aſtoniſhing perfections than even you, who are uſed to him, can conceive. He was not abuſive, yet very attacking on all ſides: he ridiculed my lord Hillſborough, cruſhed poor ſir George, terrified the attorney, laſhed my lord Granville, painted my lord of Newcaſtle, attacked Mr. Fox, and even hinted up to the duke [3]. A few of the Scotch were in the minority, and moſt of the princeſs's people, not all: all the duke of Bedford's in the majority. He himſelf ſpoke in the other houſe for the addreſs (though profeſſing incertainty about the treaties [4] themſelves), againſt my lord Temple and lord Halifax, without a diviſion. My lord Talbot was neuter; he and I were of a party: my opinion was ſtrongly with the oppoſition; I could not vote for the treaties; I would not vote againſt Mr. Fox. It is ridiculous perhaps, at the end of ſuch a debate, to give an account of my own ſilence; and as it is of very little conſequence what I did, ſo it is very unlike me to juſtify myſelf. You know how much I hate *profeſſions* of integrity; and my pride is generally too great to care what the generality of people ſay of me: but your heart is good enough to make me wiſh you ſhould think well of mine.

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

[1] William Murray, afterwards lord Mansfield.

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

[3] The duke of Cumberland.

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

to

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

Yours ever,

HOR. WALPOLE.

LETTER XXII.

Arlington-ſtreet, January 24, 1756.

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

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

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

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

Yours ever,

HOR. WALPOLE.

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

LETTER

LETTER XXIII.

Arlington-ſtreet, Feb. 12, 1756.

I WILL not write to my lady A. to-night, nor pretend to anſwer the pretticſt letter in the world, when I am out of ſpirits. I am very unhappy about poor Mr. Mann [1], who I fear is in a deep conſumption: the doctors do not give him over, and the ſymptoms are certainly a little mended this week; but you know how fallacious that diſtemper is, and how unwiſe it would be to truſt to it! As he is at Richmond, I paſs a great deal of my time out of town to be near him, and ſo may have miſſed ſome news; but I will tell you all I know.

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

The French have promiſed letters of nobleſſe to whoever fits out even a little privateer. I could not help a melancholy ſmile when my lady A. talked of coming over ſoon. I fear major-general *you* will ſcarce be permitted to return to your plough at Park-place, when we grudge every man that is left at the plough. Between the French and the earthquakes [2], you

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

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

have

have no notion how good we are grown; nobody makes a ſuit of clothes now but of ſackcloth turned up with aſhes. The faſt was kept ſo devoutly, that Dick Edgecumbe [1], finding a very lean hazard at White's, ſaid with a ſigh, "Lord, how the times are degenerated! Formerly a faſt would have brought every body hither; now it keeps every body away!" A few nights before, two men walking up the Strand, one ſaid to t'other, "Look how red the ſky is! Well, thank God! there is to be no maſquerade!"

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

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

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

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

[1] Richard Edgecumbe ſecond lord Edgecumbe.

[2] Sir Euſtace Drawbridgecourt. See World, N° 160, 5th vol.

wit

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

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

Yours ever,

HOR. WALPOLE.

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

LETTER XXIV.

Arlington-ſtreet, March 4, 1756.

DEAR HARRY,

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

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

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

[z] The duke of Cumberland.

reglée

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

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

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

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

I have told poor Mr. Mann how kind you are to him: indeed I have been exceedingly frightened and troubled for him, and thought him in immediate danger. He is certainly much mended, though I ſtill fear a conſumption for him: he has not been able to move from Richmond this whole winter: I never fail to viſit him twice or thrice a week. I heartily pity the fatigue and dulneſs of your life; nor can I flatter you with pretending to believe it will end ſoon: I hope you will not be forced to gain as much reputation in the camp as you have in the cabinet!—You ſee I muſt finiſh.

Yours ever,

HOR. WALPOLE.

LETTER XXV.

Strawberry-hill, April 16, 1756.

YOU wrong me very much in thinking I omit writing becauſe I don't hear from you as often as you have a mind I ſhould: you are kinder to me in that reſpect than I have reaſon, conſidering your numerous occupations, to expect: the real and whole truth is, that I have had nothing to tell you; for I could not tire either you or myſelf with all the details relating to this fooliſh road-bill [1], which has engroſſed the whole attention of every body lately. I have entered into it leſs than any body. What will you ſay when you are told that proxies have been ſent for to Scotland? that my lord Harrington has been dragged into the houſe of lords from his coffin, and lord Arran carried thither to take the oaths, who I believe has not appeared there ſince the Revolution? In ſhort, it has become quite a trial for power; and though the dukes of Grafton and Bedford have lent their names and their vehemence, you will gueſs what has been the engine behind the curtain.

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

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

Heath Sculp.

The hon.ble Mary Bellenden,
afterwards
Mrs Campbell.

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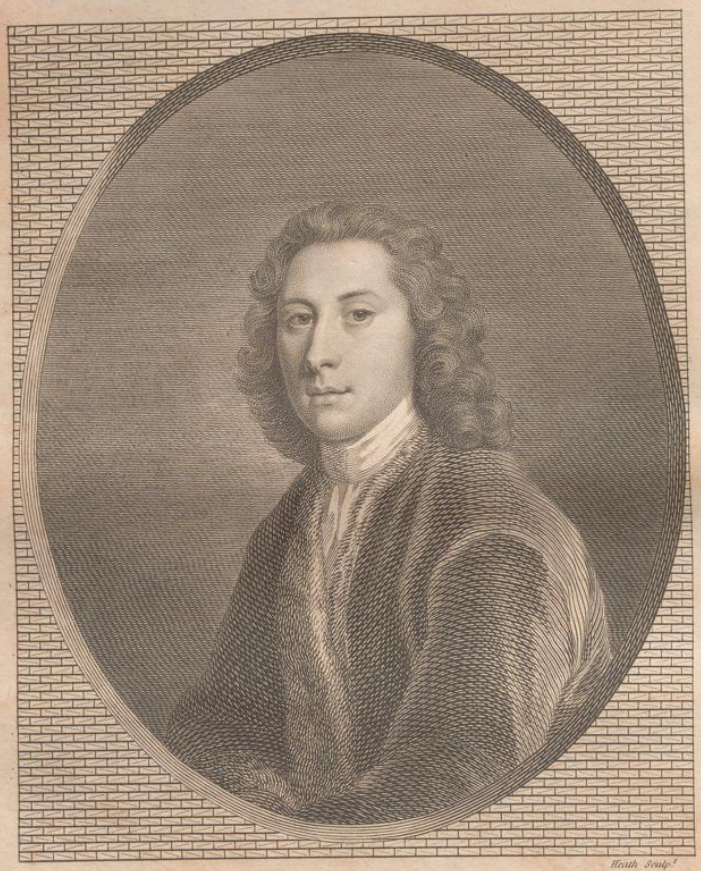

Heath Sculp.t

Col.l John Campbell afterwards Duke of Argyll.

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up all: they have already a general named, who ranks before any one of ours; and there are to be two Hanoverian aide-de-camps!

You will hear by this poſt of the death of ſir William Lowther, whoſe vaſt ſucceſſion falls to ſir James, and makes him Crœſus: he may hire the dukes of Bedford and Marlborough for led captains. I am ſorry for this young man, though I did not know him; but it is hard to be cut off ſo young and ſo rich: old rich men ſeldom deſerve to live, but he did a thouſand generous acts. You will be diverted with a ſpeech of lord S. one of thoſe ſecond-rate fortunes, who have not above five-and-thirty thouſand pounds a year. He ſays, every body may attain ſome one point if they give all their attention to it; for his part, he knows he has no great capacity, he could not make a figure by his parts; he ſhall content himſelf with being one of the richeſt men in England! I literally ſaw him t'other day buying pictures for two-and-twenty ſhillings, that I would not hang in my garret; while I, who certainly have not made riches my ſole point of view, was throwing away guineas, and piquing myſelf for old tombſtones againſt your father-in-law the general [1]. I hope lady A. will forgive my zeal for Strawberry againſt Coombank! Are you ever to ſee your Strawberry-hill again? Lord Duncannon flatters us that we ſhall ſee you in May. If I did not hope it, I would ſend you the only two new faſhionable pieces; a comic elegy by C. and a wonderful book by a more wonderful author, Greville [2]. It is called Maxims and Characters: ſeveral of the former are pretty: all the latter ſo abſurd, that one in particular, which at the beginning you take for the character of a man, turns out to be the character of a poſt-chaiſe.

You never tell me now any of Miſſy's bons-mots. I hope ſhe has not reſided in Ireland till they are degenerated into bulls! Adieu!

Yours ever,

HOR. WALPOLE.

[1] General John Campbell, who upon the death of Archibald duke of Argyll ſucceeded to that title.

[2] Fulke Greville, eſq.

LETTER XXVI.

Strawberry-hill, Auguſt 14, 1757.

YOU are too kind to me, and, if it were poſſible, would make me feel ſtill more for your approaching departure [1]. I can only thank you ten thouſand times; for I muſt not expatiate, both from the nature of the ſubject, and from the uncertainty of this letter reaching you. I was told yeſterday, that you had hanged a French ſpy in the Iſle of Wight; I don't mean you, but your government. Though I wiſh no life taken away, it was ſome ſatisfaction to think that the French were at this hour wanting information.

Mr. F. breakfaſted here t'other day. He confirmed what you tell me of lord F—— C——'s account: it is univerſally ſaid that the duke [2] failed merely by inferiority, the French ſoldiers behaving in general moſt ſcandalouſly. They had fourſcore pieces of cannon, but very ill ſerved. Marſhal D'Eſtrées was recalled before the battle, but did not know it. He is ſaid to have made ſome great miſtakes in the action. I cannot ſpeak to the truth of it, but the French are reported to have demanded two millions ſterling of Hanover.

My whole letter will conſiſt of hearſays; for, even at ſo little diſtance from town, one gets no better news than hawkers and pedlars retail about the country. From ſuch I hear that George Haldane is made governor of Jamaica, and that a Mr. Campbell, whoſe father lives in Sweden, is going thither to make an alliance with that country, and hire 12,000 men. If one of my acquaintance, as an antiquary, were alive, ſir Anthony Shirley [3], I ſup-

[1] On the expedition to Rochfort.

[2] The duke of Cumberland, in the affair at Haſtenbeck.

[3] Sir Thomas, ſir Anthony, and ſir Robert Shirley were three brothers, all great travellers, and all diſtinguiſhed by extraordinary adventures in the reigns of queen Elizabeth and James I.—Much confuſion has enſued in their hiſtory from their adventures being confounded together. Lord Orford, it ſhould ſeem, had intended to clear up theſe miſtakes, as among his papers are many notes on their ſubject, and references to all the books which mention any part of their hiſtory. Sir Anthony Shirley, after ſixteen years travels, went into Perſia, was in high favour with the Sophi, married a relation of his, and was ſent by him embaſſador to James I. in 1611. See Baker's Hiſtory of James I. p. 132, who by miſtake calls him ſir Robert inſtead of ſir Anthony.

poſe

poſe we ſhould ſend him to Perſia again for troops; I fear we ſhall get none nearer!

Adieu, my deareſt Harry! Next to wiſhing your expedition ſtill-born, my moſt conſtant thought is, how to be of any ſervice to poor lady A——, whoſe reaſonable concern makes even that of the ſtrongeſt friendſhip ſeem trifling.

Yours moſt entirely,

HOR. WALPOLE.

LETTER XXVII.

Strawberry-hill, October 13, 1757.

IF you have received mine of Tueſday, which I directed to Portſmouth, you will perceive how much I agree with you. I am charmed with your ſenſible modeſty. When I talked to you of defence, it was from concluding that you had all agreed that the attempt[1] was impracticable, nay impoſſible; and from thence I judged that the miniſtry intended to caſt the blame of a wild project upon the officers. That they may be a little willing to do that, I ſtill think—but I have the joy to find that it cannot be thrown on you. As your friend, and fearing, if I talked for you firſt, it would look like doubt of your behaviour, at leaſt that you had bid me defend you at the expence of your friends, I ſaid not a word, truſting that your innocence would break out and make its way. I have the ſatisfaction to find it has already done ſo. It comes from all quarters but your own, which makes it more honourable. My lady Suffolk told me laſt night, that ſhe heard all the *ſeamen* ſaid they wiſhed the general had been as ready as Mr. Conway. But this is not all: I left a poſitive commiſſion in town to have the truth of the general report ſent me without the leaſt diſguiſe; in conſequence of which I am ſolemnly aſſured that your name is never mentioned but with honour;

[1] On Rochfort.

that

that all the violence, and that extreme, is againſt ſir John Mordaunt and Mr. Cornwallis. I am particularly ſorry for the latter, as I firmly believe him as brave as poſſible.

This ſituation of things makes me adviſe, what I know and find I need not adviſe, your ſaying as little as poſſible in your own defence, nay, as much as you can with any decency for the others. I am neither acquainted with, nor care a ſtraw about, ſir John Mordaunt; but as it is known that you differed with him, it will do you the greateſt honour t vindicate him, inſtead of diſculpating yourſelf. My moſt earneſt deſire always is, to have your character continue as amiable and reſpectable as poſſible. There is no doubt but the whole will come out, and therefore your juſtification not coming from yourſelf will ſet it in a ten times better light. I ſhall go to town to-day to meet your brother; and as I know his affection for you will make him warm in clearing you, I ſhall endeavour to reſtrain that ardour, of which you know I have enough on the leaſt glimmering of a neceſſity: but I am ſure you will agree with me, that, on the repreſentation I have here made to you, it is not proper for your friends to appear ſolicitous about you.

The city talk very treaſon, and, connecting the ſuſpenſion at Stade with this diſappointment, cry out, that the general had poſitive orders to do nothing, in order to obtain gentler treatment of Hanover. They intend in a violent manner to demand redreſs, and are too enraged to let any part of this affair remain a myſtery.

I think, by your directions, this will reach you before you leave Bevis-mount: I would gladly meet you at Park-place, if I was not ſure of ſeeing you in town a day or two afterwards at fartheſt; which I will certainly do, if you let me know. Adieu!

Yours ever,

HOR. WALPOLE.

LETTER

LETTER XXVIII.

Arlington-ſtreet, June 4, 1758.

THE habeas corpus is finiſhed, but only for this year. Lord Temple threatened to renew it the next; on which lord Hardwicke took the party of propoſing to order the judges to prepare a bill for extending the power of granting the writ in vacation to all the judges. This prevented a diviſion; though lord Temple, who proteſted alone t'other day, had a flaming proteſt ready, which was to have been ſigned by near thirty. They ſat laſt night till paſt nine. Lord Mansfield ſpoke admirably for two hours and twenty-five minutes. Except lord Ravenſworth and the duke of Newcaſtle, whoſe meaning the firſt never knows himſelf, and the latter's nobody elſe, all who ſpoke, ſpoke well: they were lord Temple, lord Talbot, lord Bruce, and lord Stanhope, for; lord Morton, lord Hardwicke, and lord Mansfield, againſt the bill.

The duke of Grafton has reſigned. Norborne Berkeley has converted a party of pleaſure into a campaign, and is gone with the expedition[1], without a ſhirt but what he had on, and what is lent him. The night he ſailed he had invited women to ſupper. Beſides him, and thoſe you know, is a Mr. Sylveſter Smith. Every body was aſking, "But who is Sylveſter Smith?" Harry Townſhend replied, "Why, he is the ſon of Delaval, who was the ſon of Lowther, who was the ſon of Armitage, who was the ſon of Downe[2]."

The fleet ſailed on Thurſday morning. I don't know why, but the perſuaſion is that they will land on this ſide Uſhant, and that we ſhall hear ſome events by Tueſday or Wedneſday. Some believe that lord Anſon and Howe have different deſtinations. Rochfort, where there are 20,000 men, is ſaid poſitively not to be the place. The king ſays there are 80,000 men and three marſhals in Normandy and Bretagne. George Selwyn aſked general Campbell, if the miniſtry had yet told the king the object?

Mademoiſelle de l'Enclos[3] is arrived, to my ſupreme felicity—I cannot

[1] Againſt St. Maloes.

[2] All theſe gentlemen had been volunteers on ſucceſſive expeditions to the coaſt of France.

[3] The portrait of Ninon de l'Enclos, now at Strawberry-hill, given to Mr. Walpole by the old counteſs of Sandwich, daughter to the famous lord Rocheſter. She died at Paris in the year 1755.

ſay

ſay very handſome or agreeable; but I had been prepared on the article of her charms. I don't ſay, like Harry VIII. of Anne of Cleves, that ſhe is a Flanders mare, though to be ſure ſhe is rather large: on the contrary, I bear it as well as ever prince did who was married by proxy—and ſhe does not find me *fricaſſé dans de la neige*[1]. Adieu.

Yours ever,

HOR. WALPOLE.

P. S. I forgot to tell you of another *galanterie* I have had, a portrait of queen Elizabeth left here while I was out of town. The ſervant ſaid it was a preſent, but he had orders not to ſay from whom.

LETTER XXIX.

June 16, 1758, 2 o'clock noon.

WELL, my dear Harry! you are not the only man in England who have not conquered France[2]! Even dukes of Marlborough[3] have been there without doing the buſineſs. I don't doubt but your good heart has even been hoping, in ſpite of your underſtanding, that our heroes have not only taken St. Maloes, but taken a trip croſs the country to burn Rochfort, only to ſhow how eaſy it was. We have waited with aſtoniſhment at not hearing that the French court was removed in a panic to Lyons, and that the meſdames had gone off in their ſhifts with only a proviſion of rouge for a week. Nay, for my part, I expected to be deafened with encomiums on my lord A——'s continence, who, after being allotted madame Pompadour as his ſhare of the ſpoils, had again imitated Scipio, and, in ſpite of

[1] Madame de Sevigné, in her Letters to her daughter, reports that Ninon thus expreſſed herſelf relative to her ſon the marquis de Sevigné, who was one of her lovers.

[2] Alluding to the expedition againſt Rochefort, the year before, on which Mr. Conway was ſecond in command.

[3] The duke of Marlborough commanded the troops on this expedition againſt St. Maloes.

the

the violence of his *temperament*, had reſtored her unſullied to the king of France.—Alack! we have reſtored nothing but a quarter of a mile of coaſt to the right owners. A meſſenger arrived in the middle of the night with an account that we have burned two frigates and an hundred and twenty ſmall fry; that it was found impoſſible to bring up the cannon againſt the town; and that, the French army approaching the coaſt, commodore H——, with the expedition of harlequin as well as the taciturnity, reimbarked our whole force in ſeven hours, volunteers and all, with the loſs only of one man, and they are all gone to ſeek their fortune ſomewhere elſe. Well! in half a dozen more wars we ſhall know ſomething of the coaſt of France. Laſt war we diſcovered a fine bay near port l'Orient: we have now found out that we knew nothing of St. Maloes. As they are popular perſons, I hope the city of London will ſend ſome more gold boxes to theſe diſcoverers. If they ſend a patch box to lord G—— S———, it will hold all his laurels. As our young nobility cannot at preſent travel through France, I ſuppoſe this is a method for finiſhing their ſtudies. George Selwyn ſays he ſuppoſes the French ladies will have ſcaffolds erected on the ſhore to ſee the Engliſh go by.—But I won't detain the meſſenger any longer; I am impatient to make the ducheſs[1] happy, who I hope will ſoon ſee the duke returned from his coaſting voyage.

The C———s will be with you next Wedneſday, and I believe I too; but I can take my own word ſo little, that I will not give it you. I know I muſt be back at Strawberry on Friday night; for lady Hervey and lady Stafford are to be there with me for a few days from tomorrow ſe'nnight. Adieu!

Yours ever,

HOR. WALPOLE.

[1] Lady Mary Bruce ducheſs of Richmond, only child of the counteſs of Aileſbury by her firſt marriage. She was at Park-place with her mother during the duke of Richmond's abſence, who was a volunteer upon this expedition.

LETTER XXX.

Strawberry-hill, July 21, 1758.

YOUR gazette, I know, has been a little idle; but we volunteer gazettes, like other volunteers, are not eaſily tied down to regularity and rules. We think we have ſo much merit, that we think we have a right to ſome demerit too; and thoſe who depend upon us, I mean us gazettes, are often diſappointed. A common foot newſpaper may want our vivacity, but is ten times more uſeful. Beſides, I am not in town, and ten miles out of it is an hundred miles out of it for all the purpoſes of news. You know of courſe that lord George Sackville refuſed to go *a-buccaneering* again, as he called it; that *my friend* lord A. who loves a dram of any thing, from glory to brandy, is *out of order*; that juſt as lord Panmure was going to take the command, he miſſed an eye; and that at laſt they have routed out an old general Blighe from the horſe armoury in Ireland, who is to undertake the codicil to the expedition. Moreover, you know that prince Edward is bound 'prentice to Mr. Howe. All this you have heard; yet, like my couſin the Chronicle, I repeat what has been printed in every newſpaper of the week, and then finiſh with one paragraph of *ſpick and ſpan*. Alack! my poſtſcript is not very fortunate: a convoy of 12,000 men, &c. was going to the king of Pruſſia, was attacked unexpectedly by 5000 Auſtrians, and cut entirely to pieces; proviſions, ammunition, &c. all taken. The king inſtantly raiſed the ſiege, and retreated with ſo much precipitation, that he was forced to nail up 60 pieces of cannon. I conclude the next we hear of him will be a great victory: if he ſets overnight in a defeat, he always riſes next morning in a triumph—at leaſt, we that have nothing to do but expect and admire, ſhall be extremely diſappointed if he does not. Beſides, he is three months debtor to fame.

The only private hiſtory of any freſhneſs is, my lady D——'s chriſtening; the child had *three* godfathers: and I will tell you why: they had thought of the duke of Newcaſtle, my lord and George ——; but of two ——'s and his grace, God could not take the word of any two of them, ſo all three were forced to be bound.

I draw this comfort from the king of Pruſſia's defeat, that it may prevent the folly of another expedition: I don't know how or why, but no reaſon is a very good one againſt a thing that has no reaſon in it. Eleven hundred men are ill from the laſt enterpriſe. Perhaps don William Quixote [1] and admiral Amadis [2] may determine to ſend them to the Danube; for, as no information ever precedes their reſolutions, and no impoſſibilities ever deter them, I don't ſee why the only thing worthy their conſideration ſhould not be, how glorious and advantageous an exploit it would be, if it could be performed. Why did biſhop Wilkins try to fly? Not that he thought it practicable, but becauſe it would be very convenient. As he did not happen to be a particular favourite of the city of London, he was laughed at: they prepoſſeſſed in his favour, and he would have received twenty gold boxes, though twenty people had broken their necks off St. Paul's with trying the experiment.

I have heard a whiſper, that you do not go into Yorkſhire this ſummer. Is it true? It is fixed that I go to Ragley [3] on the 13th of next month; I truſt you do ſo too. Have you had ſuch deluges for three weeks well counted, as we have? If I had not cut one of my perroquet's wings, and there were an olive tree in the country, I would ſend to know where there is a foot of dry land.

You have heard, I ſuppoſe, if not, be it known to you, that Mr. Keppel, the canon of Windſor, eſpouſes my niece Laura; yes, Laura [4]. I rejoice much ſo I receive your compliments upon it, leſt you ſhould, as it ſometimes happens, forget to make them. Adieu!

Yours ever,

HOR. WALPOLE.

[1] William Pitt, afterwards earl of Chatham, then ſecretary of ſtate.
[2] Lord Anſon, then firſt lord of the admiralty.
[3] The ſeat of the earl of Herford.
[4] Eldeſt daughter of ſir Edward Walpole.

July 22.

FOR the pleaſure of my conſcience I had written all the above laſt night, expecting lord Lyttelton, the dean, and other company, to-day. This morning I receive yours; and having already told you all I know, I have only a few paragraphs to anſwer.

I am pleaſed that you are pleaſed about my book [1]: *you* ſhall ſee it very ſoon; though there will ſcarce be a new page: nobody elſe ſhall ſee it till ſpring. In the firſt place, the prints will not be finiſhed: in the next, I intend that two or three other things ſhall appear before it from my preſs, of other authors; for I will not ſurfeit people with my writings, nor have them think that I propoſe to find employment alone for a whole preſs—ſo far from it, I intend to employ it no more about myſelf.

I will certainly try to ſee you during your waiting [2]. Adieu!

LETTER XXXI.

Strawberry-hill, September 2, 1758.

IT is well I have got ſomething to pay you for the beſt letter that ever was! A vaſt victory, I own, does not entertain me ſo much as a good letter; but you are bound to like any thing military better than your own wit, and therefore I hope you will think a defeat of the Ruſſians a better bon-mot than any you ſent me. Should you think it clever if the king of Pruſſia has beaten them? How much cleverer, if he has taken three lieutenant generals and an hundred pieces of cannon? How much cleverer ſtill, if he has left fifteen thouſand Muſcovites dead on the ſpot [3]? Does the loſs of *only* three thouſand of his own men, take off from or ſharpen the ſting of this joke? In ſhort, all this is fact, as a courier arrived at Sion-hill

[1] The Anecdotes of Painting.
[2] As groom of the bed-chamber to the king.
[3] The defeat of the Ruſſians at Zornſdorff.

this morning affirms. The city, I ſuppoſe, expect that his majeſty will now be at leiſure to ſtep to Ticonderoga, and repair our miſhap [1]. But I ſhall talk no more politics: if this finds you at Chatſworth, as I ſuppoſe it will, you will be better informed than from me.

Lady —— —— arrived at Ragley between two and three in the morning—how unlucky that I was not there to offer her part of an aired bed! But how could you think of the propoſal you have made me? Am not I already in love with *the youngeſt, handſomeſt and wittieſt widow in England?* As *Herculean a labourer* as I am, as Tom Hervey ſays, I don't chooſe another. I am ſtill in the height of my impatience for the cheſt of old papers from Ragley [2], which, either by the fault of their ſervants or of the waggoner, is not yet arrived. I ſhall go to London again on Monday in queſt of it; and in truth think ſo much of it, that, when I firſt heard of the victory this morning, I rejoiced, as we were likely now *to recover the Palatinate.* Good night.

Yours ever,

HOR. WALPOLE.

LETTER XXXII.

Arlington-ſtreet, January 19, 1759.

I HOPE the treaty of Sluys advances rapidly [3]. Conſidering that your own court is as new to you as monſieur de Bareil and his, you cannot be very well entertained: the joys of a Dutch fiſhing town and the incidents of a cartel will not compoſe a very agreeable hiſtory. In the mean time you do not loſe much: though the parliament is met, no politics are come to town: one may deſcribe the houſe of commons like the price of ſtocks:

[1] The repulſe of general Abercrombie at Ticonderoga.

[2] The Conway papers in the reign of James I.

[3] Mr. Conway was ſent to Sluys to ſettle a cartel for priſoners with the French. Monſieur de Bareil was the perſon appointed by the French court for the ſame buſineſs.

Debates

Debates, nothing done. Votes, under par. Patriots. no price. Oratory, books ſhut. Love and war are as much at a ſtand: neither the ducheſs of Hamilton [1] nor the expeditions are gone off yet. Prince Edward [2] has aſked to go to Quebec, and has been refuſed. If I was ſure they would refuſe me, I would aſk to go thither too. I ſhould not diſlike about as much laurel as I could ſtick in my window at Chriſtmas.

We are next week to have a ſerenata at the Opera-houſe for the king of Pruſſia's birth-day: it is to begin, *Viva Georgio, e Federigo viva!* It will, I own, divert me to ſee my lord Temple whiſpering *for* this alliance, on the ſame bench on which I have ſo often ſeen him whiſper *againſt* all Germany. The new opera pleaſes univerſally, and I hope will yet hold up its head. Since Vanneſchi [3] is cunning enough to make us ſing *the roaſt-beef of old Germany*, I am perſuaded it will revive: politics are the only hot-bed for keeping ſuch a tender plant as Italian muſic alive in England.

You are ſo thoughtleſs about your dreſs, that I cannot help giving you a little warning againſt your return. Remember, every body that comes from abroad is *cenſé* to come from France, and whatever they wear at their firſt re-appearance immediately grows the faſhion. Now if, as is very likely, you ſhould through inadvertence change hats with a maſter of a Dutch ſmack, O—— will be upon the watch, will conclude you took your pattern from monſieur de Bareil, and in a week's time we ſhall all be equipped like Dutch ſkippers. You ſee I ſpeak very diſintereſtedly; for, as I never wear a hat myſelf, it is indifferent to me what ſort of hat I don't wear. Adieu! I hope nothing in this letter, if it is opened, will affect *the conferences*, nor haſten our rupture with Holland. Leſt it ſhould, I ſend it to lord Holderneſs's office; concluding, like lady B—— W———, that the government never ſuſpect what they ſend under their own covers.

Yours ever,

HOR. WALPOLE.

[1] Elizabeth Gunning, ducheſs dowager of Hamilton.

[2] Afterwards created duke of York.

[3] Abbate Vanneſchi, an Italian, and director of the opera.

LETTER

LETTER XXXIII.

Arlington-ſtreet, January 28, 1759.

YOU and monſieur de Bareil may give yourſelves what airs you pleaſe of ſettling cartels with expedition: you don't exchange priſoners with half ſo much alacrity as Jack Campbell[1] and the ducheſs of Hamilton have exchanged hearts. I had ſo little obſerved the negotiation, or ſuſpected any, that, when your brother told me of it yeſterday morning, I would not believe a tittle—I beg Mr. Pitt's pardon, not an *iota*. It is the prettieſt match in the world—ſince yours—and every body likes it but the duke of B—— and lord C——. What an extraordinary fate is attached to thoſe two women! Who could have believed that a Gunning would unite the two great houſes of Campbell and Hamilton? For my part, I expect to ſee my lady Coventry queen of Pruſſia. I would not venture to marry either of them theſe thirty years, for fear of being ſhuffled out of the world *prematurely* to make room for the reſt of their adventures. The firſt time Jack carries the ducheſs into the Highlands, I am perſuaded that ſome of his ſecond-ſighted ſubjects will ſee him in a winding-ſheet, with a train of kings behind him as long as thoſe in Macbeth.

We had a ſcrap of a debate on Friday on the Pruſſian and Heſſian treaties. Old Vyner oppoſed the firſt, in pity to that *poor woman*, as he called her, the empreſs queen. Lord Strange objected to the gratuity of 60,000*l.* to the landgrave, unleſs words were inſerted to expreſs his receiving that ſum in full of all demands. If Hume Campbell had cavilled at this favourite treaty, Mr. Pitt could ſcarce have treated him with more haughtineſs; and, what is far more extraordinary, Hume Campbell could ſcarce have taken it more dutifully. This *long* day was over by half an hour after four.

As you and monſieur de Bareil are on ſuch amicable terms, you will take care to ſoften to him a new conqueſt we have made. Keppel has taken the iſland of Goree. You great miniſters know enough of its importance;

[1] The preſent duke of Argyll.

I need

I need not detail it. Before your letters came we had heard of the death of the princeſs royal: you will find us black and all black. Lady Northumberland and the great ladies put off their aſſemblies: diverſions begin again to-morrow with the mourning.

You perceive, London cannot furniſh half ſo long a letter as the little town of Sluys; at leaſt I have not the art of making one out. In truth, I believe I ſhould not have writ this unleſs lady A——— had bid me; but ſhe does not care how much trouble it gives me, provided it amuſes you for a moment. Good night!

Yours ever,

HOR. WALPOLE.

P. S. I forgot to tell you that the king has granted my lord Mariſchall's pardon, at the requeſt of monſieur de Knyphauſen. I believe the pretender himſelf could get his attainder reverſed if he would apply to the king of Pruſſia.

LETTER XXXIV.

Strawberry-hill, Oct. 18, 1759.

I INTENDED my viſit to Park-place to ſhow my lady A——— that when I come thither it is not ſolely on your account, and yet I will not quarrel with my journey thither if I ſhould find you there; but ſeriouſly I cannot help begging you to think whether you will go thither or not, juſt now. My firſt thought about you has ever been what was proper for you to do; and though you are the man in the world that think of that the moſt yourſelf, yet you know I have twenty ſcruples, which even you ſometimes laugh at. I will tell them to you, and then you will judge, as you can beſt. Sir Edward Hawke and his fleet is diſperſed, at leaſt driven back to Plymouth: the French, if one may believe that they have broken a regiment for mutinying againſt embarking, were actually embarked at that inſtant. The moſt ſenſible people I know, always thought they would

poſtpone

poſtpone their invaſion, if ever they intended it, till our great ſhips could not keep the ſea, or were eaten up by the ſcurvy. Their ports are now free; their ſituation is deſperate: the new account of our taking Quebec leaves them in the moſt deplorable condition; they will be leſs able than ever to raiſe money, we have got ours for next year; and this event would facilitate it, if we had not: they muſt try for a peace, they have nothing to go to market with but Minorca. In ſhort, if they cannot ſtrike ſome deſperate blow in this iſland or Ireland, they are undone: the loſs of 20,000 men to do us ſome miſchief, would be cheap. I ſhould even think madame Pompadour in danger of being torn to pieces, if they did not make ſome attempt. Madame Maintenon, not half ſo unpopular, mentions in one of her letters her unwillingneſs to truſt her niece m^lle^ Aumale on the road, for fear of ſome ſuch accident. You will ſmile perhaps at all this reaſoning and pedantry; but it tends to this—If deſperation ſhould ſend the French ſomewhere, and the wind ſhould force them to your coaſt, which I do not ſuppoſe their object, and you ſhould be out of the way, you know what your enemies would ſay; and, ſtrange as it is, even you have been proved to have enemies. My dear ſir, think of this! Wolfe, as I am convinced, has fallen a ſacrifice to his raſh blame of you. If I underſtand any thing in the world, his letter that came on Sunday ſaid this: "*Quebec is impregnable; it is flinging away the lives of brave men to attempt it. I am in the ſituation of Conway at Rochfort; but having blamed him, I muſt do what I now ſee he was in the right to ſee was wrong, and yet what he would have done; and as I am commander, which he was not, I have the melancholy power of doing what he was prevented doing.*" Poor man! his life has paid the price of his injuſtice; and as his death has purchaſed ſuch benefit to his country, I lament him, as I am ſure you, who have twenty times more courage and good nature than I have, do too. In ſhort, I, who never did any thing right or prudent myſelf (not, I am afraid, for want of knowing what was ſo), am content with *your* being perfect, and with ſuggeſting any thing to you that may tend to keeping you ſo:—and (what is not much to the preſent purpoſe) if ſuch a pen as mine can effect it, the world hereafter ſhall know that you was ſo. In ſhort, I have pulled down my lord Falkland, and I deſire you will take care that I may ſpeak truth when I erect you in his place; for remember, I love truth even better than I love you. I always confeſs my own faults, and I will not palliate yours.—But, laughing apart, if you think there is no weight in what I ſay, I ſhall gladly meet you at Park-place,

whither I ſhall go on Monday, and ſtay as long as I can, unleſs I hear from you to the contrary. If you ſhould think I have hinted any thing to you of conſequence, would not it be handſome, if, after receiving leave, you ſhould write to my lord Ligonier, that though you had been at home but one week in the whole ſummer, yet as there might be occaſion for your preſence in the camp [1], you ſhould decline the permiſſion he had given you?—See what it is to have a wiſe relation, who preaches a thouſand fine things to you which he would be the laſt man in the world to practiſe himſelf. Adieu!

Yours ever,

HOR. WALPOLE.

LETTER XXXV.

Strawberry-hill, June 28, 1760.

THE devil is in people for fidgeting about! They can neither be quiet in their own houſes, nor let others be at peace in theirs! Have not they enough of one another in winter, but they muſt cuddle in ſummer too? For your part, you are a very prieſt: the moment one repents, you are for turning it to account. I wiſh you was in camp—never will I pity you again. How did you complain when you was in Scotland, Ireland, Flanders, and I don't know where, that you could never enjoy Park-place? Now you have a whole ſummer to yourſelf, and you are as *junkettaceous* as my lady Northumberland. Pray, what horſe-race do you go to next? For my part, I can't afford to lead ſuch a life: I have Conway-papers to ſort; I have lives of the painters to write; I have my prints to paſte, my houſe to build, and every thing in the world to tell poſterity.—How am I to find time for all this? I am paſt forty, and may not have above as many more years to live; and here I am to go here and to go there——Well, I will meet you at Chaffont on Thurſday; but I poſitively will ſtay but one night. I have ſettled with your brother that we will be at Oxford on the 13th of July, as lord Beauchamp is only looſe from the 12th to the 20th. I will be at

[1] Mr. Conway was encamped in Kent near Canterbury.

Park-place on the 12th, and we will go together the next day. If this is too early for you, we may put it off to the 15th: determine by Thurſday, and one of us will write to lord Hertford.

Well! Quebec is come to life again. Laſt night I went to ſee the Holderneſſes, who by the way are in raptures with Park—in Sion-lane: as Cibber ſays of the Revolution, I met the Raiſing of the Siege; that is, I met my lady in a triumphal car, drawn by a Manks horſe thirteen little fingers high, with lady Emily,—

— et ſibi Counteſs
Ne placeat, ma'amſelle curru portatur eodem—

Mr. M——— was walking in ovation by himſelf after the car; and they were going to ſee the bonfire at the alehouſe at the corner. The whole proceſſion returned with me; and from the counteſs's dreſſing-room we ſaw a battery fired before the houſe, the mob crying, "God bleſs the good news!" —Theſe are all the particulars I know of the ſiege: my lord would have ſhewed me the journal, but we amuſed ourſelves much better in going to eat peaches from the new Dutch ſtoves.

The rain is come indeed, and my graſs is as green as graſs; but all my hay has been cut and ſoaking this week, and I am too much in the faſhion not to have given up gardening for farming; as next I ſuppoſe we ſhall farming, and turn graziers and hogdrivers.

I never heard of ſuch a ſemele as my lady Stormont brought to bed in flames. I hope miſs Bacchus Murray will not carry the reſemblance through, and love drinking like a Pole. My lady Lyttelton is at Mr. Garrick's, and they were to have breakfaſted here this morning; but ſomehow or other they have changed their mind. Good night!

Yours ever,

HOR. WALPOLE.

LETTER XXXVI.

Strawberry-hill, Auguſt 7, 1766.

I CAN give you but an unpleaſant account of myſelf, I mean unpleaſant for me; every body elſe I ſuppoſe it will make laugh. Come, laugh at once! I am laid up with the gout, am an abſolute cripple, am carried up to bed by two men, and could walk to China as ſoon as croſs the room. In ſhort, here is my hiſtory: I have been out of order this fortnight, without knowing what was the matter with me; pains in my head, ſickneſſes at my ſtomach, diſpiritedneſs, and a return of the nightly fever I had in the winter. I concluded a northern journey would take all this off—but behold! on Monday morning I was ſeized as I thought with the cramp in my left foot; however, I walked about all day: towards evening it diſcovered itſelf by its true name, and that night I ſuffered a great deal. However, on Tueſday I was again able to go about the houſe; but ſince Tueſday I have not been able to ſtir, and am wrapped in flannels and ſwathed like ſir Paul Pliant on his wedding-night. I expect to hear that there is a bet at Arthur's, which runs faſteſt, Jack Harris [1] or I. Nobody would believe me ſix years ago when I ſaid I had the gout. They would do leanneſs and temperance honours to which they have not the leaſt claim.

I don't yet give up my expedition; as my foot is much ſwelled, I truſt this alderman diſtemper is going: I ſhall ſet out the inſtant I am able; but I much queſtion whether it will be ſoon enough for me to get to Ragley by the time the clock ſtrikes Loo. I find I grow too old to make the circuit with the charming ducheſs [2].

I did not tell you about German ſkirmiſhes, for I knew nothing of them: when two vaſt armies only ſcratch one another's faces, it gives me no attention. My gazette never contains above one or two caſualties of foreign politics:—overlaid, one king; dead of convulſions, an electorate; burnt to death, Dreſden.

[1] John Harris of Hayne in Devonſhire, married to Mr. Conway's eldeſt ſiſter.
[2] Anne Liddell ducheſs of Grafton.

I wiſh

I wish you joy of all your purchases; why, you sound as rich as if you had had the gout these ten years. I beg their pardon; but just at present, I am very glad not to be near the vivacity of either Missy or Peter [1]. I agree with you much about the Minor: there are certainly parts and wit in it. Adieu!

Yours ever,

HOR. WALPOLE.

LETTER XXXVII.

Strawberry-hill, September 19, 1760.

THANK you for your notice, though I should certainly have contrived to see you without it. Your brother promised he would come and dine here one day with you and lord Beauchamp. I go to Navestock on Monday, for two or three days; but that will not exhaust your waiting [2]. I shall be in town on Sunday; but as that is a court-day, I will not, so don't propose it—dine with you at Kensington; but I will be with my lady Hertford about six, where your brother and you will find me if you please. I cannot come to Kensington in the evening, for I have but one pair of horses in the world, and they will have to carry me to town in the morning.

I wonder the king expects a battle; when prince Ferdinand can do as well without fighting, why should he fight? Can't he make the hereditary prince gallop into a mob of Frenchmen, and get a scratch on the nose; and Johnson straddle cross a river and come back with six heads of hussars in his fob, and then can't he thank all the world, and assure them he shall never forget the victory they have not gained? These thanks are sent over: the gazette swears that this no success was chiefly owing to general Mostyn; and the chronicle protests, that it was achieved by my lord Granby's losing his hat, which he never wears; and then his lordship sends over for three hundred thousand pints of porter to drink his own health; and

[1] A favourite greyhound.

[2] Mr. Conway was a groom of the bed-chamber to the king, and then in waiting at Kensington.

then

then Mr. Pitt determines to carry on the war for another year; and then the duke of Newcaſtle hopes that we ſhall be beat, that he may lay the blame on Mr. Pitt, and that then he ſhall be miniſter for 30 years longer; and then we ſhall be the greateſt nation in the univerſe. Amen!—My dear Harry, you ſee how eaſy it is to be a hero. If you had but taken Impudence and Oatlands in your way to Rochfort, it would not have ſignified whether you had taken Rochfort or not. Adieu! I don't know who lady A.'s Mr. Alexander is.—If ſhe curls like a vine with any Mr. Alexander but you, I hope my lady Coventry will recover and be your Roxana.

Yours ever,

HOR. WALPOLE.

LETTER XXXVIII.

YOU are good for nothing; you have no engagement, you have no principles; and all this I am not afraid to tell you, as you have left your ſword behind you. If you take it ill, I have given my nephew, who brings your ſword, a letter of attorney to fight you for me; I ſhall certainly not ſee you: my lady Waldegrave goes to town on Friday, but I remain here [1]. You loſe lady Anne Conolly [2] and her forty daughters, who all dine here to-day upon a few loaves and three ſmall fiſhes. I ſhould have been glad if you would have breakfaſted here on Friday on your way; but as I lie in bed rather longer than the lark, I fear our hours would not ſuit one another. Adieu!

Yours ever,

HOR. WALPOLE.

[1] At Strawberry-hill. [2] Siſter of William earl of Strafford.

LETTER

LETTER XXXIX.

Monday, five o'clock, Feb. 1765.

I AM a little peeviſh with you—I told you on Thurſday night that I had a mind to go to Strawberry on Friday without ſtaying for the qualification-bill. You ſaid it did not ſignify—No! What if *you* intended to ſpeak on it? Am I indifferent to hearing you? More—Am I indifferent about acting with you? Would not I follow you in any thing in the world?—This is ſaying no profligate thing. Is there any thing I might not follow you in? You even did not tell me yeſterday that you had ſpoken. Yet I will tell you all I have heard; though if there was a point in the world in which I could not wiſh you to ſucceed where you wiſh yourſelf, perhaps it would be in having you employed. I cannot be cool about your danger; yet I cannot know any thing that concerns you, and keep it from you. Charles Townſhend called here juſt after I came to town to-day. Among other diſcourſe he told me of your ſpeaking on Friday, and that your ſpeech was reckoned hoſtile to the duke of Newcaſtle. Then talking of regiments going abroad, he ſaid, * * * *

With regard to your reſerve to me, I can eaſily believe that your natural modeſty made you unwilling to talk of yourſelf to me. I don't ſuſpect you of any reſerve to me: I only mention it now for an occaſion of telling you that I don't like to have any body think that I would not do whatever you do. I am of no conſequence: but at leaſt it would give me ſome, to act invariably with you; and that I ſhall moſt certainly be ever ready to do. Adieu!

Yours ever,

HOR. WALPOLE.

LETTER

LETTER XL.

Arlington-ſtreet, April 10, 1761.

IF Prince Ferdinand had ſtudied how to pleaſe me, I don't know any method he could have lighted upon ſo likely to gain my heart, as being beaten out of the field before you joined him. I delight in a hero that is driven ſo far that nobody can follow him. He is as well at Paderborn, as where I have long wiſhed the king of Pruſſia, the other world. You may frown if you pleaſe at my imprudence, you who are gone with all the diſpoſition in the world to be well with your commander; the peace is in a manner made, and the anger of generals will not be worth ſixpence theſe ten years. We peaceable folks are now to govern the world, and you warriors muſt in your turn tremble at our ſubjects the mob, as we have done before your huſſars and court-martials.

I am glad you had ſo pleaſant a paſſage[1]. My lord Lyttelton would ſay, that lady M—— C——, like Venus, ſmiled over the waves, et mare præſtabat eunti. In truth, when ſhe could tame me, ſhe muſt have had little trouble with the ocean. Tell me how many burgomaſters ſhe has ſubdued, or how many would have fallen in love with her if they had not fallen aſleep? Come, has ſhe ſaved two-pence by her charms? Have they abated a farthing of their impoſitions for her being handſomer than any thing in the ſeven provinces? Does ſhe know how political her journey is thought? Nay, my lady A———, you are not out of the ſcrape; you are both reckoned des marechales de Guebriant[2], going to fetch, and *conſequently* govern the young queen. There are more jealouſies about your voyage, than the duke of Newcaſtle would feel if Dr. Shaw had preſcribed a little ipecacuanha to my lord Bute.

I am ſorry I muſt adjourn my mirth, to give lady A—— a pang; poor

[1] From Harwich to Helvoetſluys.

[2] The marechale de Guebriant was ſent to the king of Poland with the character of embaſſadreſs by Louis XIII. to accompany the princeſs Marie de Gonzague, who had been married by proxy to the king of Poland at Paris.

ſir Harry Ballenden[1] is dead; he made a great dinner at Almac's for the houſe of Drummond, drank very hard, caught a violent fever, and died in a very few days. Perhaps you will have heard this before; I ſhall wiſh ſo; I do not like, even innocently, to be the cauſe of ſorrow.

I do not at all lament lord Granby's leaving the army, and your immediate ſucceſſion. There are perſons in the world who would gladly eaſe you of this burthen. As you are only to take the viceroyalty of a coop, and that for a few weeks, I ſhall but ſmile if you are terribly diſtreſſed. Don't let lady A—— proceed to Brunſwic: you might have had a wife who would not have thought it ſo terrible to fall into the hands [*arms*] of huſſars; but as I don't take *that* to be your counteſs's turn, leave her with the Dutch, who are not ſo boiſterous as coſſacs or chancellors of the exchequer.

My love, my duty, my jealouſy, to lady M——, if ſhe is not ſailed before you receive this—if ſhe is, I ſhall deliver them myſelf. Good night; I write immediately on the receipt of your letter, but you ſee I have nothing yet new to tell you.

Yours ever,

HOR. WALPOLE.

LETTER XLI.

Arlington-ſtreet, July 14, 1761.

MY deareſt Harry, how could you write me ſuch a cold letter as I have juſt received from you, and beginning *Dear ſir!* Can you be angry with me, for can I be in fault to you? Blameable in ten thouſand other reſpects, may not I almoſt ſay I am perfect with regard to you? Since I was fifteen have not I loved you unalterably? Since I was capable of knowing your merit, has not my admiration been veneration? For what could ſo much affection and eſteem change? Has not your honour, your intereſt, your ſafety been ever my firſt objects? Oh, Harry! if you knew what I have felt and am feeling about you, would you charge me with neglect? If I have

[1] Uncle to the counteſs of Aileſbury.

ſeen a perſon ſince you went, to whom my firſt queſtion has not been, "What do you hear of the peace?" you would have reaſon to blame me. You ſay I write very ſeldom: I will tell you what, I ſhould almoſt be ſorry to have you ſee the anxiety I have expreſſed about you in letters to every body elſe. No; I muſt except lady A——, and there is not another on earth who loves you ſo well and is ſo attentive to whatever relates to you.

With regard to writing this is exactly the caſe: I had nothing to tell you; nothing has happened; and where you are, I was cautious of writing. Having neither hopes nor fears, I always write the thoughts of the moment, and even laugh to divert the perſon I am writing to, without any ill will on the ſubjects I mention. But in your ſituation that frankneſs might be prejudicial to you: and to write grave unmeaning letters, I truſted you was too ſecure of me either to like them or deſire them. I knew no news, nor could I: I have lived quite alone at Strawberry; am connected with no court, miniſters, or party; conſequently heard nothing, and events there have been none. I have not even for this month heard my lady T——'s extempore gazette. All the morning I play with my workmen or animals, go regularly every evening to the meadows with Mrs. Clive, or ſit with my lady Suffolk [1], and at night ſcribble my painters—What a journal to ſend you! I write more trifling letters than any man living; am aſhamed of them, and yet they are expected of me. You, my lady A——, your brother, ſir Horace Mann, George Montagu, lord Strafford—all expect I ſhould write—Of what? I live leſs and leſs in the world, care for it leſs and leſs, and yet am thus obliged to inquire what it is doing. Do make theſe allowances for me, and remember half your letters go to my lady A——. I writ to her of the king's marriage, concluding ſhe would ſend it to you: tireſome as it would be, I will copy my own letters, if you expect it; for I will do any thing rather than diſoblige you. I will ſend you a diary of the duke of York's balls and Ranelaghs, inform you of how many children my lady B—— is with child, and how many races my nephew goes to. No; I will not, you do not want *ſuch* proofs of my friendſhip.

The papers tell us you are retiring, and I was glad. You ſeem to expect an action—Can this give me ſpirits? Can I write to you joyfully, and fear? Or is it fit prince Ferdinand ſhould know you have a friend that is as great

[1] Henrietta Hobart, counteſs of Suffolk, then living at Marble-hill.

Heath. Sculpt.

The hon.ble Mrs. Howard,
afterwards
Countess of Suffolk

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a coward about you as your wife? The only reaſon for my ſilence, that can *not* be true, is, that I forget you. When I am prudent or cautious, it is no ſymptom of my being indifferent. Indifference does not happen in friendſhips, as it does in paſſions; and if I was young enough or feeble enough to ceaſe to love you, I would not for my own ſake let it be known. Your virtues are my greateſt pride; I have done myſelf ſo much honour by them, that I will not let it be known you have been peeviſh with me unreaſonably. Pray God we may have peace, that I may ſcold you for it!

The king's marriage was kept the profoundeſt ſecret till laſt Wedneſday, when the privy council was extraordinarily ſummoned, and it was notified to them. Since that, the new queen's mother is dead, and will delay it a few days; but lord Harcourt is to ſail on the 27th, and the coronation will certainly be on the 22d of September. All that I know fixed, is, lord Harcourt maſter of the horſe, the duke of Mancheſter chamberlain, and Mr. Stone treaſurer. Liſts there are in abundance; I don't know the authentic: thoſe moſt talked of, are, lady Bute groom of the ſtole, the ducheſſes of Hamilton and Ancaſter, lady Northumberland, Bolinbroke, Weymouth, Scarborough, Abergavenny, Effingham, for ladies; you may chooſe any ſix of them you pleaſe; the four firſt are moſt probable. Miſſes, Henry Beauclerc, M. Howe, Meadows, Wrotteſley, Biſhop, &c. &c. &c. Chooſe your maids too. Bedchamber women, Mrs. Bloodworth, Robert Brudenel, Charlotte Dives, lady Erſkine: in ſhort, I repeat a mere newspaper.

We expect the final anſwer of France this week. Buſſy[1] was in great pain on the fireworks for Quebec, leſt he ſhould be obliged to illuminate his houſe: you ſee I ranſack my memory for ſomething to tell you.

Adieu! I have more reaſon to be angry than you had; but I am not ſo haſty: you are of a *violent*, *impetuous*, *jealous* temper—I, *cool*, *ſedate*, *reaſonable*. I believe I muſt ſubſcribe my name, or you will not know me by this deſcription.

Yours unalterably,

HOR. WALPOLE.

[1] The abbè de Buſſy ſent here with overtures of peace. Mr. Stanley was at the ſame time ſent to Paris.

LETTER XLII.

Strawberry-hill, July 23, 1761.

WELL, *mon biau couſin!* you may be as croſs as you pleaſe now: when you beat two marſhals of France and cut their armies to pieces[1], I don't mind your pouting; but in good truth, it was a little vexatious to have you quarrelling with me, when I was in greater pain about you than I can expreſs. I will ſay no more; make a peace, under the walls of Paris if you pleaſe, and I will forgive you all—but no more battles: conſider, as Dr. Hay ſaid, it is cowardly to beat the French now.

Don't look upon yourſelves as the only conquerors in the world. Pondicherri is ours, as well as the field of Kirk Denckirk. The park guns never have time to cool; we ruin ourſelves in gun-powder and ſky-rockets. If you have a mind to do the gallanteſt thing in the world after the greateſt, you muſt eſcort the princeſs of Mecklenburg[2] through France. You ſee what a bully I am; the moment the French run away, I am ſending you on expeditions. I forgot to tell you that the king has got the iſle of Dominique and the chicken-pox, two trifles that don't count in the midſt of all theſe feſtivities. No more does your letter of the 8th, which I received yeſterday: it is the one that is to come after the 16th, that I ſhall receive graciouſly.

Friday 24th.

NOT ſatisfied with the rays of glory that reached Twickenham, I came to town to baſk in your ſucceſs; but am moſt diſagreeably diſappointed to find you muſt beat the French once more, who ſeem to love to treat the Engliſh mob with ſubjects for bonfires. I had got over ſuch an alarm, that I fooliſhly ran into the other extreme, and concluded there was not a French battalion left entire upon the face of Germany. Do write to me; don't be out of humour, but tell me every motion you make: I aſſure you I have deſerved you ſhould. Would you were out of the queſtion, if it

[1] The victory obtained by prince Ferdinand of Brunſwic over the marechal de Broglio and the prince de Soubize at Kirk Denckirk.

[2] Her preſent majeſty.

were

were only that I might feel a little humanity! There is not a blackſmith or linkboy in London that exults more than I do, upon any good news, ſince you went abroad. What have I to do to hate people I never ſaw, and to rejoice in their calamities! Heaven ſend us peace, and you home! Adieu!

Yours ever,

HOR. WALPOLE.

LETTER XLIII.

Strawberry-hill.

THIS is the 5th of Auguſt, and I juſt receive your letter of the 17th of laſt month by Fitzroy[1]. I heard he had loſt his pocket-book with all his diſpatches, but had found it again. He was a long time finding the letter for me.

You do nothing but reproach me; I declare I will bear it no longer, though you ſhould beat forty more marſhals of France. I have already writ you two letters that would fully juſtify me if you receive them; if you do not, it is not I that am in fault for not writing, but the poſt-offices for reading my letters, content if they would forward them when they have done with them. They ſeem to think, like you, that I know more news than any body. What is to be known in the dead of ſummer, when all the world is diſperſed? Would you know who won the ſweep-ſtakes at Huntingdon? What parties are at Woburn? What officers upon guard in Betty's fruit-ſhop? Whether the peereſſes are to wear long or ſhort treſſes at the coronation? How many jewels lady ——— borrows of actreſſes? All this is your light ſummer wear for converſation; and if my memory were as much ſtuffed with it as my ears, I might have ſent you volumes laſt week. My nieces, lady W———, and mrs. K———, were here five days, and diſcuſſed the claim or diſappointment of every miſs in the kingdom for maid of honour. Unfortunately this new generation is not at all my affair,

[1] George Fitzroy, afterwards created lord Southampton.

I cannot

I cannot attend to what concerns them—Not that their trifles are leſs important than thoſe of one's own time, but my mould has taken all its impreſſions, and can receive no more. I muſt grow old upon the ſtock I have. I, that was ſo impatient at all their chat, the moment they were gone, flew to my lady Suffolk, and heard her talk with great ſatisfaction of the late queen's coronation-petticoat. The preceding age always appears reſpectable to us (I mean as one advances in years), one's own age intereſting, the coming age neither one nor t'other.

You may judge by this account that I have writ *all* my letters, or ought to have written them; and yet, for occaſion to blame me, you draw a very pretty picture of my ſituation: all which tends to prove that I ought to write to you every day, whether I have any thing to ſay or not. I am writing, I am building—both *works that will outlaſt the memory of battles and heroes!* Truly, I believe, the one will as much as t'other. My buildings are paper, like my writings, and both will be blown away in ten years after I am dead; if they had not the ſubſtantial uſe of amuſing me while I live, they would be worth little indeed. I will give you one inſtance that will ſum up the vanity of great men, learned men, and buildings altogether. I heard lately, that Dr. ——, a very learned perſonage, had conſented to let the tomb of Aylmer de Valence, earl of Pembroke, a very great perſonage, be removed for Wolfe's monument; that at firſt he had objected, but was wrought upon by being told that *hight* Aylmer was a knight templar, a very wicked ſet of people as his lordſhip had heard, tho' he knew nothing of them, as they are not mentioned by Longinus. I own I thought this a made ſtory, and wrote to his lordſhip, expreſſing my concern that one of the fineſt and moſt ancient monuments in the abbey ſhould be removed, and begging, if it was removed, that he would beſtow it on me, who would erect and preſerve it here. After a fortnight's deliberation, the biſhop ſent me an anſwer, civil indeed, and commending my zeal for antiquity! but avowing the ſtory under his own hand. He ſaid, that at firſt they had taken Pembroke's tomb for a knight templar's. Obſerve, that not only the man who ſhows the tombs names it every day, but that there is a draught of it at large in Dart's Weſtminſter; that upon diſcovering whoſe it was, he had been very unwilling to conſent to the removal, and at laſt had obliged Wilton to engage to ſet it up within ten feet of where it ſtands at preſent. His lordſhip concluded with congratulating me on publiſhing learned authors at my preſs. I don't wonder that a man who thinks Lucan

a *learned*

a *learned* author, ſhould miſtake a tomb in his own cathedral. If I had a mind to be angry, I could complain with reaſon; as, having paid forty pounds for ground for my mother's tomb, that the chapter of Weſtminſter ſell their church over and over again; the ancient monuments tumble upon one's head thro' their neglect, as one of them did, and killed a man at lady Elizabeth Percy's funeral; and they erect new waxen dolls of queen of Elizabeth, &c. to draw viſits and money from the mob. I hope all this hiſtory is applicable to ſome part or other of my letter; but letters you will have, and ſo I ſend you one, very like your own ſtories that you tell your daughter: There was a king, and he had three daughters, and they all went to ſee the tombs; and the youngeſt, who was in love with Aylmer de Valence, &c.

Thank you for your account of the battle[1]; thank prince Ferdinand for giving you a very honourable poſt, which, in ſpite of his teeth and yours, proved a very ſafe one; and above all, thank prince Soubize, whom I love better than all the German princes in the univerſe. Peace, I think, we muſt have at laſt, if you beat the French, or at leaſt hinder them from beating you, and afterwards ſtarve them. Buſſy's laſt *laſt* courier is expected; but as he may have a laſt laſt *laſt* courier, I truſt no more to this than to all the others. He was complaining t'other day to Mr. Pitt of our haughtineſs, and ſaid it would drive the French to ſome deſperate effort; thirty thouſand men, continued he, would embarraſs you a little, I believe! Yes, truly, replied Pitt, for I am ſo embarraſſed with thoſe we have already, I don't know what to do with them.

Adieu! Don't fancy that the more you ſcold, the more I will write: It has anſwered three times, but the next croſs word you give me ſhall put an end to our correſpondence. Sir Horace Mann's father uſed to ſay, Talk, Horace, you have been abroad:—you cry, Write, Horace, you are at home. No, ſir, you can beat an hundred and twenty thouſand French, but you cannot get the better of me. I will not write ſuch fooliſh letters as this every day, when I have nothing to ſay.

Yours as you behave,

HOR. WALPOLE.

[1] Of Kirk Denckirk.

LETTER

LETTER XLIV.

Arlington-ſtreet, Sept. 9, 1761.

THE date of my promiſe is now arrived, and I fulfil it—fulfil it with great ſatisfaction, for the queen is come; I have ſeen her, have been preſented to her—and may go back to Strawberry. For this fortnight I have lived upon the road between Twickenham and London: I came, grew impatient, returned; came again, ſtill to no purpoſe. The yachts made the coaſt of Suffolk laſt Saturday, on Sunday entered the road of Harwich, and on Monday morning the king's chief eunuch, as the Tripoline embaſſador calls lord A. landed the princeſs. She lay that night at lord Abercorn's at Witham, the palace of ſilence; and yeſterday at a quarter after three arrived at St. James's. In half an hour one heard of nothing but proclamations of her beauty: every body was content, every body pleaſed. At ſeven one went to court. The night was ſultry. About ten the proceſſion began to move towards the chapel, and at eleven they all came up into the drawing-room. She looks very ſenſible, chearful, and is remarkably genteel. Her tiara of diamonds was very pretty, her ſtomacher ſumptuous; her violet-velvet mantle and ermine ſo heavy, that the ſpectators knew as much of her upper half as the king himſelf. You will have no doubts of her ſenſe by what I ſhall tell you. On the road they wanted her to curl her toupet: ſhe ſaid ſhe thought it looked as well as that of any of the ladies ſent to fetch her; if the king bid her, ſhe would wear a periwig, otherwiſe ſhe would remain as ſhe was. When ſhe caught the firſt glimpſe of the palace, ſhe grew frightened and turned pale; the ducheſs of Hamilton ſmiled—the princeſs ſaid, "My dear ducheſs, you may laugh, you have been married twice, but it is no joke to me." Her lips trembled as the coach ſtopped, but ſhe jumped out with ſpirit, and has done nothing but with good humour and chearfulneſs. She talks a great deal—is eaſy, civil, and not diſconcerted. At firſt, when the bride-maids and the court were introduced to her, ſhe ſaid, "Mon Dieu, il y en a tant, il y en a tant!" She was pleaſed when ſhe was to kiſs the peereſſes; but lady Auguſta was forced to take her hand and give it to thoſe that were to kiſs it, which was prettily humble and good-natured. While they waited for ſupper, ſhe ſat down, ſung, and played. Her French is tolerable, ſhe exchanged much both of that and German, with the king, the Duke, and the duke of York. They

They did not get to bed till two. To-day was a drawing-room: every body was preſented to her; but ſhe ſpoke to nobody, as ſhe could not know a ſoul. The crowd was much leſs than at a birth-day, the magnificence very little more. The king looked very handſome, and talked to her continually with great good-humour. It does not promiſe as if they two would be the two moſt unhappy perſons in England, from this event. The bride-maids, eſpecially lady Caroline Ruſſel, lady Sarah Lenox, and lady Elizabeth Keppel, were beautiful figures. With neither features nor air, lady Sarah was by far the chief angel. The ducheſs of Hamilton was almoſt in poſſeſſion of her former beauty to-day; and your other ducheſs [1], your daughter, was much better dreſſed than ever I ſaw her. Except a pretty lady Sutherland, and a moſt perfect beauty, an Iriſh miſs Smith [2], I don't think the queen ſaw much elſe to diſcourage her: my niece [3], lady Kildare, Mrs. Fitzroy, were none of them there. There is a ball to-night, and two more drawing-rooms; but I have done with them. The ducheſs of Queenſberry and lady Weſtmorland were in the proceſſion, and did credit to the ancient nobility.

You don't preſume to ſuppoſe, I hope, that we are thinking of you, and wars, and misfortunes and diſtreſſes, in theſe feſtival times. Mr. Pitt himſelf would be mobbed if he talked of any thing but clothes, and diamonds, and bride maids. Oh! yes, we have wars, civil wars; there is a campaign opened in the bed-chamber. Every body is excluded but the miniſters; even the lords of the bed-chamber, cabinet-counſellors, and foreign miniſters: but it has given ſuch offence that I don't know whether lord Huntingdon muſt not be the ſcape-goat. Adieu! I am going to tranſcribe moſt of this letter to your counteſs.

Yours ever,

HOR. WALPOLE.

[1] The ducheſs of Richmond.
[2] Afterwards married to Mr. Matthew, now lord Landaff.
[3] The counteſs of Waldegrave.

LETTER XLV.

Arlington-ſtreet, Sept. 25, 1761.

THIS is the moſt unhappy day I have known of years: Buſſy goes away! Mankind is again given up to the ſword! Peace and you are far from England!

Strawberry-hill.

I was interrupted this morning, juſt as I had begun my letter, by lord Waldegrave; and then the duke of Devonſhire ſent for me to Burlington-houſe to meet the ducheſs of Bedford, and ſee the old pictures from Hardwicke. If my letter reaches you three days later, at leaſt you are ſaved from a lamentation. Buſſy has put off his journey to Monday (to be ſure, you know this is Friday): he ſays this is a ſtrange country, he can get no waggoner to carry his goods on a Sunday. I am glad a Spaniſh war waits for a conveyance, and that a waggoner's *veto* is as good as a tribune's of Rome, and can ſtop Mr. Pitt on his career to Mexico. He was going poſt to conquer it—and Beckford, I ſuppoſe, would have had a contract for remitting all the gold, of which Mr. Pitt never thinks, unleſs to ſerve a city-friend. It is ſerious that we have diſcuſſions with Spain, who ſays France is humbled enough, but muſt not be ruined. Spaniſh gold is actually coining in frontier towns of France; and the privilege which Biſcay and two other provinces have of fiſhing on the coaſt of Newfoundland, has been demanded for all Spain. It was refuſed peremptorily; and Mr. ſecretary Cortez [1] inſiſted yeſterday ſe'nnight on recalling lord Briſtol [2]. The reſt of the council, who are content with the world they have to govern, without conquering others, prevailed to defer this impetuoſity. However, if France or Spain are the leaſt untractable, a war is inevitable: nay, if they don't ſubmit by the firſt day of the ſeſſion, I have no doubt but Mr. Pitt will declare it himſelf on the addreſs. I have no opinion of Spain intending it: they give France money to protract a war, from which they reap ſuch advantages in their peaceful capacity; and I ſhould think would not give their money if they were on the point of having occaſion for it themſelves. In ſpite of you, and all the old barons our anceſtors, I pray that we may

[1] Mr. Pitt, then ſecretary of ſtate.

[2] The Engliſh embaſſador at the court of Madrid.

have

have done with glory, and would willingly burn every Roman and Greek hiſtorian who have done nothing but tranſmit precedents for cutting throats.

The coronation is over: 'tis even a more gorgeous ſight than I imagined. I ſaw the proceſſion and the hall; but the return was in the dark. In the morning they had forgot the ſword of ſtate, the chairs for king and queen, and their canopies. They uſed the lord mayor's for the firſt, and made the laſt in the hall: ſo they did not ſet forth till noon; and then, by a childiſh compliment to the king, reſerved the illumination of the hall till his entry, by which means they arrived like a funeral, nothing being diſcernible but the plumes of the knights of the bath, which ſeemed the herſe. Lady Kildare, the ducheſs of Richmond, and lady Pembroke, were the capital beauties. Lady Harrington, the fineſt figure at a diſtance; old Weſtmorland, the moſt majeſtic. Lady Hertford could not walk, and indeed I think is in a way to give us great anxiety. She is going to Ragley to ride. Lord Beauchamp was one of the king's train-bearers. Of all the incidents of the day, the moſt diverting was, what happened to the queen. She had a retiring-chamber, with *all* conveniencies, prepared behind the altar. She went thither—in the *moſt convenient*, what found ſhe but—the duke of Newcaſtle! Lady Hardwicke died three days before the ceremony, which kept away the whole houſe of Yorke. Some of the peereſſes were dreſſed over night, ſlept in arm-chairs, and were waked if they tumbled their heads. Your ſiſter Harris's maid, lady Peterborough, was a comely figure. My lady Cowper refuſed, but was forced to walk with lady M——. Lady Falmouth was not there; on which George Selwyn ſaid, that thoſe peereſſes who were moſt uſed to *walk*, did not. I carried my lady Townſhend, lady Hertford, lady Anne Conolly, my lady Hervey, and Mrs. Clive, to my deputy's houſe at the gate of Weſtminſter-hall. My lady Townſhend ſaid ſhe ſhould be very glad to ſee a coronation, as ſhe never had ſeen one. "Why," ſaid I, "madam, you walked at the laſt?" "Yes, child," ſaid ſhe, "but I ſaw nothing of it: I only looked to ſee who looked at me." The ducheſs of Queenſberry walked: her affectation that day was to do nothing prepoſterous. The queen has been at the opera, and ſays ſhe will go once a week. This is a freſh diſaſter to our box, where we have lived ſo harmoniouſly for three years. We can get no alternative but that over miſs Chudleigh's; and lord Strafford and lady M—— C—— will not ſubſcribe, unleſs we can. The duke of Devonſhire and I are negotiating with all our art to keep our

party together. The crowds at the opera and play when the king and queen go, are a little greater than what I remember. The late royalties went to the Haymarket, when it was the faſhion to frequent the other opera in Lincoln's-inn-fields. Lord Cheſterfield one night came into the latter, and was aſked, If he had been at the other houſe? "Yes," ſaid he, "but there was nobody but the king and queen; and as I thought they might be talking buſineſs, I came away."

Thank you for your journals: the beſt route you can ſend me would be of your journey homewards. Adieu!

Yours moſt ſincerely,

HOR. WALPOLE.

P. S. If you ever hear from, or write to, ſuch a perſon as lady A———, pray tell her ſhe is worſe to me in point of correſpondence than ever you ſaid I was to you, and that ſhe ſends me every thing but letters.

LETTER XLVI.

Arlington-ſtreet, October 12, 1761.

IT is very lucky that you did not ſucceed in the expedition to Rochfort. Perhaps you might have been made a peer; and as *Chatham* is a naval title, it might have fallen to your ſhare. But it was reſerved to crown greater glory: and leſt it ſhould not be ſubſtantial pay enough, three thouſand pounds a year for three lives go along with it. Not to Mr. Pitt—you can't ſuppoſe it. Why truly, not the title, but the annuity does, and lady Heſther is the baroneſs; that, if he ſhould pleaſe, he may earn an earldom himſelf. Don't believe me, if you have not a mind. I know I did not believe thoſe who told it me. But aſk the gazette that ſwears it—aſk the king, who has kiſſed lady Heſther—aſk the city of London, who are ready to tear Mr. Pitt to pieces—aſk forty people I can name who are overjoyed at it—and then aſk me again, who am mortified, and who have been the dupe of his diſintereſtedneſs. Oh, my dear Harry! I beg you on my knees, keep your virtue: do let me think there is ſtill one man upon earth who deſpiſes money.

I wrote

I wrote you an account laſt week of his reſignation. Could you have believed that in four days he would have tumbled from the conqueſt of Spain to receiving a quarter's penſion from Mr. Weſt[1]? To-day he has adverti ſed his ſeven coach-horſes to be ſold—Three thouſand a year for three lives, and fifty thouſand pounds of his own, will not keep a coach and ſix. I proteſt I believe he is mad, and lord Temple thinks ſo too; for he reſigned the ſame morning that Pitt accepted the penſion. George Grenville is miniſter in the houſe of commons. I don't know who will be ſpeaker. They talk of Prowſe, Huſſey, Bacon, and even of old ſir John Ruſhout. Delaval has ſaid an admirable thing: he blames Pitt—not as you and I do; but calls him fool; and ſays, if he had gone into the city, told them he had a poor wife and children unprovided for, and had opened a ſubſcription, he would have got five hundred thouſand pounds, inſtead of three thouſand pounds a year. In the mean time the good man has ſaddled us with a war which we can neither carry on nor carry off. 'Tis pitiful! 'tis wondrous pitiful! Is the communication ſtopped, that we never hear from you? I own 'tis an Iriſh queſtion. I am out of humour: my viſions are diſpelled, and you are ſtill abroad. As I cannot put Mr. Pitt to death, at leaſt I have buried him: here is his epitaph:

Admire his eloquence——It mounted higher
Than Attic purity, or Roman fire:
Adore his ſervices——our Lions view
Ranging, where Roman eagles never flew:
Copy his ſoul ſupreme o'er Lucre's ſphere;
—But oh! beware three thouſand pounds a year!

October 13.

Jemmy Grenville reſigned yeſterday. Lord Temple is all hoſtility; and goes to the drawing-room to tell every body how angry he is with the court——but what is ſir Joſeph Wittol, when Nol Bluff is pacific? They talk of erecting a tavern in the city, called The Salutation: the ſign to repreſent Lord Bath and Mr. Pitt embracing. Theſe are ſhameful times. Adieu!

Yours ever,

HOR. WALPOLE.

[1] Secretary to the treaſury.

LETTER XLVII.

Strawberry-hill, October 26, 1761.

HOW ſtrange it ſeems! You are talking to me of the king's wedding, while we are thinking of a civil war. Why, the king's wedding was a century ago, almoſt two months; even the coronation that happened half an age ago, is quite forgot. The poſt to Germany cannot keep pace with our revolutions. Who knows but you may ſtill be thinking that Mr. Pitt is the moſt diſintereſted man in the world? Truly, as far as the votes of a common-council can make him ſo, he is. Like Cromwell, he has always promoted the ſelf-denying ordinance, and has contrived to be excuſed from it himſelf. The city could no longer chooſe who ſhould be their man of virtue; there was not one left: by all rules they ought next to have pitched upon one who was the oldeſt offender: inſtead of that, they have re-elected the moſt recent; and, as if virtue was a borough, Mr. Pitt is re-choſen for it, on vacating his ſeat. Well, but all this is very ſerious: I ſhall offer you a prophetic picture, and ſhall be very glad if I am not a true ſoothſayer. The city have voted an addreſs of thanks to Mr. Pitt, and given inſtructions to their members; the chief articles of which are, to promote an inquiry into the diſpoſal of the money that has been granted, and to conſent to no peace, unleſs we are to retain all, or very near all, our conqueſts. Thus the city of London uſurp the right of making peace and war. But is the government to be dictated to by one town? By no means. But ſuppoſe they are not—what is the conſequence? How will the money be raiſed? If it cannot be raiſed without them, Mr. Pitt muſt again be miniſter: that you think would eaſily be accommodated. Stay, ſtay; he and lord Temple have declared againſt the whole cabinet council. Why, that they have done before now, and yet have acted with them again. It is very true; but a little word has eſcaped Mr. Pitt, which never entered into his former declarations; nay, nor into Cromwell's, nor Hugh Capet's, nor Julius Cæſar's, nor any reformer's of ancient time. He has happened to ſay, he will *guide*. Now, though the cabinet council are mighty willing to be guided, when they cannot help it, yet they wiſh to have appearances ſaved: they cannot be fond of being told they are to be guided; ſtill leſs, that other people ſhould be told ſo. Here, then, is Mr. Pitt and the common-council on one hand, the great lords on the other. I proteſt, I do not

ſee but it will come to this. Will it allay the confuſion, if Mr. Fox is retained on the ſide of the court? Here are no whigs and tories, harmleſs people, that are content with worrying one another for 150 years together. The new parties are, *I will*, and *You ſhall not*; and their principles do not admit delay. However, this age is of ſuppler mould than ſome of its predeceſſors; and this may come round again, by a coup de baguette, when one leaſt expects it. If it ſhould not, the honeſteſt part one can take is to look on, and try if one can do any good if matters go too far.

I am charmed with the Caſtle of Hercules[1]; it is the boldeſt pile I have ſeen ſince I travelled in Fairyland. You ought to have delivered a princeſs impriſoned by enchanters in his club: ſhe, in gratitude, ſhould have fallen in love with you: your conſtancy ſhould have been immaculate. The devil knows how it would have ended—I don't—And ſo I break off my romance.

You need not beat the French any more this year: it cannot be aſcribed to Mr. Pitt; and the mob won't thank you. If we are to have a warm campaign in parliament, I hope you will be ſent for. Adieu! We take the field to-morrow ſe'nnight.

Yours ever,

HOR. WALPOLE.

P. S. You will be ſorry to hear that Workſop is burned. My lady Waldegrave has got a daughter, and your brother an ague.

LETTER XLVIII.

Strawberry-hill, Sept. 9, 1762.

Nondum laurus erat, longoque decentia crine
Tempora cingebat de qualibet arbore Phœbus.

THIS is a hint to you, that as Phœbus, who was certainly your ſuperior, could take up with a cheſtnut garland, or any crown he found, you muſt

[1] Alluding to a deſcription of a building in Heſſe Caſſel, given by Mr. Conway in one of his letters.

have

have the humility to be content without laurels, when none are to be had: you have hunted far and near for them, and taken true pains to the laſt in that old nurſery-garden Germany, and by the way have made me ſhudder with your laſt journal: but you muſt be eaſy with qualibet other arbore; you muſt come home to your own plantations. The duke of Bedford is gone in a fury to make peace, for he cannot be even pacific with temper; and by this time I ſuppoſe the duke de Nivernois is unpacking his portion of olive *dans la rue de Suffolk-ſtreet*. I ſay, I ſuppoſe—for I do not, like my friends at Arthur's, whip into my poſt-chaiſe to ſee every novelty. My two ſovereigns, the ducheſs of G—— and lady M—— C——, are arrived, and yet I have ſeen neither Polly nor Lucy. The former, I hear, is entirely French; the latter as abſolutely Engliſh.

Well! but if you inſiſt on not doffing your cuiraſs, you may find an opportunity of wearing it. The ſtorm thickens. The city of London are ready to hoiſt their ſtandard; treaſon is the bon ton at that end of the town; ſeditious papers paſted up at every corner: nay, my neighbourhood is not unfaſhionable; we have had them at Brentford and Kingſton. The Peace is the cry; but to make weight, they throw in all the abuſive ingredients they can collect. They talk of your friend the duke of Devonſhire's reſigning; and, for the duke of Newcaſtle, it puts him ſo much in mind of the end of queen Anne's time, that I believe he hopes to be miniſter again for another forty years.

In the mean time there are but dark news from the Havannah; the Gazette, who would not fib for the world, ſays, we have loſt but four officers: the World, who is not quite ſo ſcrupulous, ſays, our loſs is heavy. —But what ſhocking notice to thoſe who have *Harry Conways* there! The Gazette breaks off with ſaying, that they were to ſtorm the next day! Upon the whole, it is regarded as a preparative to worſe news.

Our next monarch was chriſtened laſt night, George Auguſtus Frederic; the princeſs, the duke of Cumberland, and duke of Mecklenburgh, ſponſors; the ceremony performed by the biſhop of London. The queen's bed, magnificent, and they ſay in taſte, was placed in the great drawing-room: though ſhe is not to ſee company in form, yet it looks as if they had intended people ſhould have been there, as all who preſented themſelves were admitted,

mitted, which were very few, for it had not been notified; I ſuppoſe to prevent too great a crowd—All I have heard named, beſides thoſe in waiting, were the ducheſs of Queenſberry, lady Dalkeith, Mrs. Grenville, and about four more ladies.

My lady A—— is abominable: ſhe ſettled a party to come hither, and put it off for a month; and now ſhe has been here and ſeen my cabinet, ſhe ought to tell you what good reaſon I had not to ſtir. If ſhe has not told you that it is the fineſt, the prettieſt, the neweſt and the oldeſt thing in the world, I will not go to Park-place on the 20th, as I have promiſed. Oh! but tremble you may for me, though you will not for yourſelf—all my glories were on the point of vaniſhing laſt night in a flame! The chimney of the new gallery, which chimney is full of deal-boards, and which gallery is full of ſhavings, was on fire at eight o'clock. Harry had quarrelled with the other ſervants, and would not ſit in the kitchen; and to keep up his anger had lighted a vaſt fire in the ſervants' hall, which is under the gallery. The chimney took fire; and if Margaret had not ſmelt it with the firſt noſe that ever a ſervant had, a quarter of an hour had ſet us in a blaze. I hope you are frightened out of your ſenſes for me: if you are not, I will never live in a panic for three or four years for you again.

I have had lord March and the Rena[1] here for one night, which does not raiſe my reputation in the neighbourhood, and may uſher me again for a Scotchman into The North Briton[2]. I have had too a letter from a Ger-

[1] A faſhionable courtezan.

[2] The favourable opinion given by Mr. Walpole of the abilities of the Scotch in The royal and noble authors, firſt drew upon him the notice of The North Briton. The paſſage alluded to is the following in the ſecond number of that paper: "Mr. Horace Walpole, in that deep book called The royal and noble authors, ſays, We are *the moſt accompliſhed nation in Europe; the nation to which, if any one country is endowed with a ſuperior partition of ſenſe,* [and he ought to have added, of *humour* and *taſte*, in both which we excel.] *I ſhould be inclined to give the preference in that particular.* How faithful is this maſterly pen of Mr. Walpole! How unlike the odious ſharp and ſtrong inciſion pen of Swift! He has called us only *a poor* FIERCE *northern* people; and has aſſerted, *that the penſions and employments poſſeſſed by the natives of Scotland in England, amounted to more than the whole body of their nobility ever ſpent at home; and that all the money they raiſed upon the public was hardly ſufficient to defray their civil and military liſts.* This was at the latter end of queen Anne's reign. How very different is the caſe now! I beg to recommend Mr. Walpole, too, for ſo very particular a compliment (which I hope flowed from his *heart* ſtill more than from his *head*), and I entreat his lordſhip to put him on the liſt immediately after my countrymen and the Cocoa."

man that I never ſaw, who tells me, that, hearing by chance how well I am with my lord Bute, he deſires me to get him a place. The North Briton firſt recommended me for an employment, and has now given me intereſt at the backſtairs. It is a notion, that whatever is ſaid of one, has generally ſome kind of foundation: ſurely I am a contradiction to this maxim! yet, was I of conſequence enough to be remembered, perhaps poſterity would believe that I was a flatterer! Good-night!

Yours ever,

HOR. WALPOLE.

LETTER XLIX.

Strawberry-hill, Sept. 28, 1762.

TO my ſorrow and your wicked joy, it is a doubt whether monſieur de Nivernois will ſhut the temple of Janus. We do not believe him quite ſo much in earneſt, as the dove [1] we have ſent, who has ſummoned his turtle to Paris. She ſets out the day after to-morrow, eſcorted, to add gravity to the embaſſy, by George Selwyn. The ſtocks don't mind this journey of a ruſh, but draw in their horns every day. We can learn nothing of the Havannah, though the axis on which the whole treaty turns. We believe, for we have never ſeen them, that the laſt letters thence brought accounts of great loſs, eſpecially by the ſickneſs. Colonel Burgoyne [2] has given a little fillip to the Spaniards, and ſhown them, that though they can take Portugal from the Portugueſe, it will not be entirely ſo eaſy to wreſt it from the Engliſh. Lord Pulteney [3], and my nephew [4], lady Waldegrave's brother, diſtinguiſhed themſelves. I hope your hereditary prince is recovering of the wounds in his loins; for they ſay he is to marry princeſs Auguſta.

Lady A—— has told you, to be ſure, that I have been at Park-place.

[1] The duke of Bedford, then embaſſador at Paris.

[2] Colonel, afterwards general Burgoyne, with the compte de Lippe, commanded the Britiſh troops ſent to the relief of Portugal.

[3] Only ſon of William Pulteney, earl of Bath. He died before his father.

[4] Edward, only ſon of ſir Edward Walpole. He died in 1771.

Every

Every thing there is in beauty; and, I ſhould think, pleaſanter than a campaign in Germany. Your counteſs is handſomer than fame; your daughter improving every day; your plantations more thriving than the poor woods about Marburg and Caſſel. Chineſe pheaſants ſwarm there.—For lady C——, I aſſure you, ſhe ſits cloſe upon her egg, and it will not be her fault if ſhe does not hatch a hero. We miſſed all the glories of the inſtallation [1], and all the falſe, and all the frowning faces there. Not a knight was abſent, but the lame and the deaf.

Your brother, lady Hertford, and lord Beauchamp, are gone from Windſor into Suffolk. Henry [2], who has the genuine indifference of a *Harry Conway*, would not ſtir from Oxford for thoſe pageants. Lord Beauchamp ſhowed me a couple of his letters, which have more natural humour and cleverneſs than is conceivable. They have the eaſe and drollery of a man of parts who has lived long in the world—and he is ſcarce ſeventeen!

I am going to Lord Waldegrave's [3] for a few days, and, when your counteſs returns from Goodwood, am to meet her at C——'s. Lord Strafford [4], who has been terribly alarmed about my lady, mentions, with great pleaſure, the letters he receives from you. His neighbour and couſin, lord Rockingham, I hear, is one of the warmeſt declaimers at Arthur's againſt the preſent ſyſtem. Abuſe continues in much plenty, but I have ſeen none that I thought had wit enough to bear the ſea. Good-night. There are ſatiric prints enough to tapeſtry Weſtminſter-hall.

Yours ever,

HOR. WALPOLE.

Stay a moment: I recollect telling you a lie in my laſt, which, though of no conſequence, I muſt correct. The right reverend midwife, Thomas Secker, archbiſhop, did chriſten the babe, and not the biſhop of London, as I had been told by matron authority. A-propos to babes: Have you read

[1] An inſtallation of knights of the garter.

[2] Henry Seymour Conway, ſecond ſon of Francis, earl and afterward marquis of Hertford.

[3] James, ſecond earl of Waldegrave, knight of the garter, had married Maria, ſecond daughter of ſir Edward Walpole.

[4] William Wentworth, earl of Strafford, married lady Anne Campbell, third daughter of John duke of Argyll.

Rouſſeau on education? I almoſt got through a volume at Park-place, though impatiently; it has more tautology than any of his works, and leſs eloquence. Sure he has writ more ſenſe and more nonſenſe than ever any man did of both! All I have yet learned from this work is, that one ſhould have a tutor for one's ſon to teach him to have no ideas, in order that he may begin to learn his alphabet as he loſes his maidenhead.

Thurſday noon, 30th.

Io Havannah! Io Albemarle! I had ſealed my letter, and given it to Harry for the poſt; when my lady Suffolk ſent me a ſhort note from Charles Townſhend, to ſay the Havannah ſurrendered on the 12th of Auguſt, and that we have taken twelve ſhips of the line in the harbour. The news came late laſt night. I do not know a particular more. God grant no more blood be ſhed! I have hopes again of the peace. My deareſt Harry, now we have preſerved you to the laſt moment, do take care of yourſelf. When one has a whole war to wade through, it is not worth while to be careful in any one battle; but it is ſilly to fling one's ſelf away in the laſt. Your character is eſtabliſhed; prince Ferdinand's letters are full of encomiums on you; but what will weigh more with you, ſave yourſelf for another war, which I doubt you will live to ſee, and in which you may be ſuperior commander, and have ſpace to diſplay your talents. A ſecond in ſervice is never remembered, whether the honour of the victory be owing to him, or he killed. Turenne would have a very ſhort paragraph, if the prince of Condé had been general, when he fell. Adieu.

LETTER L.

Arlington-ſtreet, October 4, 1762.

I AM concerned to hear you have been ſo much out of order, but ſhould rejoice your ſole command [1] diſappointed you, if this late cannonading buſineſs [2] did not deſtroy all my little proſpects. Can one believe the French negotiators are ſincere, when their marſhals are ſo falſe? What vexes me

[1] During lord Granby's abſence from the army in Flanders the command in chief had devolved on Mr. Conway.

[2] The affair of Bucker-Muhl. See Annual Regiſter for the year 1762, page 49.

more is to hear you ſeriouſly tell your brother that you are always unlucky, and loſe all opportunities of fighting. How can you be ſuch a child? You cannot, like a German, love fighting for its own ſake. No: you think of the mob of London, who, if you had taken Peru, would forget you the firſt Lord-Mayor's-Day, or for the firſt hyæna that comes to town. How can one build on virtue and on fame too? When do they ever go together? In my paſſion, I could almoſt wiſh you were as worthleſs and as great as the king of Pruſſia! If conſcience is a puniſhment, is not it a reward too? Go to that ſilent tribunal, and be ſatisfied with its ſentence.

I have nothing new to tell you. The Havannah is more likely to break off the peace than to advance it. We are not in a humour to give up the world; *anzi*, are much more diſpoſed to conquer the reſt of it. We ſhall have ſome cannonading here, I believe, if we ſign the peace. Mr. Pitt, from the boſom of his retreat, has made Beckford mayor. The duke of Newcaſtle, if not taken in again, will probably end his life as he began it—at the head of a mob. Perſonalities and abuſe, public and private, increaſe to the moſt outrageous degree, and yet the town is at the emptieſt. You may gueſs what will be the caſe in a month. I do not ſee at all into the ſtorm: I do not mean that there will not be a great majority to vote any thing; but there are times when even majorities cannot do all they are ready to do. Lord Bute has certainly great luck, which is ſomething in politics, whatever it is in logic: but whether peace or war, I would not give him much for the place he will have this day twelve-month. Adieu! The watchman goes paſt one in the morning; and as I have nothing better than reflections and conjectures to ſend you, I may as well go to bed.

LETTER LI.

Strawberry-hill, Oct. 29, 1762.

YOU take my philoſophy very kindly, as it was meant; but I ſuppoſe you ſmile a little in your ſleeve to hear me turn moraliſt. Yet why ſhould not I? Muſt every abſurd young man prove a fooliſh old one? Not that I intend, when the latter term is quite arrived, to profeſs preaching; nor ſhould, I believe, have talked ſo gravely to you, if your ſituation had

had not made me grave. Till the campaign is ended, I ſhall be in no humour to ſmile. For the war, when it will be over, I have no idea. The peace is a jack-o'lanthorn that dances before one's eyes, is never approached, and at beſt ſeems ready to lead ſome folks into a woeful quagmire.

As your brother was in town, and I had my intelligence from him, I concluded you would have the ſame, and therefore did not tell you of this laſt revolution, which has brought Mr. Fox again upon the ſcene. I have been in town but once ſince; yet learned enough to confirm the opinion I had conceived, that the building totters, and that this laſt buttreſs will but puſh on its fall. Beſides the clamorous oppoſition already encamped, The World talks of another, compoſed of names not ſo often found in a mutiny. What think you of the great duke [1], and the little duke [2], and the old duke [3], and the Derbyſhire duke [4], banded together againſt the favourite [5]? If ſo, it proves the court, as the late lord G—— wrote to the mayor of Litchfield, will have a majority in every thing but numbers. However, my letter is a week old before I write it: things may have changed ſince laſt Tueſday. Then the proſpect was *des plus* gloomy. Portugal at the eve of being conquered—Spain preferring a diadem to the mural crown of the Havannah—a ſquadron taking horſe for Naples, to ſee whether king Carlos has any more private bowels than public, whether he is a better father than brother. If what I heard yeſterday be true, that the parliament is to be put off till the 24th, it does not look as if they were ready in the green-room, and deſpiſed catcalls.

You bid me ſend you the flower of brimſtone, the beſt things publiſhed in this ſeaſon of outrage. I ſhould not have waited for orders, if I had met with the leaſt tolerable morſel. But this oppoſition ran ſtark mad at once, curſed, ſwore, called names, and has not been one minute cool enough to have a grain of wit. Their prints are groſs, their papers ſcurrilous; indeed the authors abuſe one another more than any body elſe. I have not ſeen a ſingle ballad or epigram. They are as ſeriouſly dull as if the controverſy was religious. I do not take in a paper of either ſide, and being very indif-

[1] Of Cumberland.
[2] Of Bedford.
[3] Of Newcaſtle.
[4] Of Devonſhire.
[5] John Stuart earl of Bute.

ferent, the only way of being impartial, they ſhall not make me pay till they make me laugh. I am here quite alone, and ſhall ſtay a fortnight longer, unleſs the parliament prorogued lengthens my holidays. I do not pretend to be ſo indifferent, to have ſo little curioſity, as not to go and ſee the duke of Newcaſtle frightened *for* his country—the only thing that never yet gave him a panic. Then I am ſtill ſuch a ſchoolboy, that though I could gueſs half their orations, and know *all* their meaning, I muſt go and hear Cæſar and Pompey ſcold in the Temple of Concord. As this age is to make ſuch a figure hereafter, how the Gronoviuses and Warburtons would deſpiſe a ſenator that deſerted the forum when the maſters of the world harangued! For, as this age is to be hiſtoric, ſo of courſe it will be a ſtandard of virtue too; and we, like our wicked predeceſſors the Romans, ſhall be quoted, till our very ghoſts bluſh, as models of patriotiſm and magnanimity. What lectures will be read to poor children on this æra! Europe taught to tremble, the great king humbled, the treaſures of Peru diverted into the Thames, Aſia ſubdued by the gigantic Clive! for in that age men were near ſeven feet high; France ſuing for peace at the gates of Buckingham-houſe, the ſteady wiſdom of the duke of Bedford drawing a circle round the Gallic monarch, and forbidding him to paſs it till he had ſigned the ceſſion of America; Pitt more eloquent than Demoſthenes, and trampling on proffered penſions like—I don't know who; lord Temple ſacrificing a brother to the love of his country; Wilkes as ſpotleſs as Salluſt, and the Flamen Churchill[1] knocking down the foes of Britain with ſtatues of the gods!——Oh! I am out of breath with eloquence and prophecy, and truth and lies: my narrow cheſt was not formed to hold inſpiration; I muſt return to piddling with my painters: thoſe lofty ſubjects are too much for me. Good night!

Yours ever,

HOR. WALPOLE.

P. S. I forgot to tell you that Gideon, who is dead worth more than the whole land of Canaan, has left the reverſion of all his milk and honey, after his ſon and daughter and their children, to the duke of Devonſhire, without inſiſting on his taking the name, or even being circumciſed.

[1] Charles Churchill the poet.

Lord

Lord Albemarle is expected home in December. My nephew Keppel [1] is biſhop of Exeter, not of the Havannah, as you may imagine, for his mitre was promiſed the day before the news came.

LETTER LII.

Strawberry-hill, February 28, 1763.

YOUR letter of the 19th ſeems to poſtpone your arrival rather than advance it; yet lady A. tells me that to her you talk of being here in ten days. I wiſh devoutly to ſee you, though I am not departing myſelf; but I am impatient to have your diſagreeable function [2] at an end, and to know that you enjoy yourſelf after ſuch fatigues, dangers, and ill-requited ſervices. For any public ſatisfaction you will receive in being at home, you muſt not expect much. Your mind was not formed to float on the ſurface of a mercenary world. My prayer (and my belief) is, that you may always prefer what you always have preferred, your integrity to ſucceſs. You will then laugh, as I do, at the attacks and malice of faction or miniſters. I taſte of both; but, as my health is recovered, and my mind does not reproach me, they will perhaps only give me an opportunity, which I ſhould never have ſought, of proving that I have ſome virtue—and it will not be proved in the way they probably expect. I have better evidence than by hanging out the tattered enſigns of patriotiſm. But this and a thouſand other things I ſhall reſerve for our meeting. Your brother has preſſed me much to go with him, if he goes, to Paris [3]. I take it very kindly, but have excuſed myſelf, though I have promiſed either to accompany him for a ſhort time at firſt, or to go to him if he ſhould have any particular occaſion for me: but my reſolution againſt ever appearing in any public light is unalterable. When I wiſh to live leſs and leſs in the world here, I cannot think of mounting a new ſtage at Paris. At this moment I am alone here, while every body is balloting in the houſe of commons. Sir John Philips propoſed a commiſſion of accounts, which has been converted into a ſelect committee of 21, eligible by ballot. As the miniſtry is not predominant in the

[1] Frederick Keppel, youngeſt brother of George earl of Albemarle, who commanded at taking the Havannah, had married Laura, eldeſt daughter of ſir Edward Walpole.

[2] The re-embarkation of the Britiſh troops from Flanders after the peace.

[3] As embaſſador.

affections

affections of mankind, ſome of them may find a jury elected that will not be quite ſo complaiſant as the houſe is in general when their votes are given *openly*. As many may be glad of this opportunity, I ſhun it; for I ſhould ſcorn to do any thing in ſecret, though I have ſome enemies that are not quite ſo generous.

You ſay you have ſeen the North Briton in which I make a capital figure. Wilkes, the author, I hear, ſays, that if he had thought I ſhould have taken it ſo well, he would have been damned before he would have written it—but I am not ſore where I am not ſore.

The theatre at Covent-garden has ſuffered more by riots than even Drury-lane. A footman of lord Dacre has been hanged for murdering the butler. George Selwyn had great hand in bringing him to confeſs it. That Selwyn ſhould be a capital performer in a ſcene of that kind is not extraordinary: I tell it you for the ſtrange coolneſs which the young fellow, who was but nineteen, expreſſed: as he was writing his confeſſion, "I murd—" he ſtopped, and aſked, "How do you ſpell *murdered?*"

Mr. Fox is much better than at the beginning of the winter; and both his health and power ſeem to promiſe a longer duration than people expected. Indeed I think the latter is ſo eſtabliſhed, that lord B—— would find it more difficult to remove him, than he did his predeceſſors, and may even feel the effects of the weight he has made over to him; for it is already obvious that lord B——'s levée is not the preſent path to fortune. Permanence is not the complexion of theſe times—a diſtreſsful circumſtance to the votaries of a court, but amuſing to us ſpectators. Adieu!

Yours ever,

HOR. WALPOLE.

LETTER LIII.

Strawberry-hill, May 1, 1763.

I FEEL happy at hearing your happineſs; but, my dear Harry, your viſion is much indebted to your long abſence, which

Makes bleak rocks and barren mountains ſmile.

I mean no offence to Park-place, but the bitterneſs of the weather makes me wonder how you can find the country tolerable now. This is a May-day for the latitude of Siberia! The milk-maids ſhould be wrapped *in the motherly comforts of a ſwan-ſkin petticoat.* In ſhort, ſuch hard words have paſſed between me and the north wind to day, that, according to the language of the times, I was very near abuſing it for coming from Scotland, and to imputing it to lord B——. I don't know whether I ſhould not have written a North Briton againſt it, if the printers were not all ſent to Newgate, and Mr. Wilkes to the Tower—ay, to the Tower, tout de bon. The new miniſtry are trying to make up for their ridiculous inſignificance by a coup d'eclat. As I came hither yeſterday, I do not know whether the particulars I have heard are genuine—but in the Tower he certainly is, taken up by lord Halifax's warrant for treaſon; vide the North Briton of Saturday was ſe'nnight. It is ſaid he refuſed to obey the warrant, of which he aſked and got a copy from the two meſſengers, telling them he did not mean to make his eſcape, but ſending to demand his habeas corpus, which was refuſed. He then went to lord Halifax, and thence to the Tower; declaring they ſhould get nothing out of him but what they knew. All his papers have been ſeized. Lord chief juſtice Pratt, I am told, finds great fault with the wording of the warrant.

I don't know how to execute your commiſſion for books of architecture, nor care to put you to expence, which I know will not anſwer. I have been conſulting my neighbour young Mr. Thomas Pitt[1], my preſent architect: we have all books of that ſort here, but cannot think of one which will help you to a cottage or a green-houſe. For the former you ſhould ſend me your idea, your dimenſions; for the latter, don't you rebuild your old one, though in another place? A pretty green-houſe I never ſaw; nor without immoderate expence can it well be an agreeable object. Mr. Pitt thinks a mere portico without a pediment, and windows removeable in ſummer, would be the beſt plan you could have. If ſo, don't you remember ſomething of that kind, which you liked, at ſir Charles Cotterel's at Rouſham? But a fine green-houſe muſt be on a more exalted plan. In ſhort, you muſt be more particular, before I can be at all ſo.

I called at Hammerſmith yeſterday about lady A——'s tubs; one of

[1] Afterwards created lord Camelford.

them is nearly finiſhed, but they will not both be completed theſe ten days. Shall they be ſent to you by water? Good-night to her ladyſhip and you, and the Infanta[1], whoſe progreſs in waxen ſtatuary I hope advances ſo faſt, that by next winter ſhe may rival Rackſtrow's old man. Do you know that, though appriſed of what I was going to ſee, it deceived me, and made ſuch impreſſion on my mind, that, thinking on it as I came home in my chariot, and ſeeing a woman ſtedfaſtly at work in a window in Pall-mall, it made me ſtart to ſee her move. Adieu!

Yours ever,

HOR. WALPOLE.

Arlington-ſtreet, Monday night.

THE mighty commitment ſet out with a blunder; the warrant directed the printer, and all concerned (unnamed) to be taken up. Conſequently Wilkes had his habeas corpus of courſe, and was committed again; moved for another in the common-pleas, and is to appear there to-morrow morning. Lord Temple being, by another ſtrain of power, refuſed admittance to him, ſaid, "I thought this was the Tower, but find it is the Baſtille." They found among Wilkes's papers an unpubliſhed North Briton, deſigned for laſt Saturday. It contained advice to the king not to go to St. Paul's on the thankſgiving, but to have a ſnug one in his own chapel; and to let lord G—— S—— carry the ſword. There was a dialogue in it too between Fox and Calcraft: the former ſays to the latter, "I did not think you would have ſerved me ſo, Jemmy Twitcher."

LETTER LIV.

Arlington-ſtreet, May 6, very late, 1763.

THE complexion of the times is a little altered ſince the beginning of this laſt winter. Prerogative, that gave itſelf ſuch airs in November, and would ſpeak to nothing but a Tory, has had a rap this morning that will do

[1] Anne Seymour Conway, whoſe genius for ſculpture has ſince diſtinguiſhed itſelf in more durable materials. E.

it ſome good, unleſs it is weak enough to do itſelf more harm. The judges of the common-pleas have unanimouſly diſmiſſed Wilkes from his impriſonment, as a breach of privilege; his offence not being a breach of the peace, only tending to it. The people are in tranſports; and it will require all the vanity and confidence of thoſe able miniſters lord S. and Mr. C. to keep up the ſpirits of the court.

I muſt change this tone, to tell you of the moſt diſmal calamity that ever happened. Lady Moleſworth's houſe, in Upper Brook-ſtreet, was burned to the ground between four and five this morning. She herſelf, two of her daughters, her brother, and ſix ſervants, periſhed. Two other of the young ladies jumped out of the two pair of ſtairs and garret windows: one broke her thigh, the other (the eldeſt of all) broke her's too, and has had it cut off. The fifth daughter is much burnt. The French governeſs leaped from the garret, and was daſhed to pieces. Dr. Moleſworth and his wife, who were there on a viſit, eſcaped; the wife by jumping from the two pair of ſtairs, and ſaving herſelf by a rail; he by hanging by his hands, till a ſecond ladder was brought, after a firſt had proved too ſhort. Nobody knows how or where the fire began; the cataſtrophe is ſhocking beyond what one ever heard; and poor lady Moleſworth, whoſe character and conduct were the moſt amiable in the world, is univerſally lamented. Your good hearts will feel this in the moſt lively manner.

I go early to Strawberry to-morrow, giving up the new opera, madame de Boufflers, and Mr. Wilkes, and all the preſent topics. Wilkes, whoſe caſe has taken its place by the ſide of the ſeven biſhops, calls himſelf the eighth—not quite improperly, when one remembers that ſir Jonathan Trelawney, who ſwore like a trooper, was one of thoſe confeſſors.

There is a good letter in the Gazetteer on the other ſide, pretending to be written by lord Temple, and adviſing Wilkes to cut his throat, like lord E. as it would be of infinite ſervice to their cauſe. There are publiſhed, too, three volumes of lady Mary Wortley's letters, which I believe are genuine, and are not unentertaining—But have you read Tom Hervey's letter to the late king? That beats every thing for madneſs, horrid indecency, and folly, and yet has ſome charming and ſtriking paſſages.

I have adviſed Mrs. H. to inform againſt Jack, as writing in the North Briton; he will then be ſhut up in the Tower, and may be ſhown for old Nero [1]. Adieu!

Yours ever,

HOR. WALPOLE.

LETTER LV.

Arlington-ſtreet, May 21, 1763.

YOU have now ſeen the celebrated madame de Boufflers [2]. I dare ſay you could in that ſhort time perceive that ſhe is agreeable, but I dare ſay too that you will agree with me that vivacity is by no means the partage of the French—bating the étourderie of the mouſquetaires and of a high-dried petit-maître or two, they appear to me more lifeleſs than Germans. I cannot comprehend how they came by the character of a lively people. Charles Townſhend has more ſal volatile in him than the whole nation. Their king is taciturnity itſelf; Mirepoix was a walking mummy; Nivernois has about as much life as a ſick favourite child; and monſieur Duſſon is a good-humoured country gentleman, who has been drunk the day before, and is upon his good behaviour. If I have the gout next year and am thoroughly humbled by it again, I will go to Paris, that I may be upon a level with them: at preſent, I am *trop fou* to keep them company. Mind, I do not inſiſt that, to have ſpirits, a nation ſhould be as frantic as poor ———, as abſurd as the ducheſs of Queenſberry, or as daſhing as the Virgin Chudleigh. Oh, that you had been at her ball t'other night! Hiſtory could never deſcribe it and keep its countenance. The queen's real birth-day, you know, is not kept: this maid of honour kept it—nay, while the court is in mourning, expected people to be out of mourning; the queen's family really was ſo, lady Northumberland having deſired leave for them. A ſcaffold was erected in Hyde-park for fireworks. To ſhow the illuminations without to more advantage, the company were received in an apartment

[1] An old lion there, ſo called.

[2] The comteſſe de Boufflers, who, ſince the revolution in France of the year 1789, reſided in England for two or three years with her daughter-in-law the comteſſe Emilie de Boufflers.

totally

totally dark, where they remained for two hours—If they gave riſe to any more birth-days, who could help it? The fireworks were fine, and ſucceeded well. On each ſide of the court were two large ſcaffolds for the Virgin's tradeſpeople. When the fireworks ceaſed, a large ſcene was lighted in the court, repreſenting their majeſties; on each ſide of which were ſix obeliſks, painted with emblems, and illuminated; mottos beneath in Latin and Engliſh: 1. For the prince of Wales, a ſhip, Multorum ſpes. 2. For the princeſs dowager, a bird of Paradiſe, and *two* little ones, *Meos ad ſidera tollo*. People ſmiled. 3. Duke of York, a temple, Virtuti & honori. 4. Princeſs Auguſta, a bird of Paradiſe, Non habet parem—unluckily this was tranſlated, *I have no peer*. People laughed out, conſidering where this was exhibited. 5. The three younger princes, an orange-tree, Promittit & dat. 6. The two younger princeſſes, the flower crown-imperial. I forget the Latin: the tranſlation was ſilly enough, Baſhful in youth, graceful in age. The lady of the houſe made many apologies for the poorneſs of the performance, which ſhe ſaid was only oil-paper, painted by one of her ſervants; but it really was fine and pretty. The duke of Kingſton was in a frock, comme chez lui. Behind the houſe was a cenotaph for the princeſs Elizabeth, a kind of illuminated cradle; the motto, All the honours the dead can receive. This burying-ground was a ſtrange codicil to a feſtival; and, what was more ſtrange, about one in the morning, this ſarcophagus burſt out into crackers and guns. The margrave of Anſpach began the ball with the Virgin. The ſupper was moſt ſumptuous.

You aſk, when I propoſe to be at Park-place. I aſk, Shall not you come to the duke of Richmond's maſquerade, which is the 2d of June? I cannot well be with you till towards the end of that month.

The incloſed is a letter which I wiſh you to read attentively, to give me your opinion upon it, and return it. It is from a ſenſible friend of mine in Scotland, who has lately correſponded with me on the incloſed ſubjects, which I little underſtand; but I promiſed to communicate his ideas to George Grenville, if he would ſtate them—Are they practicable? I wiſh much that ſomething could be done for thoſe brave ſoldiers and ſailors, who will all come to the gallows, unleſs ſome timely proviſion can be made for them.—The former part of his letter relates to a grievance he complains of, that

that men who have *not* ſerved, are admitted into garriſons, and then into our hoſpitals, which were deſigned for meritorious ſufferers [1]. Adieu!

Yours ever,

HOR. WALPOLE.

LETTER LVI.

Arlington-ſtreet, Saturday evening.

NO, indeed I cannot conſent to your being a dirty Philander [2]. Pink and white, white and pink! and both as greaſy as if you had gnawed a leg of a fowl on the ſtairs of the Hay-market with a bunter from the Cardigan's Head! For heaven's ſake don't produce a tight roſe-coloured thigh, unleſs you intend to prevent my lord ———'s return from Harrowgate. Write, the moment you receive this, to your taylor to get you a ſober purple domino as I have done, and it will make you a couple of ſummer waiſtcoats.

In the next place, have your ideas a little more correct about us of times paſt. We did not furniſh our cottages with chairs of ten guineas a piece. Ebony for a farm-houſe [3]! So, two hundred years hence ſome man of taſte will build a hamlet in the ſtyle of George the third, and beg his couſin Tom Hearne to get him ſome chairs for it of mahogany gilt, and covered with blue damaſk. Adieu! I have not a minute's time more.

Yours, &c.

HOR. WALPOLE.

[1] As this letter is not to be found, no farther light can be thrown on its contents.

[2] At the maſquerade given by the duke of Richmond on the 6th of June, 1763, at his houſe in Privy-garden.

[3] Mr. Conway was at this time fitting up the little building beautifully ſituated on the brow of the hill at Park-place, and called the Cottage, though indeed containing a very good room towards the proſpect in the Gothic ſtyle, for which he had conſulted Mr. Walpole on the propriety of ebony chairs. E.

LETTER

LETTER LVII.

Strawberry-hill, Auguſt 9, 1763.

MY gallery claims your promiſe; the painters and gilders finiſh to-morrow, and next day it waſhes its hands. You talked of the 15th; ſhall I expect you then, and the counteſs[1], and the conteſſina[2], and the baroneſs[3]?

Lord Digby is to be married immediately to the pretty miſs Fielding; and Mr. Boothby, they ſay, to lady Mary Douglas. What more news I know I cannot ſend you; for I have had it from lady Denbigh and lady Blandford[4], who have ſo confounded names, genders, and circumſtances, that I am not ſure whether prince Ferdinand is not going to be married to the Hereditary Prince. Adieu!

Yours ever,

HOR. WALPOLE.

P. S. If you want to know more of me, you may read a whole column of abuſe upon me in the Public Ledger of Thurſday laſt; where they inform me that the Scotch cannot be ſo ſenſible as the Engliſh, becauſe they have not ſuch good writers. Alack! I am afraid *the moſt ſenſible* men in any country do *not* write.

I had writ this laſt night. This morning I receive your paper of evaſions, perfide que vous êtes! You may let it alone, you will never ſee any thing like my gallery—And then to aſk me to leave it the inſtant it is finiſhed! I never heard ſuch a requeſt in my days!—Why, all the earth is begging to come to ſee it: as Edging ſays, I have had offers enough from blue and green ribbands to make me a falbala-apron. Then I have juſt refuſed to let Mrs. K—— and her biſhop be in the houſe with me, becauſe I expected all you—It is mighty well, mighty fine!—No, ſir, no, I ſhall not

[1] Of Aileſbury.
[2] Miſs Anne Seymour Conway.
[3] Elizabeth Rich, ſecond wife of George lord Lyttelton.
[4] They were both Dutch women, and ſpoke very bad Engliſh.

come;

come; nor am I in a humour to do any thing elſe you deſire: indeed, without your provoking me, I ſhould not have come into the propoſal of paying Giardini. We have been duped and cheated every winter for theſe twenty years by the undertakers of operas, and I never will pay a farthing more till the laſt moment, nor can be terrified at their puffs; I am aſtoniſhed you are. So far from frightening me, the kindeſt thing they could do, would be not to let one have a box to hear their old thread-bare voices and frippery thefts; and as for Giardini himſelf, I would not go croſs the room to hear him play to eternity. I ſhould think he could frighten nobody but lady Bingley by a refuſal.

LETTER LVIII.

Arlington-ſtreet, April 19, 1764.

I AM juſt come from the ducheſs of Argyll's[1], where I dined. General Warburton was there, and ſaid it was the report at the houſe of lords, that you are turned out—He imagined, of your regiment—but that I ſuppoſe is a miſtake for the bedchamber[2]. I ſhall hear more to-night, and lady Strafford, who brings you this, will tell you; though to be ſure you will know earlier by the poſt to-morrow. My only reaſon for writing is, to repeat to you, that whatever you do I ſhall act with you[3]. I reſent any thing done to you as to myſelf. My fortunes ſhall never be ſeparated from yours—except that ſome time or other I hope yours will be great, and I am content with mine.

The Manns go on with the buſineſs[4]—The letter you received was from Mr. Edward Mann, not from Gal's widow. Adieu! I was going to ſay, my *diſgraced* friend—How delightful to have a character ſo unſpotted, that the word *diſgrace* recoils on thoſe who diſplace you!

Yours unalterably,

HOR. WALPOLE.

[1] Widow of John Campbell, duke of Argyll. She was ſiſter to general Warburton, and had been maid of honour to queen Anne.

[2] Mr. Conway was diſmiſſed from all his employments, civil and military, for having oppoſed the miniſtry in the houſe of commons, on the queſtion of the legality of general warrants, at the time of the proſecution of Mr. Wilkes for the publication of The North Briton. E.

[3] Mr. Walpole was then in the houſe of commons, member for King's Lynn in Norfolk.

[4] Of army-clothiers.

LETTER LIX.

Strawberry-hill, Saturday night, eight o'clock, April 21, 1764.

I WRITE to you with a very bad head-ach; I have paſſed a night, for which —— and the duke of —— ſhall paſs many an uneaſy one! Notwithſtanding I heard from every body I met, that your regiment, as well as bedchamber, were taken away, I would not believe it, till laſt night the ducheſs of G—— told me, that the night before the ducheſs of ——— ſaid to her, "Are not you very ſorry for poor Mr. Conway? He has loſt every thing." When the witch of Endor pities, one knows ſhe has raiſed the devil.

I am come hither alone to put my thoughts into ſome order, and to avoid ſhowing the firſt ſallies of my reſentment, which I know you would diſapprove; nor does it become your friend to rail. My anger ſhall be a little more manly, and the plan of my revenge a little deeper laid than in peeviſh bons-mots. You ſhall judge of my indignation by its duration.

In the mean time, let me beg you, in the moſt earneſt and moſt ſincere of all profeſſions, to ſuffer me to make your loſs as light as it is in my power to make it: I have ſix thouſand pounds in the funds; accept all, or what part you want. Do not imagine I will be put off with a refuſal. The retrenchment of my expences, which I ſhall from this hour commence, will convince you that I mean to re-place your fortune as far as I can. When I thought you did not want it, I had made another diſpoſition. You have ever been the deareſt perſon to me in the world. You have ſhown that you deſerve to be ſo.—You ſuffer for your ſpotleſs integrity.—Can I heſitate a moment to ſhow that there is at leaſt one man who knows how to value you? The new will, which I am going to make, will be a teſtimonial of my own ſenſe of virtue.

One circumſtance has heightened my reſentment. If it was *not* an accident, it deſerves to heighten it. The very day on which your diſmiſſion was notified, I received an order from the treaſury for the payment of what money was due to me there. Is it poſſible that they could mean to make any diſtinction between us? Have I ſeparated myſelf from you? Is

Is there that ſpot on earth where I can be ſuſpected of having paid court? Have I even left my name at a miniſter's door, ſince you took your part? If they have dared to hint this, the pen that is now writing to you will bitterly undeceive them.

I am impatient to ſee the letters you have received, and the anſwers you have ſent. Do you come to town? If you do not, I will come to you to-morrow ſe'nnight, that is, the 29th. I give no advice on any thing, becauſe you are cooler than I am—not ſo cool, I hope, as to be inſenſible to this outrage, this villainy, this injuſtice! You owe it to your country to labour the extermination of ſuch miniſters!

I am ſo bad a hypocrite, that I am afraid of ſhowing how deeply I feel this. Yet laſt night I received the account from the ducheſs of G—— with more temper than you believe me capable of: but the agitation of the night diſordered me ſo much, that lord John Cavendiſh, who was with me two hours this morning, does not, I believe, take me for a hero. As there are ſome who I know would enjoy my mortification, and who probably deſigned I ſhould feel my ſhare of it, I wiſh to command myſelf—but that ſtruggle ſhall be added to their bill. I ſaw nobody elſe before I came away but Legge, who ſent for me and wrote the incloſed for you. He would have ſaid more both to you and lady A——, but I would not let him, as he is ſo ill: however, he thinks himſelf that he ſhall live. I hope he will! I would not loſe a ſhadow that can haunt theſe miniſters.

I feel for lady A——, becauſe I know ſhe feels juſt as I do—and it is not a pleaſant ſenſation. I will ſay no more, though I could write volumes. Adieu!

Yours, as I ever have been and ever will be,

HOR. WALPOLE.

LETTER LX.

Arlington-ſtreet, April 24, 1764.

I REJOICE that you feel your loſs[1] ſo little: that you act with dignity and propriety does not ſurpriſe me. To have you behave in character and with character, is my firſt of all wiſhes; for then it will not be in the power of man to make you unhappy. Aſk yourſelf—Is there a man in England with whom you would change character?—Is there a man in England who would not change with you? Then think how little they have taken away!

For me, I ſhall certainly conduct myſelf as you preſcribe. *Your* friend ſhall ſay and do nothing unworthy of *your* friend. You govern me in every thing but one: I mean the diſpoſition I have told you I ſhall make[2]. Nothing can alter that, but a great change in your fortune. In another point you partly miſunderſtood me. That I ſhall explain hereafter.

I ſhall certainly meet you here on Sunday, and very cheerfully. We may laugh at a world in which nothing of us will remain long but our characters. Adieu! the dear family!

Yours eternally,

HOR. WALPOLE.

LETTER LXI.

Arlington-ſtreet, June 5, 1764.

YOU will wonder that I have been ſo long without giving you any ſigns of life; yet, though not writing *to* you, I have been employed *about* you, as I have ever ſince the 21ſt of April; a day your enemies ſhall have ſome cauſe to remember. I had writ nine or ten ſheets of an anſwer to the *Addreſs to the Public*, when I received the incloſed *mandate*[3]. You will ſee

[1] Of his employments.
[2] Of leaving a conſiderable part of his fortune to Mr. Conway.
[3] The paper here alluded to does not appear.

my

my maſters order me, as a ſubaltern of the exchequer, to drop you and defend them—but you will ſee too, that, inſtead of obeying, *I have given warning.* I would not communicate any part of this tranſaction to you, till it was out of my hands, becauſe I knew your affection for me would not approve my going ſo far—But it was neceſſary. My honour required that I ſhould declare my adherence to you in the moſt authentic manner. I found that ſome perſons had dared to doubt whether I would riſk every thing for you. You ſee by theſe letters that Mr. Grenville himſelf had preſumed ſo. Even a change in the adminiſtration, however unlikely, might happen before I had any opportunity of declaring myſelf; and then thoſe who ſhould chooſe to put the worſt conſtruction, either on my actions or my ſilence, might ſay what they pleaſed. I was waiting for ſome opportunity: they have put it into my hands, and I took care not to let it ſlip. Indeed they have put more into my hands, which I have not let ſlip neither. Could I expect they would give me ſo abſurd an account of Mr. Grenville's conduct, and give it me in writing? They can only add to this obligation that of provocation to print my letter, which, however ſtrong in facts, I have taken care to make very decent in terms, becauſe it imports us to have the candid (that is, I fear, the mercenary) on our ſide.—No, that we muſt not expect, but at leaſt diſarmed.

Lord Taviſtock has flung his handkerchief to lady Elizabeth Keppel. They all go to Woburn on Thurſday, and the ceremony is to be performed as ſoon as her brother, the biſhop, can arrive from Exeter. I am heartily glad the ducheſs of Bedford does not ſet her heart on marrying me to any body; I am ſure ſhe would bring it about. She has ſome ſmall intention of coupling my niece and ———, but I have forbidden the banns.

The birth-day, I hear, was lamentably empty. We had a funereal loo laſt night in the great chamber at lady Bel Finch's: the Duke, princeſs Emily, and the ducheſs of Bedford were there. The princeſs entertained her grace with the joy the duke of Bedford will have in being a grandfather; in which reflection, I believe, the grandmotherhood was not forgotten. Adieu!

LETTER

LETTER LXII.

September 1, 1764.

I SEND you the reply to The counter-addreſs[1]; it is the loweſt of all Grub-ſtreet, and I hear is treated ſo. They have nothing better to ſay, than that I am in love with you, have been ſo theſe twenty years, and am no giant. I am a very conſtant old ſwain: they might have made the years above thirty; it is ſo long I have had the ſame unalterable friendſhip for you, independent of being near relations and bred up together. For arguments, ſo far from any new ones, the man gives up or denies moſt of the former. I own I am rejoiced not only to ſee how little they can defend themſelves, but to know the extent of their malice and revenge! They muſt be ſorely hurt, when reduced to ſuch ſcurrility. Yet there is one paragraph, however, which I think is of ——— ———'s own inditing. It ſays, *I flattered, ſolicited, and then baſely deſerted him.* I no more expected to hear myſelf accuſed of flattery, than of being in love with you; but I ſhall not laugh at the former as I do at the latter. Nothing but his own conſummate vanity could ſuppoſe I had ever ſtooped to flatter *him!* or that any man was connected with him, but who was low enough to be paid for it. Where has he one ſuch attachment?

You have your ſhare too—The miſcarriage at Rochfort now directly laid at your door: repeated inſinuations againſt your courage:—but I truſt you will mind them no more than I do, excepting the *flattery*, which I ſhall not forget, I promiſe them.

I came to town yeſterday on ſome buſineſs, and found a caſe.—When I opened it, what was there but my lady A———'s moſt beautiful of all pictures[2]! Don't imagine I can think it intended for me, or that, if it could be ſo, I would hear of ſuch a thing. It is far above what can be parted with, or accepted. I am ſerious—there is no letting ſuch a picture, when one has accompliſhed it, go from where one can ſee it every day.

[1] A pamphlet wrote by Mr. Walpole, in anſwer to another, called "*An addreſs to the public on the late diſmiſſal of a general officer.*" The counter addreſs is publiſhed in the ſecond volume of this edition. E.

[2] A landſcape executed in worſteds by lady Aileſbury. It is now at Strawberry-hill.

I ſhould take the thought equally kind and friendly, but ſhe muſt let me bring it back, if I am not to do any thing elſe with it, and it came by miſtake. I am not ſo ſelfiſh to deprive her of what ſhe muſt have ſuch pleaſure in ſeeing. I ſhall have more ſatisfaction in ſeeing it at Park-place; where, in ſpite of the worſt kind of malice, I ſhall perſiſt in ſaying my heart is fixed. They may ruin me, but no calumny ſhall make me deſert you. Indeed your caſe would be completely cruel, if it was more honourable for your relations and friends to abandon you than to ſtick to you. My option is made, and I ſcorn their abuſe as much as I deſpiſe their power.

I think of coming to you on Thurſday next for a day or two, unleſs your houſe is full, or you hear from me to the contrary. Adieu!

Yours ever,

HOR. WALPOLE.

LETTER LXIII.

Strawberry-hill, October 5, 1764.

IT is over with us!—If I did not know your firmneſs, I would have prepared you by degrees; but you are a man, and can hear the worſt at once. The duke of Cumberland [1] is dead. I have heard it but this inſtant. The duke of Newcaſtle was come to breakfaſt with me, and had pulled out a letter from lord Frederick, with a hopeleſs account of the poor duke of Devonſhire. Ere I could read it, colonel Schutz called at the door and told my ſervant this fatal news! I know no more—it muſt be at Newmarket, and very ſudden; for the duke of Newcaſtle had a letter from Hodgſon, dated on Monday, which ſaid the duke was perfectly well, and his gout gone:—yes, to be ſure, into his head. Princeſs Amelia had endeavoured to prevent his going to Newmarket, having perceived great alteration in his ſpeech, as the duke of Newcaſtle had.——Well! it will not be.—Every thing fights againſt this country! Mr. Pitt muſt ſave it himſelf—or, what I do

[1] William duke of Cumberland, ſon of George the ſecond.

not

not know whether he will not like as well, ſhare in overturning its liberty—if they will admit him; which I queſtion now if they will be fools enough to do.

You ſee I write in deſpair. I am for the whole, but perfectly tranquil. We have acted with honour, and have nothing to reproach ourſelves with. We cannot combat fate. We ſhall be left almoſt alone; but I think you will no more go with the torrent than I will. Could I have foreſeen this tide of ill fortune, I would have done juſt as I have done; and my conduct ſhall ſhow I am ſatisfied I have done right. For the reſt, come what come may, I am perfectly prepared! and while there is a free ſpot of earth upon the globe, that ſhall be my country. I am ſorry it will not be this, but to-morrow I ſhall be able to laugh as uſual. What ſignifies what happens when one is ſeven-and-forty, as I am to-day?

"They tell me 'tis my birth-day"—but I will not go on with Antony, and ſay

———————— "and I'll keep it
With double pomp of ſadneſs."—

No; when they can ſmile, who ruin a great country, ſure thoſe who would have ſaved it may indulge themſelves in that cheerfulneſs which conſcious integrity beſtows. I think I ſhall come to you next week; and ſince we have no longer any plan of operations to ſettle, we will look over the map of Europe, and fix upon a pleaſant corner for our exile—for take notice, I do not deſign to fall upon my dagger, in hopes that ſome Mr. Addiſon a thouſand years hence may write a dull tragedy about me. I will write my own ſtory a little more cheerfully than he would; but I fear now I muſt not print it at my own preſs. Adieu! You was a philoſopher before you had any occaſion to be ſo: pray continue ſo; you have ample occaſion!

Yours ever,

HOR. WALPOLE.

LETTER

LETTER LXIV.

Strawberry-hill, October 13, 1764.

LORD John Cavendish has been so kind as to send me word of the duke of Devonshire's [1] legacy to you. You cannot doubt of the great joy this gives me; and yet it serves to aggravate the loss of so worthy a man! And when I feel it thus, I am sensible how much more it will add to your concern, instead of diminishing it. Yet do not wholly reflect on your misfortune. You might despise the acquisition of five thousand pounds simply; but when that sum is a public testimonial to your virtue, and bequeathed by a man so virtuous, it is a million! Measure it with the riches of those who have basely injured you, and it is still more! Why, it is glory, it is conscious innocence, it is satisfaction—it is affluence without guilt.—Oh! the comfortable sound! It is a good name in the history of these corrupt days. There it will exist, when the wealth of your and their country's enemies will be wasted, or will be an indelible blemish on their descendants.

My heart is full, and yet I will say no more. My best loves to all your opulent family. Who says virtue is not rewarded in this world? It is rewarded by virtue, and it is persecuted by the bad: Can greater honour be paid to it?

Yours ever,

HOR. WALPOLE.

LETTER LXV.

Strawberry-hill, October 29, 1764.

I AM glad you mentioned it: I would not have had you appear without your close mourning for the duke of Devonshire upon any account. I was once going to tell you of it, knowing your inaccuracy in such matters; but thought it still impossible you should be ignorant how necessary it is. Lord

[1] William, fourth duke of Devonshire. During his administration in Ireland Mr. Conway had been secretary of state there.

Strafford, who has a legacy of only 200*l.* wrote to conſult lady Suffolk. She told him, for ſuch a ſum, which only implies a ring, it was ſometimes not done; but yet adviſed him to mourn. In your caſe it is indiſpenſible; nor can you ſee any of his family without it. Beſides, it is much better on ſuch an occaſion to over, than under do. I anſwer this paragraph firſt, becauſe I am ſo earneſt not to have you blamed.

Beſides wiſhing to ſee you all, I have wanted exceedingly to come to you, having much to ſay to you; but I am confined here, that is, Mr. Chute [r] is: he was ſeized with the gout laſt Wedneſday ſe'nnight, the day he came hither to meet George Montagu, and this is the firſt day he has been out of his bed-chamber. I muſt therefore put off our meeting till Saturday, when you ſhall certainly find me in town.

We have a report here, but the authority bitter bad, that lord March is going to be married to ———. I don't believe it the leſs for our knowing nothing of it; for unleſs their daughter were breeding, and it were to ſave her character, neither —— nor —— would diſcloſe a tittle about it. Yet in charity they ſhould advertiſe it, that parents and relations, if it is ſo, may lock up all knives, ropes, laudanum, and rivers, leſt it ſhould occaſion a violent mortality among his fair admirers.

I am charmed with an anſwer I have juſt read in the papers of a poor man in Bedlam, who was ill uſed by an apprentice becauſe he would not tell him why he was confined there. The unhappy creature ſaid at laſt, "Becauſe God has deprived me of a bleſſing which you never enjoyed." There never was any thing finer or more moving! Your ſenſibility will not be quite ſo much affected by a ſtory I heard t'other day of ſir Fletcher Norton. He has a mother—yes, a mother: perhaps you thought, that, like that tender urchin Love,

—— duris in cotibus *illum*
Iſmarus, aut Rhodope, aut extremi Garamantes,
Nec noſtri generis puerum nec ſanguinis edunt.

Well, Mrs. Rhodope lives in a mighty ſhabby hovel at Preſton, which the dutiful and affectionate ſir Fletcher began to think not ſuitable to the dig-

[r] John Chute, eſq. of the Vine in Hampſhire.

nity of one who has the honour of being his parent. He cheapened a better, in which were two pictures which the proprietor valued at threescore pounds. The *attorney* insisted on having them for nothing, as fixtures—the landlord refused, the bargain was broken off, and the dowager madam Norton remains in her original hut. I could tell you another story which you would not dislike; but as it might hurt the person concerned, if it was known, I shall not send it by the post; but will tell it you when I see you. Adieu!

Yours most cordially,

HOR. WALPOLE.

LETTER LXVI.

Wednesday noon, July 3, 1765.

THE footing part of my dance with my shocking partner the gout is almost over. I had little pain there this last night, and got, at twice, about three hours sleep; but whenever I waked found my head very bad, which Mr. Graham thinks gouty too. The fever is still very high: but the same sage is of opinion, with my lady Londonderry, that if it was a fever from death, I should die; but as it is only a fever from the gout, I shall live. I think so too, and hope that, like the duke and duchess of Marlborough, they are so inseparable, that when one goes, t'other will.

Tell lady A———, I fear it will be long before I shall be able to compass all your terraces again.

The weather is very hot, and I have the comfort of a window open all day. I have got a bushel of roses too, and a new scarlet nightingale, which does *not* sing Nancy Dawson from morning to night. Perhaps you think all these poor pleasures; but you are ignorant what a provocative the gout is, and what charms it can bestow on a moment's amusement! Oh! it beats all the refinements of a Roman sensualist. It has made even my watch a darling plaything; I strike it as often as a child does. Then the disorder of my sleep diverts me when I am awake. I dreamt that I went to see

madame de Bentheim at Paris, and that ſhe had the prettieſt palace in the world, built like a pavilion, of yellow laced with blue; that I made love to her daughter, whom I called mademoiſelle bleüe et jaune, and thought it very clever.

My next reverie was very ſerious, and laſted half an hour after I was awake; which you will perhaps think a little light-headed, and ſo do I. I thought Mr. Pitt had had a conference with madame de Bentheim, and granted all her demands. I rung for Louis at ſix in the morning, and wanted to get up and inform myſelf of what had been kept ſo ſecret from me. You muſt know, that all theſe viſions of madame de Bentheim flowed from George Selwyn telling me laſt night, that ſhe had carried moſt of her points, and was returning. What ſtuff I tell you!—But, alas! I have nothing better to do, ſitting on my bed, and wiſhing to forget how brightly the ſun ſhines, when I cannot be at Strawberry.

LETTER LXVII.

Amiens[1], Wedneſday, Sept. 11, 1765.

BIAU COUSIN,

I HAVE had a very proſperous journey till juſt at entering this city. I eſcaped a prince of Naſſau at Dover, and ſickneſs at ſea, though the voyage laſted ſeven hours and a half. I have recovered my ſtrength ſurpriſingly in the time; though almoſt famiſhed for want of clean victuals, and comfortable tea and bread and butter. Half a mile from hence I met a coach and four with an equipage of French, and a lady in pea-green and ſilver, a ſmart hat and feather, and two ſuivantes. My reaſon told me it was the archbiſhop's concubine; but luckily my heart whiſpered that it was lady —— ——. I jumped out of my chaiſe—yes, jumped, as Mrs. Nugent ſaid of herſelf, fell on my knees, and ſaid my firſt ave-maria, gratiâ plena! We juſt ſhot a few politics flying—heard that madame de Mirepoix had toaſted me t'other day in tea—ſhook hands, forgot to weep, and parted; ſhe to

[1] Mr. Walpole having had a long and dangerous fit of gout in the antecedent ſummer, was adviſed to try change of air for the reeſtabliſhment of his health, and left London on his way to Paris, September the 9th, 1765. E.

the

the hereditary princeſs, I to this inn, where is actually reſident the ducheſs of Douglas. We are not likely to have any intercourſe, or I would declare myſelf a Hamilton [1].

I find this country wonderfully enriched ſince I ſaw it four-and-twenty years ago. Boulogne is grown quite a plump ſmug town, with a number of new houſes. The worſt villages are tight, and wooden ſhoes have diſappeared. Mr. Pitt and the city of London may fancy what they will, but France will not come a-begging to the Manſion-houſe this year or two. In truth, I impute this air of opulence a little to ourſelves. The crumbs that fall from the chaiſes of the ſwarms of Engliſh that viſit Paris, muſt have contributed to fatten this province. It is plain I muſt have little to do when I turn my hand to calculating: but here is my obſervation. From Boulogne to Paris it will coſt me near ten guineas; but then conſider, I travel alone, and carry Louis moſt part of the way in the chaiſe with me. Nos autres milords Anglois are not often ſo frugal. Your brother [2], laſt year, had ninety-nine Engliſh to dinner on the king's birth-day. How many of them do you think dropped ſo little as ten guineas on this road? In ſhort, there are the ſeeds of a calculation for you; and if you will water them with a torrent of words, they will produce ſuch a diſſertation, that you will be able to vie with George Grenville next ſeſſion in plans of national œconomy—only be ſure not to tax travelling till I come back, loaded with purchaſes; nor, till then, propagate my ideas. It will be time enough for me to be thrifty of the nation's money, when I have ſpent all my own.

Clermont, 12th.

WHILE they are getting my dinner, I continue my journal. The ducheſs of Douglas (for Engliſh are generally the moſt extraordinary perſons that we meet with even out of England) left Amiens before me, on her way home. You will not gueſs what ſhe carries with her—Oh! nothing that will hurt our manufactures; nor what George Grenville himſelf would ſeize. One of her ſervants died at Paris; ſhe had him embalmed, and the body is tied before her chaiſe:—a droll way of being chief mourner!

[1] The memorable cauſe between the houſes of Douglas and Hamilton was then pending.

[2] Francis earl of Hertford, then embaſſador at Paris.

For

For a French abſurdity, I have obſerved that along the great roads they plant walnut-trees, but ſtrip them up for firing. It is like the owl that bit off the feet of mice, that they might lie ſtill and fatten.

At the foot of this hill is an old-faſhioned chateau belonging to the duke of Fitz-James, with a *parc en quincunx* and clipped hedges. We ſaw him walking in his waiſtcoat and ribband, very well powdered; a figure like Guerchy. I cannot ſay his ſeat rivals Goodwood or Euſton [1]. I ſhall lie at Chantilly to-night, for I did not ſet out till ten this morning—not becauſe I could not, as you will ſuſpect, get up ſooner—but becauſe all the horſes in the country have attended the queen to Nancy [2]. Beſides, I have a little underplot of ſeeing Chantilly and St. Denis in my way; which you know one could not do in the dark to-night, nor in winter, if I return then.

Hotel de feue madame l'Ambaſſadrice d'Angleterre [3], Sept. 13, 7 o'clock.

I AM juſt arrived. My lady Hertford is not at home, and lady Anne [4] will not come out of her burrow: ſo I have juſt time to finiſh this before madame returns; and Brian ſets out to-night and will carry it. I find I ſhall have a great deal to ſay: formerly I obſerved nothing, and now remark every thing minutely. I have already fallen in love with twenty things, and in hate with forty. Adieu!

Yours ever,

HOR. WALPOLE.

[1] The duc de Fitz-James's father, marechal Berwick, was a natural ſon of James II. Mr. Walpole therefore compares his country ſeat with thoſe of the dukes of Richmond and Grafton, ſimilar deſcendants from his brother Charles II. E.

[2] Staniſlaus king of Poland, father to the queen of Louis XV. lived at Nancy.

[3] Lord Hertford was at this time recalled, and the duke of Richmond appointed to ſucceed him in the embaſſy at Paris.

[4] Lady Anne Seymour Conway, afterwards married to the earl of Drogheda.

LETTER

LETTER LXVIII.

Paris, October 6, 1765.

I AM glad to find you grow juſt, and that you do conceive at laſt, that I could do better than ſtay in England for politics. Tenez, mon enfant, as the ducheſſe de la Ferté ſaid to madame Staal [1]; comme il n'y a que moi au monde qui aie toujours raiſon, I will be very reaſonable; and as you have made this conceſſion to me, who knew I was in the right, I will not expect you to anſwer all my *reaſonable* letters. If you ſend a bullying letter to the king of Spain [2], or to *choſe*, my neighbour here [3], I will conſider them as written to myſelf, and ſubſtract ſo much from your bill—Nay, I will accept a line from lady A——— now and then in part of payment. I ſhall continue to write as the wind ſets in my pen; and do own my babble does not demand much reply.

For ſo reaſonable a perſon as I am, I have changed my mind very often about this country. The firſt five days I was in violent ſpirits—then came a diſmal cloud of whiſk and literature, and I could not bear it. At preſent I begin, very *Engliſhly* indeed, to eſtabliſh a right to my own way. I laugh, and talk nonſenſe, and make them hear me. There are two or three houſes where I go quite at my eaſe, am never aſked to touch a card, nor hold diſſertations. Nay, I don't pay homage to their authors. Every woman has one or two planted in her houſe, and God knows how they water them. The old preſident Henault is the pagod at madame du Deffand's, an old blind debauchée of wit, where I ſupped laſt night. The preſident is very near deaf, and much nearer ſuperannuated. He ſits by the table: the miſtreſs of the houſe, who formerly was his, inquires after every diſh on the table, is told who has eaten of which, and then bawls the bill of fare of every individual into the preſident's ears. In ſhort, every mouthful is proclaimed, and ſo is every blunder I make againſt grammar. Some that I make on purpoſe, ſucceed; and one of them is to be reported to the queen to-day by Henault, who is her great favourite. I had been at Verſailles; and having been much taken notice of by her majeſty, I ſaid, alluding to madame de

[1] See Memoires de madame de Staal (the firſt authoreſs of that name), publiſhed with the reſt of her works in three ſmall volumes. E.

[2] Mr. Conway was now ſecretary of ſtate for the foreign department.

[3] The king of France, Louis XV.

Sevigné,

Sevigné, *La reine eſt le plus grand roi du monde.* You may judge if I am in poſſeſſion by a ſcene that paſſed after ſupper. Sir James Macdonald[1] had been mimicking Hume: I told the women, who, beſides the miſtreſs, were the ducheſſe de la Valiere, madame de Forcalquier, and a demoiſelle, that to be ſure they would be glad to have a ſpecimen of Mr. Pitt's manner of ſpeaking; and that nobody mimicked him ſo well as Elliot[2]. They firmly believed it, teaſed him for an hour, and at laſt ſaid he was the rudeſt man in the world not to oblige them. It appeared the more ſtrange, becauſe here every body ſings, reads their own works in public, or attempts any one thing without heſitation or capacity. Elliot ſpeaks miſerable French; which added to the diverſion.

I had had my ſhare of diſtreſs in the morning, by going through the operation of being preſented to the whole royal family, down to the little Madame's pap-dinner, and had behaved as ſillily as you will eaſily believe; hiding myſelf behind every mortal. The queen called me up to her dreſſing-table, and ſeemed mightily diſpoſed to goſſip with me; but inſtead of enjoying my glory like madame de Sevigné, I ſlunk back into the crowd after a few queſtions. She told monſieur de Guerchy of it afterwards, and that I had run away from her, but ſaid ſhe would have her revenge at Fontainebleau—So I muſt go thither, which I did not intend. The king, dauphin, dauphineſs, meſdames, and the wild beaſt, did not ſay a word to me. Yes, the wild beaſt, he of the Gevaudan. He is killed, and actually in the queen's anti-chambre, where he was exhibited to us with as much parade as if it was Mr. Pitt. It is an exceedingly large wolf, and, the connoiſſeurs ſay, has twelve teeth more than any wolf ever had ſince the days of Romulus's wet-nurſe. The critics deny it to be the true beaſt; and I find moſt people think the beaſt's name is *legion, for there are many.* He was covered with a ſheet, which two chaſſeurs lifted up for the foreign miniſters and ſtrangers. I dined at the duke of Praſlin's with five-and-twenty tomes of the corps diplomatique; and after dinner was preſented, by monſieur de Guerchy, to the duc de Choiſeul. The duc de Praſlin is as like his own letters in D'Eon's book as he can ſtare; that is, I believe, a very ſilly fellow. His wiſdom is of the grave kind. His couſin, the firſt

[1] An elder brother of ſir A. Macdonald, the preſent lord chief baron of the exchequer. He died at Rome the year following, leaving behind him a diſtinguiſhed character for every mental accompliſhment.

[2] Sir Gilbert Elliot of Minto.

miniſter, is a little volatile being, whoſe countenance and manner had nothing to frighten me for my country. I ſaw him but for three ſeconds, which is as much as he allows to any one body or thing. Monſieur de Guerchy[1], whoſe goodneſs to me is inexpreſſible, took the trouble of walking every where with me, and carried me particularly to ſee the new office for ſtate papers—I wiſh I could ſend it you. It is a large building, diſpoſed like an hoſpital, with the moſt admirable order and method. Lodgings for every officer; his name and buſineſs written over his door. In the body is a perſpective of ſeven or eight large chambers: each is painted with emblems, and wainſcoted with preſſes with wired doors and crimſon curtains. Over each preſs, in golden letters, the country to which the pieces relate, as Angleterre, Allemagne, &c. Each room has a large funnel of bronze with or moulu, like a column, to air the papers and preſerve them. In ſhort, it is as magnificent as uſeful.

From thence I went to ſee the reſervoir of pictures at monſieur de Marigny's. They are what are not diſpoſed of in the palaces, though ſometimes changed with others. This *refuſe*, which fills many rooms from top to bottom, is compoſed of the moſt glorious works of Raphael, L. da Vinci, Giorgione, Titian, Guido, Correggio, &c. Many pictures, which I knew by their prints, without an idea where they exiſted, I found there.

The duc de Nivernois is extremely obliging to me. I have ſupped at madame de Bentheim's, who has a very fine houſe, and a woful huſband. She is much livelier than any Frenchwoman. The livelieſt man I have ſeen is the duc de Duras: he is ſhorter and plumper than lord Halifax, but very like him in the face. I am to ſup with the Duffons on Sunday. In ſhort, all that have been in England are exceedingly diſpoſed to repay any civilities they received there. Monſieur de Caraman wrote from the country to excuſe his not coming to ſee me, as his wife is on the point of being brought-to-bed, but begged I would come to them—So I would, if I was a man-midwife: but though they are eaſy on ſuch heads, I am not uſed to it, and cannot make a party of pleaſure of a labour.

Wilkes arrived here two days ago, and announced that he was going

[1] He had been embaſſador in England.

miniſter to Conſtantinople. To-day I hear he has lowered his credentials, and talks of going to England, if he can make his peace[1]. I thought, by the manner in which this was mentioned to me, that the perſon meant to ſound me: but I made no anſwer; for, having given up politics in England, I certainly did not come to tranſact them here. He has not been to make me the firſt viſit, which, as the laſt arrived, depends on him: ſo, never having ſpoken to him in my life, I have no call to ſeek him. I avoid all politics ſo much, that I had not heard one word here about Spain. I ſuppoſe my ſilence paſſes for very artful myſtery, and puzzles the miniſters, who keep ſpies on the moſt inſignificant foreigner. It would have been lucky if I had been as watchful. At Chantilli I loſt my portmanteau with half my linen; and the night before laſt I was robbed of a new frock, waiſtcoat and breeches, laced with gold, a white and ſilver waiſtcoat, black velvet breeches, a knife and a book. Theſe are expences I did not expect, and by no means entering into my ſyſtem of extravagance.

I am very ſorry for the death of lord Ophaly, and for his family. I knew the poor young man himſelf but little, but he ſeemed extremely good-natured. What the duke of Richmond will do for a hotel, I cannot conceive. Adieu!

Yours ever,

HOR. WALPOLE.

LETTER LXIX.

Paris, October 28, 1765.

MR. Hume[2] ſends me word from Fontainebleau, that your brother, ſome time in the ſpring of 1764, tranſmitted to the Engliſh miniſtry *a pretty exact and very authentic account of the French finances*; theſe are his words: *and that it will be eaſily found among his lordſhip's diſpatches of that period.* To the other queſtion I have received no anſwer; I ſuppoſe he has not yet been able to inform himſelf.

[1] After his outlawry.

[2] The celebrated David Hume was ſecretary of embaſſy to the earl of Hertford during his reſidence at Paris.

This

This goes by an Engliſh coachman of count Lauragais, ſent over to buy more horſes: therefore I ſhall write a little miniſterially, and, perhaps, ſurpriſe you, if you are not already appriſed of things in the light I ſee them.

The dauphin will probably hold out very few days. His death, that is, the near proſpect of it, fills *the philoſophers* with the greateſt joy, as it was feared he would endeavour the reſtoration of the jeſuits. You will think the ſentiments of *the philoſophers* very odd *ſtate-news*—but do you know who *the philoſophers* are, or what the term means here? In the firſt place, it comprehends almoſt every body; and in the next, means men, who avowing war againſt popery, aim, many of them, at a ſubverſion of all religion, and ſtill many more, at the deſtruction of regal power[1]. How do you know this? you will ſay; you, who have been but ſix weeks in France, three of which you have been confined to your chamber. True: but in the firſt period I went every where, and heard nothing elſe; in the latter, I have been extremely viſited, and have had long and explicit converſations with many, who think as I tell you, and with a few of the other ſide, who are no leſs perſuaded that there are ſuch intentions. In particular, I had two officers here t'other night, neither of them young, whom I had difficulty to keep from a ſerious quarrel, and who, in the heat of the diſpute, informed me of much more than I could have learnt with great pains.

As a proof that my ideas are not quite viſions, I ſend you a moſt curious paper[2]; ſuch as I believe no *magiſtrate* would have pronounced in the time of Charles I. I ſhould not like to have it known to come from me, nor any part of the intelligence I ſend you; with regard to which, if you think it neceſſary to communicate it to particular perſons, I deſire my name may be ſuppreſſed. I tell it you for *your* ſatisfaction and information, but would not have any body elſe think that I do any thing here but amuſe myſelf: my amuſements indeed are triſte enough, and conſiſt wholly in trying to get well; but my recovery moves very ſlowly. I have not yet had any thing but cloth ſhoes on, live ſometimes a whole day on warm water, and am never tolerably well till twelve or one o'clock.

[1] The reader, in the year 1798, will be ſtruck with this ſuccinct account of *les philoſophes François*, their doctrines and their intentions, given in the year 1765, which their ſubſequent conduct has proved ſo accurately true. E.

[2] This paper does not appear.

I have had another letter from ſir Horace Mann, who has much at heart his ribband and increaſe of character. Conſequently you know, as I love him ſo much, I muſt have them at heart too. Count Lorenzi is recalled, becauſe here they think it neceſſary to ſend a Frenchman of higher rank to the new Grand Ducal court. I wiſh ſir Horace could be raiſed on this occaſion. For his ribband, his promiſe is ſo old and ſo poſitive, that it is quite a hardſhip.

Pray put the colonies in good humour; I ſee they are violently diſpoſed to the new adminiſtration.

I have not time to ſay more, nor more to ſay if I had time; ſo good night. Let me know if you receive this, and how ſoon: it goes the day after to-morrow. Various reports ſay, the duke of Richmond comes this week. I ſent you a letter by monſieur de Guerchy.

Duſſon, I hear, goes embaſſador to Poland. Tell lady A——— that I have five or ſix little parcels, though not above one for her, of laces and ribbands, which lady C—— left with me; but how to convey them the lord knows.

Yours ever,

HOR. WALPOLE.

LETTER LXX.

Paris, November 29, 1765.

AS I anſwered your ſhort letter with a very long one, I ſhall be ſhorter in anſwer to your long, which I received late laſt night from Fontainebleau: it is not very neceſſary; but as lord William Gordon ſets out for England on Monday, I take that opportunity.

The duke of R——— tells me that Choiſeul has promiſed every thing. I wiſh it may be performed, and *ſpeedily*, as it will give you an opportunity of opening the parliament with great eclat. My opinion you know is, that this is the moment for puſhing them and obtaining.

Thank you for all you ſay about my gout. We have had a week of very hard froſt, that has done me great good, and rebraced me. The ſwelling of my legs is quite gone. What has done me more good, is having entirely left off tea, to which I believe the weakneſs of my ſtomach was owing, having had no ſickneſs ſince. In ſhort, I think I am cured of every thing but my fears. You talk coolly of going as far as Naples, and propoſe my going with you. I would not go ſo far, if Naples was the direct road to the new Jeruſalem. I have no thought or wiſh, but to get home, and be quiet for the reſt of my days, which I ſhall moſt certainly do the firſt moment the ſeaſon will let me; and if I once get to London again, ſhall be ſcarce tempted ever to lie in an inn more. I have refuſed to go to Aubigné, though I ſhould lie but one night on the road. You may gueſs what I have ſuffered, when I am grown ſo timorous about my health.—However, I am again reverted to my ſyſtem of water, and trying to recover my hardineſs—but nothing has at all ſoftened me towards phyſicians.

You ſee I have given you a ſerious anſwer, though I am rather diſpoſed to ſmile at your propoſal. Go to Italy! for what?—Oh! to quit—do you know, I think that as idle a thought as the other. Pray ſtay where you are, and do ſome good to your country, or retire when you cannot—but don't put your finger in your eye and cry after the holidays and ſugar-plums of Park-place. You have engaged and muſt go through, or be hindered. Could you tell the world the reaſon? Would not all men ſay you had found yourſelf incapable of what you had undertaken? I have no patience with your thinking ſo idly. It would be a reflection on your underſtanding and character, and a want of reſolution unworthy of you.

My advice is, to aſk for the firſt great government that falls, if you will not take your regiment again; to continue acting vigorouſly and honeſtly where you are. Things are never ſtable enough in our country to give you a proſpect of a long ſlavery. Your defect is irreſolution. When you have taken your poſt, act up to it; and if you are driven from it, your retirement will then be as honourable (and more ſatisfactory) than your adminiſtration. I ſpeak frankly, as my friendſhip for you directs. My way of acting (though a private inſtance) is agreeable to my doctrine. I determined, whenever our oppoſition ſhould be over, to have done with politics; and you ſee I have adhered to my reſolution by coming hither;

and therefore you may be convinced that I ſpeak my thoughts. I don't aſk your pardon, becauſe I ſhould be forced to aſk my own if I did not tell you what I think the beſt for you. You have life and Park-place enough to come, and *you* have not had five months of gout. Make yourſelf independent honourably, which you may do by a government; but if you will take my advice, don't accept a miniſterial place when you ceaſe to be a miniſter. The former is a reward due to your profeſſion and ſervices, the latter is a degradation. You know the haughtineſs of my ſpirit; I give you no advice but what I would follow.

I ſent lady A—— *the Orpheline leguée*; a poor performance; but the ſubject made me think ſhe would like to ſee it. I am over head and ears at count Caylus's auction, and have bought half of it for a ſong—but I am ſtill in greater felicity and luck, having diſcovered, by mere accident, a portrait of count Grammont, after having been in ſearch of one theſe fifteen years, and aſſured there was no ſuch thing. A-propos, I promiſed you my own: but beſides that there is nobody here that excels in painting ſkeletons; ſeriouſly, their painters are bitter bad, and as much inferior to Reynolds and Ramſay, as Hudſon to Vandyck. I had rather ſtay till my return. Adieu!

Yours ever,

HOR. WALPOLE.

LETTER LXXI.

Paris, December 5, 1765.

I HAVE not above a note's worth to ſay; but as lord Oſſory ſets out tomorrow, I juſt ſend you a line.

The dauphin, if he is ſtill alive, which ſome folks doubt, is kept ſo only by cordials; though the biſhop of Glandeve has aſſured the queen that he had God's own word for his recovery, which ſhe ſtill believes, whether her ſon is dead or not.

The remonſtrance of the parliament of Paris, on the diſſolution of that of Bretagne, is very decent; they are to have an audience next week. They do not touch on Chalotais, becauſe the accuſation againſt him is for treaſon. What do you think that treaſon is? A correſpondence with Mr. Pitt, to whom he is made to ſay, *that Rennes is nearer to London than Paris.* It is now believed that the anonymous letters, ſuppoſed to be written by Chalotais, were forged by a jeſuit—thoſe to Mr. Pitt could not have even ſo good an author.

The duke of Richmond is ſtill at Aubigné; I wonder he ſtays, for it is the hardeſt froſt alive. Mr. Hume does not go to Ireland, where your brother finds he would by no means be welcome.—I have a notion he will ſtay here till your brother's return.

The duc de Praſlin, it is ſaid, will retire at Chriſtmas. As La Borde, the great banker of the court, is trying to retire too, my couſin, who is much connected with La Borde, ſuſpects that Choiſeul is not very firm himſelf.

I have ſupped with monſieur de Maurepas, and another night with marſhal Richelieu: the firſt is extremely agreeable and *ſenſible;* and, I am glad, not *Miniſter.* The other is an old piece of tawdry, worn out, but endeavouring to bruſh itſelf up; and put me in mind of lord Cheſterfield, for they laugh before they know what he has ſaid—and are in the right, for I think they would not laugh afterwards.

I ſend lady A—— the words and muſic of the prettieſt opera comique in the world—I wiſh I could ſend her the actors too. Adieu!

Yours ever,

HOR. WALPOLE.

December 9th.

Lord Oſſory put off his journey; which ſtopped this letter, and it will now go by Mr. Andr. Stuart.

The

The face of things is changed here, which I am impatient to tell you, that you may ſee it is truth, not ſyſtem, which I pique myſelf on ſending you. The vigour of the court has frightened the parliaments. That of Pau has ſubmitted. The procureurs, &c. of Rennes, who, it was ſaid, would not plead before the new commiſſion, were told, that if they did not plead the next day they ſhould be hanged without a trial—No bribe ever operated faſter!

I heard t'other day, that ſome Spaniſh miniſter, I forget his name, being dead, Squillace would take his department, and Grimaldi have that of the Weſt Indies.—He is the worſt that could have it, as we have no greater enemy.

The dauphin is certainly alive, but in the moſt ſhocking way poſſible; his bones worn through his ſkin, a great ſwelling behind, and ſo relaxed, that his inteſtines appear from that part; and yeſterday the mortification was ſuſpected.

I have received a long letter from lady A——, for which I give her a thouſand thanks; and would anſwer it directly, if I had not told you every earthly thing I know.

The duke and ducheſs[1] are, I hear, at Fontainebleau: the moment they return, I will give the ducheſs lady A——'s commiſſion.

LETTER LXXII.

Paris, January 12, 1766.

I HAVE received your letter by general Vernon, and another, to which I have writ an anſwer, but was diſappointed of a conveyance I expected. You ſhall have it with additions, by the firſt meſſenger that goes; but I cannot ſend it by the poſt, as I have ſpoken very freely of ſome perſons you

[1] Of Richmond.

name,

name, in which we agree thoroughly. Theſe few lines are only to tell you I am not idle in writing to you.

I almoſt repent having come hither; for I like the way of life and many of the people ſo well, that I doubt I ſhall feel more regret at leaving Paris than I expected. It would ſound vain to tell you the honours and diſtinctions I receive, and how much I am in faſhion; yet when they come from the handſomeſt women in France, and the moſt reſpectable in point of character, can one help being a little proud? If I was twenty years younger, I ſhould wiſh they were not quite ſo reſpectable. Madame de Brionne, whom I have never ſeen, and who was to have met me at ſupper laſt night at the charming madame d'Egmont's, ſent me an invitation by the latter for Wedneſday next. I was engaged, and heſitated. I was told, "Comment! ſçavez-vous que c'eſt qu'elle ne feroit pas pour toute la France?" However, leſt you ſhould dread my returning a perfect old ſwain, I ſtudy my wrinkles, compare myſelf and my limbs to every plate of larks I ſee, and treat my underſtanding with at leaſt as little mercy. Yet, do you know, my preſent fame is owing to a very trifling compoſition, but which has made incredible noiſe. I was one evening at madame Geoffrin's joking on Rouſſeau's affectations and contradictions, and ſaid ſome things that diverted them. When I came home I put them into a letter, and ſhowed it next day to Helvetius and the duc de Nivernois; who were ſo pleaſed with it, that, after telling me ſome faults in the language, which you may be ſure there were, they encouraged me to let it be ſeen. As you know I willingly laugh at mountebanks *political* or literary, let their talents be ever ſo great, I was not averſe. The copies have ſpread like wild-fire; et me voici à la mode! I expect the end of my reign at the end of the week with great compoſure. Here is the letter:

Le Roi de PRUSSE à Monſieur ROUSSEAU.

Mon cher Jean Jacques,

VOUS avez renoncé à Geneve votre patrie; vous vous êtes fait chaſſer de la Suiſſe, pays tant vanté dans vos écrits; la France vous a decreté. Venez donc chez moi: j'admire vos talents; je m'amuſe de vos reveries, qui (ſoit dit en paſſant) vous occupent trop, et trop long tems. Il faut à la fin être ſage et heureux. Vous avez fait aſſez parler de vous par

des ſingularités peu convenables à un veritable grand homme. Demontrez à vos ennemis, que vous pouvez avoir quelquefois le ſens commun: cela les fachera, ſans vous faire tort. Mes états vous offrent une retraite paiſible; je vous veux du bien, et je vous en ferai, ſi vous le trouvez bon. Mais ſi vous vous obſtiniez à rejetter mon ſecours, attendez-vous que je ne le dirai à perſonne. Si vous perſiſtez à vous creuſer l'eſprit pour trouver de nouveaux malheurs, choiſiſſez les tels que vous voudrez. Je ſuis roi, je puis vous en procurer au grè de vos ſouhaits: et ce qui ſurement ne vous arrivera pas vis à vis de vos ennemis, je ceſſerai de vous perſécuter quand vous ceſſerez de mettre votre gloire à l'être.

Votre bon ami,

FREDERIC.

The princeſſe de Ligne, whoſe mother was an Engliſhwoman, made a good obſervation to me laſt night. She ſaid, *Je ſuis roi, je puis vous procurer de malheurs*, was plainly the ſtroke of an Engliſh pen. I ſaid, then I had certainly not well imitated the character in which I wrote. You will ſay, I am a bold man to attack both Voltaire and Rouſſeau. It is true; but I ſhoot at their heel, at their vulnerable part.

I beg your pardon for taking up your time with theſe trifles. The day after to-morrow we go in cavalcade with the ducheſs[1] to her audience[2]; I have got my cravat and ſhammy ſhoes. Adieu!

Yours ever,

HOR. WALPOLE.

LETTER LXXIII.

Paris, April 6, 1766.

IN a certain city of Europe[3] it is the cuſtom to wear ſlouched hats, long cloaks and high capes. Scandal and the government called this dreſs, *going*

[1] Of Richmond.
[2] At Verſailles as embaſſadreſs.
[3] This account alludes to the inſurrection at Madrid, on the attempt of the court in the laſt reign to introduce the French dreſs in Spain. E.

in

in maſk, and pretended that it contributed to aſſaſſination. An ordonnance was publiſhed, commanding free-born hats to be cocked, cloaks to be ſhortened, and capes laid aſide. All the world obeyed for the firſt day; but the next, every thing returned into its old channel. In the evening a tumult aroſe, and cries of God bleſs the king! God bleſs the kingdom! but confuſion to the prime miniſter[1].—The word was no ſooner given, but his houſe was beſet, the windows broken, and the gates attempted. The guards came and fired on the *weavers*[2] of cloaks. The weavers returned the fire, and many fell on each ſide. As the hour of ſupper approached and the mob grew hungry, they recollected a tax upon bread, and demanded the *repeal*. The king yielded to both requeſts, and hats and loaves were ſet at liberty. The people were not contented, and ſtill inſiſted on the permiſſion of murdering the firſt miniſter; though his majeſty aſſured his faithful commons that the miniſter was never conſulted on acts of government, and was only his private friend, who ſometimes called upon him in an evening to drink a glaſs of wine and talk botany. The people were incredulous, and continued in mutiny when the laſt letters came away.

If you ſhould happen to ſuppoſe, as I did, that this *hiſtory* arrived in London, do not be alarmed; for it was at Madrid; and a nation who has borne the inquiſition cannot ſupport a cocked hat!—So neceſſary it is for governors to know when lead or a feather will turn the balance of human underſtandings, or will not.

I ſhould not have entrenched on lord George's[3] province of ſending you news of revolutions, but he is at Aubigné[4]; and I thought it right to adverti ſe you in time, in caſe you ſhould have a mind to ſend a bale of ſlouched hats to the ſupport of the mutineers. As I have worn a flapped hat all my life, when I have worn any at all, I think myſelf qualified, and would offer my ſervice to command them; but being perſuaded that you are a faithful obſerver of treaties, though a friend to repeals, I ſhall come and receive your commands in perſon. In the mean time I cannot help figuring what a pompous proteſt my lord Lyttelton might draw up in the character of an old grandee againſt the revocation of the act for cocked hats.

[1] Squillace, an Italian, whom the king was obliged to baniſh.

[2] Alluding to the mobs of ſilk-weavers which had taken place this year in London.

[3] Lord George Lenox, only brother to the duke of Richmond.

[4] The duke of Richmond's country ſeat in France.

Lady A—— forgot to ſend me word of your recovery, as ſhe promiſed; but I was ſo lucky as to hear it from other hands. Pray take care of yourſelf, and do not imagine that you are as weak as I am, and can eſcape the ſcythe, as I do by being low: your life is of more conſequence. If you don't believe me, ſtep into the ſtreet and aſk the firſt man you meet.

This is Sunday, and Thurſday is fixed for my departure; unleſs the Clairon ſhould return to the ſtage on Tueſday ſe'nnight, as is ſaid; and I do not know whether I ſhould not be tempted to borrow two or three days more, having never ſeen her: yet my lilacs pull hard, and I have not a farthing left in the world. Be ſure you do not leave a cranny open for George Grenville to wriggle in, till I have got all my things out of the cuſtom-houſe. Adieu!

Yours ever,

HOR. WALPOLE.

LETTER LXXIV.

Paris, April 8, 1766.

I SENT you a few lines by the poſt yeſterday, with the firſt accounts of the inſurrection at Madrid. I have ſince ſeen Stahremberg, the Imperial miniſter, who has had a courier from thence; and if lord Rochford has not ſent one, you will not be ſorry to know more particulars. The mob diſarmed the invalids; ſtopped all coaches, to prevent Squillace's flight; and meeting the duke de Medina Celi, forced him and the duke d'Arcos to carry their demands to the king. His moſt frightened majeſty granted them directly; on which his highneſs the people diſpatched a monk with their demands in writing, couched in four articles: the diminution of the gabel on bread and oil; the revocation of the ordonnance on hats and cloaks; the baniſhment of Squillace; and the abolition of ſome other tax, I don't know what. The king ſigned all; yet was ſtill forced to appear in a balcony, and promiſe to obſerve what he had granted. Squillace was ſent with an eſcort to Carthagena, to embark for Naples, and the firſt commis of the treaſury appointed to ſucceed him; which does not look much like obſervation of the conditions. Some ſay Enſenada is recalled, and that Grimaldi is in no good

odour with the people. If the latter and Squillace are diſmiſſed, we get rid of two enemies.

The tumult ceaſed on the grant of the demands; but the king retiring that night to Aranjuez, the inſurrection was renewed the next morning, on pretence that this flight was a breach of the capitulation. The people ſeized the gates of the capital, and permitted nobody to go out. In this ſtate were things when the courier came away. The ordonnance againſt going in diſguiſe looks as if ſome ſuſpicions had been conceived; and yet their confidence was ſo great as not to have 2000 guards in the town. The pitiful behaviour of the court makes one think that the Italians were frightened, and that the Spaniſh part of the miniſtry were not ſorry it took that turn. As I ſuppoſe there is no great city in Spain which has not at leaſt a bigger bundle of grievances than the capital, one ſhall not wonder if the puſillanimous behaviour of the king encourages them to redreſs themſelves too.

There is what is called a change of the miniſtry here; but it is only a croſſing over and figuring in. The duc de Praſlin has wiſhed to retire for ſome time; and for this laſt fortnight there has been much talk of his being replaced by the duc d'Aiguillon, the duc de Nivernois, &c.; but it is plain, though not believed till *now*, that the duc de Choiſeul is all-powerful. To purchaſe the ſtay of his couſin Praſlin, on whom he can depend, and to leave no cranny open, he has ceded the marine and colonies to the duc de Praſlin, and taken the foreign and military department himſelf. His couſin is beſides named chef du conſeil des finances; a very honourable, very dignified and very idle place, and never filled ſince the duc de Bethune had it. Praſlin's hopeful cub the viſcount, whom you ſaw in England laſt year, goes to Naples, and the marquis de Durfort to Vienna—a cold, dry, proud man, with the figure and manner of lord Cornbury.

Great matters are expected to-day from the parliament, which re-aſſembles. A mouſquetaire, his piece loaded with a lettre de cachet, went about a fortnight ago to the notary who keeps the parliamentary regiſters, and demanded them. They were refuſed—but given up, on the lettre de cachet being produced. The parliament intends to try the notary for breach of truſt, which I ſuppoſe will make his fortune; though he has not the merit of perjury like —— ——.

There

There have been inſurrections at Bourdeaux and Toulouſe, on the militia, and 27 perſons were killed at the latter: but both are appeaſed. Theſe things are ſo much in vogue, that I wonder the French do not dreſs *à la revolte*.

The queen is in a very dangerous way.

This will be my laſt letter; but I am not ſure I ſhall ſet out before the middle of next week.

Yours ever,

HOR. WALPOLE.

LETTER LXXV.

Bath, October 2, 1766.

I ARRIVED yeſterday at noon, and bore my journey perfectly well, except that I had the head-ach all yeſterday; but it is gone to-day, or at leaſt made way for a little giddineſs which the water gave me this morning at firſt. If it does not do me good very ſoon, I ſhall leave it; for I diſlike the place exceedingly, and am diſappointed in it. Their new buildings that are ſo admired, look like a collection of little hoſpitals; the reſt is deteſtable; and all crammed together, and ſurrounded with perpendicular hills that have no beauty. The river is paltry enough to be the Seine or Tyber. Oh! how unlike my lovely Thames!

I met my lord Chatham's coach yeſterday full of ſuch Grenville-looking children, that I ſhall not go to ſee him this day or two [1]; and to-day I ſpoke to lady Rockingham in the ſtreet. My lords chancellor and preſident are here, and lord and lady Powis. Lady Malpas arrived yeſterday. I ſhall viſit miſs Rich to-morrow. In the next apartment to mine lodges ——— ———. I have not ſeen him ſome years; and he is grown either mad or

[1] Mr. Walpole in general diſliked being in company with children, to whom he was little accuſtomed. E.

ſuper-

ſuperannuated, and talks without ceſſation or coherence: you would think all the articles of a dictionary were prating together at once. The Bedfords are expected this week. There are forty thouſand others that I neither know nor intend to know. In ſhort, it is living in a fair, and I am heartily ſick of it already. Adieu!

Yours ever,

HOR. WALPOLE.

LETTER LXXVI.

Bath, October 18, 1766.

YOU have made me laugh, and ſomebody elſe makes me ſtare. How can one wonder at any thing he does, when he knows ſo little of the world? I ſuppoſe the next ſtep will be to propoſe me for groom of the bed-chamber to the new duke of Cumberland. But why me? Here is that hopeful young fellow ſir John Ruſhout, the oldeſt member of the houſe, and, as extremes meet, very proper to begin again; why overlook him? However, as the ſecret is kept from me myſelf, I am perfectly eaſy about it. I ſhall call to-day or to-morrow to aſk his commands, but certainly ſhall not obey thoſe you mention.

The waters certainly are not ſo beneficial to me as at firſt: I have almoſt every morning my pain in my ſtomach. I do not pretend this to be the cauſe of my leaving Bath. The truth is, I cannot bear it any longer. You laugh at my regularity; but the contrary habit is ſo ſtrong in me, that I cannot continue ſuch ſobriety. The public rooms, and the Loo, where we play in a circle, like the hazard on twelfth-night, are inſupportable. This coming into the world again, when I am ſo weary of it, is as bad and ridiculous as moving an addreſs would be. I have no affectation, for affectation is a monſter at nine-and-forty; but if I cannot live quietly, privately, and comfortably, I am perfectly indifferent about living at all. I would not kill myſelf, for that is a philoſopher's affectation, and I will come hither again, if I muſt; but I ſhall always drive very near, before I ſubmit to

do

do any thing I do not like. In ſhort, I muſt be as fooliſh as I pleaſe, as long as I can keep without the limits of abſurdity. What has an old man to do but to preſerve himſelf from parade on one hand, and ridicule on the other? Charming youth may indulge itſelf in either, may be cenſured, will be envied, and has time to correct. Adieu!

Yours ever,

HOR. WALPOLE.

Monday evening.

You are a delightful manager of the houſe of commons, to reckon 540, inſtead of 565! Sandwich was more accurate in liſts, and would not have miſcounted 25, which are ſomething in a diviſion.

LETTER LXXVII.

Strawberry-hill, Auguſt 9, 1768.

YOU are very kind, or elſe you ſaw into my mind, and knew that I have been thinking of writing to you, but had not a pen full of matter. True, I have been in town, but I am more likely to learn news here; where at leaſt we have it like fiſh, that could not find vent in London. I ſaw nothing there but the ruins of Loo, lady Hertford's cribbage, and lord B———, like patience on a monument, ſmiling in grief. He is totally ruined, and quite charmed. Yet I heartily pity him. To Virginia he cannot be indifferent: he muſt turn their heads ſome how or other. If his graces do not captivate them, he will enrage them to fury; for I take all his douceur to be enamelled on iron.

My life is moſt uniform and void of events, and has nothing worth repeating. I have not had a ſoul with me, but accidental company now and then at dinner. Lady Holderneſs, lady Ancram, lady Mary Coke, Mrs. Anne Pitt, and Mr. Hume, dined here the day before yeſterday. They were but juſt gone, when George Selwyn, lord Bolinbroke, and ſir William Muſgrave, who had been at Hampton-court, came in, at nine at night, to drink

drink tea. They told me, what I was very glad to hear, and what I could not doubt, as they had it from the duke of Grafton himſelf, that biſhop Cornwallis goes to Canterbury. I feared it would be ———; but it ſeems he had ſecured all the back-ſtairs, and not the great ſtairs. As the laſt head of the church[1] had been on the midwife line, I ſuppoſe goody ——— had hopes; and as he had been preſident of an atheiſtical club, to be ſure Warburton did not deſpair. I was thinking it would make a good article in the papers, that three biſhops had ſupped with Nancy Parſons at Vauxhall, in their way to Lambeth. I am ſure —— would have been of the number; and ———, who told the duke of Newcaſtle, that if his grace had commanded the Blues at Minden they would have behaved better, would make no ſcruple to cry up her chaſtity.

The king of Denmark comes on Thurſday; and I go to-morrow to ſee him. It has coſt three thouſand pounds to new-furniſh an apartment for him at St. James's; and now he will not go thither, ſuppoſing it would be a confinement. He is to lodge at his own miniſter Dieden's.

Auguſtus Hervey, thinking it the bel air, is going to ſue for a divorce from the Chudleigh. He aſked lord B——— t'other day, who was his proctor, as he would have aſked for his taylor. The nymph has ſent him word, that if he proves her his wife he muſt pay her debts; and ſhe owes ſixteen thouſand pounds. This obſtacle thrown in the way, looks as if ſhe was not ſure of being ducheſs of Kingſton. The lawyers ſay, it will be no valid plea; it not appearing that ſhe was Hervey's wife, and therefore the tradeſmen could not reckon on his paying them.

Yes, it is my Gray, Gray the poet, who is made profeſſor of modern hiſtory; and I believe it is worth 500*l.* a year. I knew nothing of it till I ſaw it in the papers; but believe it was Stonehewer that obtained it for him.

Yes again; I uſe a bit of alum half as big as my nail, once or twice a week, and let it diſſolve in my mouth. I ſhould not think that uſing it oftener could be prejudicial. You ſhould inquire; but as you are in more

[1] Thomas Secker, archbiſhop of Canterbury.

hurry than I am, you ſhould certainly uſe it oftener than I do. I wiſh I could cure my lady A—— too. Ice-water has aſtoniſhing effect on my ſtomach, and removes all pain like a charm. Pray, though the one's teeth may not be ſo white as formerly, nor t'other look in perfect health, let the Daniſh king ſee ſuch good ſpecimens of the laſt age—though, by what I hear, he likes nothing but the very preſent age.—However, ſure you will both come and look at him: not that I believe he is a jot better than the apprentices that flirt to Epſom in a Tim-whiſky; but I want to meet you in town.

I don't very well know what I write, for I hear a caravan on my ſtairs, that are come to ſee the houſe: Margaret is chattering, and the dogs barking; and this I call retirement! and yet I think it preferable to your viſit at Becket. Adieu! Let me know ſomething more of your motions, before you go to Ireland, which I think a ſtrange journey, and better compounded for: and when I ſee you in town I will ſettle with you another viſit to Park-place.

Yours ever,

HOR. WALPOLE.

LETTER LXXVIII.

Strawberry-hill, Friday, July 7, 1769.

YOU deſired me to write, if I knew any thing particular. How particular will content you? Don't imagine I would ſend you ſuch haſh as the livery's petition[1]. Come; would the apparition of my lord Chatham ſatisfy you? Don't be frightened: it was not his ghoſt. He, he himſelf in propriâ perſonâ, and not in a ſtrait waiſtcoat, walked into the king's levee this morning, and was in the cloſet twenty minutes after the levee; and was to go out of town to-night again. The deuce is in it if this is not news. Whether he is to be king, miniſter, lord mayor, or alderman, I do not know; nor a word more than I have told you.

[1] The petition of the livery of London, complaining of the unconſtitutional conduct of the king's miniſters, and the undue return of Mr. Luttrell when he oppoſed Mr. Wilkes at the election for Middleſex. E.

Whether he was ſent for to guard St. James's gate, or whether he came alone, like Almanzor, to ſtorm it, I cannot tell: by Beckford's violence I ſhould think the latter. I am ſo indifferent what he came for, that I ſhall wait till Sunday to learn; when I lie in town on my way to Ely. You will probably hear more from your brother before I can write again. I ſend this by my friend Mr. Granger [1], who will leave it at your park-gate as he goes through Henley home. Good-night: it is paſt twelve, and I am going to bed.

Yours ever,

HOR. WALPOLE.

LETTER LXXIX.

Strawberry-hill, Tueſday Nov. 14, 1769.

I AM here quite alone, and did not think of going to town till Friday for the opera, which I have not yet ſeen. In compliment to you and your counteſs I will make an effort, and be there on Thurſday; and will either dine with you at your own houſe, or at your brother's; which you chooſe. This is a great favour, and beyond my lord Temple's journey to dine with my lord mayor [2]. I am ſo ſick of the follies of all ſides, that I am happy to be at quiet here, and to know no more of them than what I am forced to ſee in the newſpapers; and thoſe I ſkip over as faſt as I can.

The account you give me of lady —— was juſt the ſame as I received from Paris. I will ſhow you a very particular letter I received by a private hand from thence; which convinces me that I gueſſed right, contrary to all the wiſe, that the journey to Fontainebleau would overſet monſieur de Choiſeul. I think he holds but by a thread, which will ſnap ſoon. I am labouring hard with the ducheſs [3] to procure the duke of Richmond ſatisfaction in the favour he has aſked about his duchy [4]; but he ſhall not know

[1] Author of the Biographical Hiſtory of England.
[2] In the ſecond mayoralty of William Beckford.
[3] The ducheſs of Choiſeul.
[4] Of Aubigné.

it till it is completed, if I can be ſo lucky as to ſucceed. I think I ſhall, if they do not fall immediately.

You perceive how barren I am, and why I have not written to you. I paſs my time in clipping and paſting prints; and do not think I have read forty pages ſince I came to England. I bought a poem called Trincalo's Trip to the Jubilee; having been ſtruck with two lines in an extract in the papers,

And the ear-piercing fife,
And the ear-piercing wife—

Alas! all the reſt, and it is very long, is a heap of unintelligible nonſenſe, about Shakeſpeare, politics, and the lord knows what. I am grieved that, with our admiration of Shakeſpeare, we can do nothing but write worſe than ever he did. One would think the age ſtudied nothing but his Love's labour loſt, and Titus Andronicus. Politics and abuſe have totally corrupted our taſte. Nobody thinks of writing a line that is to laſt beyond the next fortnight. We might as well be given up to controverſial divinity. The times put me in mind of the Conſtantinopolitan empire; where, in an age of learning, the ſubtleſt wits of Greece contrived to leave nothing behind them, but the memory of their follies and acrimony. Milton did not write his Paradiſe Loſt till he had outlived his politics. With all his parts, and noble ſentiments of liberty, who would remember him for his barbarous proſe? Nothing is more true than that extremes meet. The licentiouſneſs of the preſs makes us as ſavage as our Saxon anceſtors, who could only ſet their marks; and an outrageous purſuit of individual independence, grounded on ſelfiſh views, extinguiſhes genius as much as deſpotiſm does. The public good of our country is never thought of by men that hate half their country. Heroes confine their ambition to be leaders of the mob. Orators ſeek applauſe from their faction, not from poſterity; and miniſters forget foreign enemies, to defend themſelves againſt a majority in parliament. When any Cæſar has conquered Gaul, I will excuſe him for aiming at the perpetual dictature. If he has only jockeyed ſomebody out of the borough of Veii or Falernum, it is too impudent to call himſelf a patriot or a ſtateſman. Adieu!

LETTER

LETTER LXXX.

Arlington-ſtreet, July 12, 1770.

REPOSING under my laurels! No, no, I am repoſing in a much better tent, under the teſter of my own bed. I am not obliged to riſe by break of day and be dreſſed for the drawing-room; I may ſaunter in my ſlippers till dinner-time, and not make bows till my back is as much out of joint as my lord Temple's. In ſhort, I ſhould die of the gout or fatigue, if I was to be Polonius to a princeſs for another week[1]. Twice a-day we made a pilgrimage to almoſt every heathen temple in that province that they call a garden; and there is no ſallying out of the houſe without deſcending a flight of ſteps as high as St. Paul's. My lord Beſborough would have dragged me up to the top of the column, to ſee all the kingdoms of the earth; but I would not, if he could have given them to me. To crown all, becauſe we live under the line, and that we were all of us giddy young creatures, of near threeſcore, we ſupped in a grotto in the Elyſian fields, and were refreſhed with rivers of dew and gentle ſhowers that dripped from all the trees; and put us in mind of the heroic ages, when kings and queens were ſhepherds and ſhepherdeſſes, and lived in caves, and were wet to the ſkin two or three times a-day. Well! thank heaven, I am emerged from that Elyſium, and once more in a chriſtian country!—Not but, to ſay the truth, our pagan landlord and landlady were very obliging, and the party went off much better than I expected. We had no very recent politics, though volumes about the Spaniſh war; and as I took care to give every thing a ludicrous turn as much as I could, the princeſs was diverted, the ſix days rolled away, and the ſeventh is my ſabbath; and I promiſe you I will do no manner of work, I, nor my cat, nor my dog, nor any thing that is mine. For this reaſon, I entreat that the journey to Goodwood may not take place before the 12th of Auguſt, when I will attend you. But this expedition to Stowe has quite blown up my intended one to Wentworth-caſtle: I have not reſolution enough left for ſuch a journey. Will you and lady A—— come to Strawberry before or after Goodwood? I know you like being dragged from home as little as I do; therefore you ſhall place that viſit juſt when it is moſt convenient to you.

1 Mr. Walpole had been for a week at Stowe, the ſeat of earl Temple, with a party invited to meet her royal highneſs the late princeſs Amelia.

I came

I came to town the night before laſt, and am juſt returning. There are not twenty people in all London. Are not you in deſpair about the ſummer? It is horrid to be ruined in coals in June and July. Adieu!

Yours ever,

HOR. WALPOLE.

LETTER LXXXI.

Arlington-ſtreet, Chriſtmas-day.

IF poplar-pines ever grow [1], it muſt be in ſuch a ſoaking ſeaſon as this. I wiſh you would ſend half-a-dozen by ſome Henley barge to meet me next Saturday at Strawberry-hill, that they may be as tall as the monument by next ſummer. My caſcades give themſelves the airs of cataracts, and Mrs. Clive looks like the ſun riſing out of the ocean. Poor Mr. Raftor [2] is tired to death of their ſolitude; and as his paſſion is walking, he talks with rapture of the brave rows of lamps all along the ſtreets, juſt as I uſed formerly to think no trees beautiful without lamps to them, like thoſe at Vauxhall.

As I came to town but to dinner, and have not ſeen a ſoul, I do not know whether there is any news. I am juſt going to the princeſs [3], where I ſhall hear all there is. I went to king Arthur on Saturday, and was tired to death, both of the nonſenſe of the piece and the execrable performance, the ſingers being ſtill worſe than the actors. The ſcenes are little better (though Garrick boaſts of rivalling the French opera), except a pretty bridge, and a gothic church with windows of painted glaſs. This ſcene, which ſhould be a barbarous temple of Woden, is a perfect cathedral, and the devil officiates at a kind of high maſs! I never ſaw greater abſurdities.

Adieu!

[1] The firſt poplar-pine (or, as they have ſince been called, Lombardy poplar) planted in England is that at Park-place, on the bank of the river near the great arch. It was a cutting brought from Turin by the late lord Rochford in his carriage, and planted by general Conway's own hand. E.

[2] Brother to Mrs. Clive. He had been an actor himſelf, and, when his ſiſter retired from the ſtage, lived with her in the houſe Mr. Walpole had given her at Twickenham. E.

[3] The late princeſs Amelia.

LETTER

LETTER LXXXII.

Arlington-ſtreet, Dec. 29, 1770.

THE trees[1] came ſafe: I thank you for them: they are gone to Strawberry, and I am going to plant them. This paragraph would not call for a letter, but I have news for you of importance enough to dignify a diſpatch. The duc de Choiſeul is fallen! The expreſs from lord Harcourt[2] arrived yeſterday morning; the event happened laſt Monday night, and the courier ſet out ſo immediately, that not many particulars are yet known. The duke was allowed but three hours to prepare himſelf, and ordered to retire to his ſeat at Chanteloup: but ſome letters ſay, Il ira plus loin. The duc de Praſlin is baniſhed too, and Chatelet is forbidden to viſit Choiſeul. Chatelet was to have had the marine; and I am ſure is no loſs to us. The chevalier de Muy is made ſecretary of ſtate pour la guerre; and it is concluded that the duc d'Aiguillon is prime-miniſter, but was not named ſo in the firſt hurry. There! there is a revolution! there is a new ſcene opened! Will it advance the war? Will it make peace? Theſe are the queſtions all mankind is aſking. This whale has ſwallowed up all gudgeon-queſtions. Lord Harcourt writes, that the d'Aiguilloniſts had officiouſly taken opportunities of aſſuring him, that if they prevailed it would be peace; but in this country we know that opponents turned miniſters *can* change their language. It is added, that the morning of Choiſeul's baniſhment, the king ſaid to him, Monſieur, je vous ai dit que je ne voulois pas la guerre. Yet how does this agree with Francès's[3] eager proteſtations that Choiſeul's fate depended on preſerving the peace? How does it agree with the comptroller-general's offer of finding funds for the war, and of Choiſeul's proving he could not?—But how reconcile half the politics one hears? De Guiſnes and Francès ſent their excuſes to the ducheſs of Argyll laſt night; and I ſuppoſe the Spaniards too, for none of them were there.—Well! I ſhall let all this buſtle cool for two days; for what Engliſhman does not ſacrifice any thing to go his Saturday out of town?—And yet I am very much intereſted in this event; I feel much for madame de Choiſeul, though nothing

[1] The Lombardy poplars.

[2] Then embaſſador at Paris.

[3] Then the chargé des affaires from the French court in London.

for

for her *Corſican* huſband; but I am in the utmoſt anxiety for my dear old friend[1], who paſſed every evening with the ducheſs, and was thence in great credit; and what is worſe, though nobody I think can be ſavage enough to take away her penſion, ſhe may find great difficulty to get it paid—and then her poor heart is ſo good and warm, that this blow on her friends, at her great age, may kill her. I have had no letter, nor had laſt poſt—whether it was ſtopped, or whether ſhe apprehended the event, as I imagine—for every body obſerved, on Tueſday night, at your brother's, that Francès could not open his mouth. In ſhort, I am moſt ſeriouſly alarmed about her.

You have ſeen in the papers the deſigned arrangements in the law. They now ſay there is ſome hitch; but I ſuppoſe it turns on ſome demands, and ſo will be got over by their being granted.

Mr. Maſon, the bard, gave me yeſterday the incloſed memorial, and begged I would recommend it to you. It is in favour of a very ingenious painter. Adieu! the ſun ſhines brightly; but it is one o'clock, and it will be ſet before I get to Twickenham.

Yours ever,

HOR. WALPOLE.

LETTER LXXXIII.

Paris, July 30, 1771.

I DO not know where you are, nor where this will find you, nor when it will ſet out to ſeek you, as I am not certain by whom I ſhall ſend it. It is of little conſequence, as I have nothing material to tell you, but what you probably may have heard.

The diſtreſs here is incredible, eſpecially at court. The king's tradeſmen are ruined, his ſervants ſtarving, and even angels and archangels

[1] Madame la marquiſe du Deffand.

cannot

cannot get their penſions and ſalaries, but ſing Woe! woe! woe! inſtead of Hoſannahs. Compiegne is abandoned; Villiers-coterets and Chantilly[1] crowded, and Chanteloup[2] ſtill more in faſhion, whither every body goes that pleaſes; though, when they aſk leave, the anſwer is, *Je ne le defends ni le permets*. This is the firſt time that ever the will of a king of France was interpreted againſt his inclination. Yet, after annihilating his parliament, and ruining public credit, he tamely ſubmits to be affronted by his own ſervants. Mad. de Beauveau and two or three high-ſpirited dames defy this czar of Gaul. Yet they and their cabal are as inconſiſtent on the other hand. They make epigrams, ſing vaudevilles againſt the miſtreſs, hand about libels againſt the chancellor, and have no more effect than a ſky-rocket; but in three months will die to go to court, and to be invited to ſup with madame du Barry. The only real ſtruggle is between the chancellor[3] and the duc d'Aiguillon. The firſt is falſe, bold, determined, and not ſubject to little qualms. The other is leſs known, communicates himſelf to nobody, is ſuſpected of deep policy and deep deſigns, but ſeems to intend to ſet out under a maſk of very ſmooth varniſh; for he has juſt obtained the payment of all his bitter enemy la Chalotais's penſions and arrears. He has the advantage too of being but moderately deteſted in compariſon of his rival, and, what he values more, the intereſt of the miſtreſs[4]. The comptroller-general[5] ſerves both, by acting miſchief more ſenſibly felt; for he ruins every body but thoſe who purchaſe a reſpite from his miſtreſs. He diſpenſes bankruptcy by retail, and will fall, becauſe he cannot even by theſe means be uſeful enough. They are ſtriking off nine millions from la caiſſe militaire, five from the marine, and one from the affaires étrangeres: yet all this will not extricate them. You never ſaw a great nation in ſo diſgraceful a poſition. Their next proſpect is not better: it reſts on an Imbecille, both in mind and body.

July 31.

Mr. Churchill and my ſiſter ſet out to-night after ſupper, and I ſhall ſend this letter by them. There are no new books, no new plays, no new novels;

[1] The country palaces of the duke of Orleans and the prince of Condé, who were in diſgrace at court for having eſpouſed the cauſe of the parliament of Paris baniſhed by the chancellor Maupou.

[2] The country ſeat of the duc de Choiſeul, to which, on his ceaſing to be firſt miniſter, he was baniſhed by the king.

[3] Maupou.

[4] Madame du Barry.

[5] The abbé Terrai.

nay, no new faſhions. They have dragged old m^lle^ le Maure out of a retreat of thirty years, to ſing at the Coliſée, which is a moſt gaudy Ranelagh, gilt, painted, and be-cupided like an opera, but not calculated to laſt as long as Mother Coliſeum, being compoſed of chalk and paſteboard. Round it are courts of treillage, that ſerve for nothing, and behind it a canal, very like a horſe-pond, on which there are fireworks and juſts. All together it is very pretty; but as there are few nabobs and nabobeſſes in this country, and as the middling and common people are not much richer than Job when he had loſt every thing but his patience, the proprietors are on the point of being ruined, unleſs the project takes place that is talked of. It is, to oblige Corneille, Racine, and Moliere to hold their tongues twice a-week, that their audiences may go to the Coliſée. This is like our parliament's adjourning when ſenators want to go to Newmarket. There is a monſieur Guillard writing a hiſtory of the rivalité de la France et de l'Angleterre.—I hope he will not omit this parallel.

The inſtance of their poverty that ſtrikes *me* moſt, who make political obſervations by the thermometer of baubles, is, that there is nothing new in their ſhops. I know the faces of every ſnuff-box and every tea-cup as well as thoſe of madame du Lac and monſieur Poirier. I have choſen ſome cups and ſaucers for my lady A———, as ſhe ordered me, but I cannot ſay they are at all extraordinary. I have beſpoken two cabriolets for her, inſtead of ſix, becauſe I think them very dear, and that ſhe may have four more if ſhe likes them. I ſhall bring too a ſample of a baguette that ſuits them. For myſelf, between œconomy and the want of novelty, I have not laid out five guineas—a very memorable anecdote in the hiſtory of my life. Indeed, the czarina and I have a little diſpute: ſhe has offered to purchaſe the whole Crozat collection of pictures, at which I had intended to ruin myſelf. The Turks take her for it!—A-propos, they are ſending from hence fourſcore officers to Poland, each of whom I ſuppoſe, like Almanzor, can ſtamp with his foot and raiſe an army.

As my ſiſter travels like a Tartar princeſs with her whole horde, ſhe will arrive too late almoſt for me to hear from you in return to this letter, which in truth requires no anſwer, vû que I ſhall ſet out myſelf on the 26th of Auguſt. You will not imagine that I am glad to ſave myſelf the pleaſure of hearing from you, but I would not give you the trouble of writing

writing unneceſſarily. If you are at home, and not in Scotland, you will judge by theſe dates where to find me. Adieu!

Yours ever,

HOR. WALPOLE.

P. S. Inſtead of reſtoring the Jeſuits, they are proceeding to annihilate the Celeſtine, Auguſtines, and ſome other orders.

LETTER LXXXIV.

Paris, Aug. 11, 1771.

YOU will have ſeen, I hope, before now, that I have not neglected writing to you. I ſent you a letter by my ſiſter, but doubt ſhe has been a great while upon the road, as they travel with a large family. I was not ſure where you was, and would not write at random by the poſt.

I was juſt going out when I received yours and the newſpapers. I was ſtruck in a moſt ſenſible manner, when, after reading your letter, I ſaw in the newſpapers that Gray[1] is dead! So very ancient an intimacy, and, I ſuppoſe, the natural reflection to ſelf on loſing a perſon but a year older, made me abſolutely ſtart in my chair. It ſeemed more a corporal than a mental blow; and yet I am exceedingly concerned for him, and every body muſt be ſo for the loſs of ſuch a genius. He called on me but two or three days before I came hither; he complained of being ill, and talked of the gout in his ſtomach—but I expected his death no more than my own—and yet the ſame death will probably be mine.—I am full of all theſe reflections—but ſhall not attriſt you with them:—only do not wonder that my letter will be ſhort, when my mind is full of what I do not give vent to. It was but laſt night that I was thinking how few perſons laſt, if one lives to be old, to whom one can talk without reſerve. It is impoſſible to be intimate with the young, becauſe they and the old cannot converſe on the ſame common topics; and of the old that ſurvive, there are few one can commence a friendſhip with, becauſe one has probably all one's life deſpiſed their

[1] Thomas Gray, the poet.

hearts or their underſtandings. Theſe are the ſteps through which one paſſes to the unenviable lees of life!

I am very ſorry for the ſtate of poor lady B———. It preſages ill. She had a proſpect of long happineſs. Opium is a very falſe friend.

I will get you Bougainville's book.—I think it is on the Falkland Iſles, for it cannot be on thoſe juſt diſcovered; but as I ſet out to-morrow ſe'nnight, and probably may have no opportunity ſooner of ſending it, I will bring it myſelf. Adieu!

Yours ever,

HOR. WALPOLE.

LETTER LXXXV.

Arlington-ſtreet, September 7, 1771.

I ARRIVED yeſterday within an hour or two after you was gone, which mortified me exceedingly; lord knows when I ſhall ſee you. You are ſo active and ſo buſy, and caſt bullets[1] and build bridges, are pontifex maximus, and, like ſir John Thorold or Cimon,

——— triumph over land and wave,

that one can never get a word with you. Yet I am very well worth a general's or a politician's ear. I have been deep in all the ſecrets of France, and confidant of ſome of the principals of both parties. I know what is, and is to be, though I am neither prieſt nor conjurer—and have heard a vaſt deal about breaking carabiniers and grenadiers; though, as

[1] Mr. Conway was now at the head of the ordnance, but with the title and appointments of lieutenant-general only. The particular circumſtances attending this, are thus recorded in a letter of Mr. Walpole's to another correſpondent at the time, and deſerve to be known. E.

"January, 1770.

"The king offered the maſterſhip of the ordnance, on lord Granby's reſignation, to Mr. Conway, who is only lieutenant-general of it. He ſaid he had lived in friendſhip with lord Granby, and would not profit by his ſpoils: but as he thought he could do ſome eſſential ſervice in the office, where there are many abuſes; if his majeſty would be pleaſed to let him continue as he is, he would do the buſineſs of the office without accepting the ſalary."

uſual,

uſual, I dare to ſay I ſhall give a woful account of both. The worſt part is, that by the moſt horrid oppreſſion and injuſtice their finances will very ſoon be in good order—unleſs ſome bankrupt turns Ravaillac, which will not ſurpriſe me. The horror the nation has conceived of the king and chancellor, makes it probable that the latter, at leaſt, will be ſacrificed. He ſeems not to be without apprehenſion, and has removed from the king's library a MS. trial of a chancellor who was condemned to be hanged under Charles VII.—For the king, qui a fait ſes épreuves, and not to his honour, you will not wonder that he lives in terrors.

I have executed all lady A———'s commiſſions; but mind, I do not commiſſion you to tell her, for you would certainly forget it.

As you will no doubt come to town to report who burnt Portſmouth, I will meet you here, if I am appriſed of the day. Your niece's marriage[a] pleaſes me extremely. Though I never ſaw him till laſt night, I know a great deal of her futur, and like his character. His perſon is much better than I expected, and far preferable to many of the fine young moderns. He is better than ſir ——, at leaſt as well as the duke of ——, and Adonis compared to the charming Mr. ———. Adieu!

LETTER LXXXVI.

Late Strawberry-hill, January 7, 1772.

YOU have read of my calamity without knowing it, and will pity me when you do. I have been blown up; my caſtle is blown up; Guy Fawkes has been about my houſe; and the fifth of November has fallen on the 6th of January! In ſhort, nine thouſand powder-mills broke looſe yeſterday morning on Hounſlow-heath; a whole ſquadron of them came hither, and have broken eight of my painted-glaſs windows: and the north ſide of the caſtle looks as if it had ſtood a ſiege. The two ſaints in the hall have ſuffered martyrdom! they have had their bodies cut off, and nothing remains but their heads. The two next great ſufferers are indeed two of

[a] The marriage of lady Gertrude Seymour Conway to lord Villiers, ſince earl of Grandiſon.

the

the leaſt valuable, being the paſſage windows to the library and great parlour—a fine pane is demoliſhed in the round room; and the window by the gallery is damaged. Thoſe in the cabinet and Holbein-room, and gallery, and blue-room, and green-cloſet, &c. have eſcaped. As the ſtorm came from the north-weſt, the china-cloſet was not touched, nor a cup fell down. The bow-window of brave old coloured glaſs, at Mr. Hindley's, is maſſacred; and all the north ſides of Twickenham and Brentford are ſhattered. At London it was proclaimed an earthquake, and half the inhabitants ran into the ſtreet.

As lieutenant-general of the ordnance, I muſt beſeech you to give ſtrict orders that no more powder-mills may blow up. My aunt, Mrs. Kerwood, reading one day in the papers that a diſtiller's had been burnt by the head of the ſtill flying off, ſaid, ſhe wondered they did not make an act of parliament againſt the heads of ſtills flying off. Now, I hold it much eaſier for you to do a body this ſervice; and would recommend to your conſideration, whether it would not be prudent to have all magazines of powder kept under water till they are wanted for ſervice. In the mean time, I expect a penſion to make me amends for what I have ſuffered under the government. Adieu!

Yours, all that remains of me,

HOR. WALPOLE.

LETTER LXXXVII.

Strawberry-hill, Monday June 22, 1772.

IT is lucky that I have had no dealings with Mr. F——; for, if he had ruined me, as he has half the world, I could not have *run* away. I tired myſelf with walking on Friday; the gout came on Saturday in my foot; yeſterday I kept my bed till four o'clock, and my room all day—but, with wrapping myſelf all over with bootikins, I have ſcarce had any pain—my foot ſwelled immediately, and to-day I am deſcended into the blueth and greenth[1]; and though you expect to find that I am paving the way to an

[1] Cant words of Mr. Walpole's for blue and green. He means, that he came out of his room to the blue ſky and green fields. E.

excuſe, I think I ſhall be able to be with you on Saturday. All I intend to excuſe myſelf from, is walking. I ſhould certainly never have the gout, if I had loſt the uſe of my feet. Cherubims that have no legs, and do nothing but ſtick their chins in a cloud and ſing, are never out of order. Exerciſe is the worſt thing in the world, and as bad an invention as gunpowder.

A-propos to Mr. F——, here is a paſſage ridiculouſly applicable to him, that I met with yeſterday in the letters of Guy Patin: "Il n'y a pas long tems qu'un auditeur des comptes nommé monſ. Nivelle fit banqueroute; et tout fraichement, c'eſt-à-dire depuis trois jours, un treſorier des parties caſuelles, nommé Sanſon, en a fait autant; et pour vous montrer, qu'il eſt vrai que *res humanæ faciunt circulum*, comme il a eté autrefois dit par Plato et par Ariſtote, celuy-là s'en retourne d'où il vient. Il eſt fils d'un paiſan; il a eté laquais de ſon premier metier, et aujourd'hui il n'eſt plus rien, ſi non qu'il lui reſte une aſſez belle femme."——I do not think I can find in Patin or Plato, nay, nor in Ariſtotle, though he wrote about every thing, a parallel caſe to —— ——'s: there are advertiſed to be ſold more annuities of his and his ſociety, to the amount of five hundred thouſand pounds a year! I wonder what he will do next, when he has ſold the eſtates of all his friends!

I have been reading the moſt delightful book in the world, the lives of Leland, Tom Hearne, and Antony Wood. The laſt's diary makes a thick volume in octavo. One entry is, "This day Old Joan began to make my bed." In the ſtory of Leland is an examination of a free maſon, written by the hand of king Henry VI. with notes by Mr. Locke. Free-maſonry, Henry VI. and Locke, make a ſtrange heterogeneous olio; but that is not all. The reſpondent, who defends the myſtery of maſonry, ſays it was brought into Europe by the Venetians—he means the Phenicians—And who do you think propagated it? Why, one Peter Gore—And who do you think that was?—One Pythagoras, Pythagore.—I do not know whether it is not ſtill more extraordinary, that this and the reſt of the nonſenſe in that account made Mr. Locke determine to be a free-maſon: ſo would I too, if I could expect to hear of more *Peter Gores*.

Pray tell lady Lyttelton that I ſay ſhe will certainly kill herſelf if ſhe lets

lets lady A—— drag her twice a day to feed the pheaſants; and you make her climb cliffs and clamber over mountains. She has a tractability that alarms me for her; and if ſhe does not pluck up a ſpirit and determine never to be put out of her own way, I do not know what may be the conſequence. I will come and ſet her an example of immoveability. Take notice, I do not ſay one civil ſyllable to lady A——. She has not paſſed a whole day here theſe two years. She is always very gracious, ſays ſhe will come when *you* will fix a time, as if *you* governed, and then puts it off whenever it is propoſed, nor will ſpare one ſingle day from Park-place—as if other people were not as partial to their own Park-places! Adieu!

Yours ever,

HOR. WALPOLE.

Tueſday noon.

I WROTE my letter laſt night; this morning I received yours, and ſhall wait till Sunday, as you bid me, which will be more convenient for my gout, though not for other engagements; but I ſhall obey the ſuperior, as nullum tempus occurrit regi et podagræ.

LETTER LXXXVIII.

Arlington-ſtreet, Auguſt 30, 1773.

I RETURNED laſt night from Houghton[1], where multiplicity of buſineſs detained me four days longer than I intended, and where I found a ſcene infinitely more mortifying than I expected; though I certainly did not go with a proſpect of finding a land flowing with milk and honey. Except the pictures, which are in the fineſt preſervation, and the woods, which are become foreſts, all the reſt is ruin, deſolation, confuſion, diſorder, debts, mortgages, ſales, pillage, villainy, waſte, folly, and madneſs. I do not believe that five thouſand pounds would put the houſe and buildings into good repair. The nettles and brambles in the park are up to your ſhoulders; horſes have been turned into the garden, and banditti lodged in every cot-

[1] Where he had gone during the inſanity of his nephew George earl of Orford, to endeavour to ſettle and arrange his affairs.

tage. The perpetuity of livings that come up to the park-pales have been ſold—and every farm let for half its value. In ſhort, you know how much family-pride I have—and conſequently may judge how much I have been mortified!—Nor do I tell you half, or *near* the worſt circumſtances. I have juſt ſtopped the torrent—and that is all. I am very uncertain whether I muſt not fling up the truſt; and ſome of the difficulties in my way ſeem unſurmountable, and too dangerous not to alarm even my zeal; ſince I muſt not ruin myſelf, and hurt thoſe for whom I muſt feel too, only to reſtore a family that will end with myſelf, and to retrieve an eſtate, from which I am not likely ever to receive the leaſt advantage.

If you will ſettle with the C———s your journey to Chalfont, and will let me know the day, I will endeavour to meet you there; I hope it will not be till next week. I am overwhelmed with buſineſs—but indeed I know not when I ſhall be otherwiſe! I wiſh you joy of this endleſs ſummer.

LETTER LXXXIX.

Strawberry-hill, June 23, 1774.

I HAVE nothing to ſay—which is the beſt reaſon in the world for writing; for one muſt have a great regard for any body one writes to, when one begins a letter neither on ceremony nor buſineſs. You are ſeeing armies[1], who are always in fine order and great ſpirits when they are in cold blood: I am ſorry you thought it worth while to realiſe what I ſhould have thought you could have ſeen in your mind's eye. However, I hope you will be amuſed and pleaſed with viewing heroes, both in their autumn and their bud. Vienna will be a new ſight; ſo will the Auſtrian eagle and its two heads. I ſhould like *ſeeing* too, if any fairy would preſent me with a cheſt that would fly up into the air by touching a peg, and tranſport me whither I pleaſed in an inſtant: but roads, and inns, and dirt are terrible drawbacks on my curioſity. I grow ſo old, or ſo indolent, that I ſcarce ſtir from hence; and the dread of the gout makes me almoſt as much a priſoner, as a

[1] Mr. Conway was now on a tour of military curioſity through Flanders, Germany, Pruſſia, and part of Hungary.

fit of it. News I know none, if there is any. The papers tell me the city was to preſent a petition to the king againſt the Quebec-bill yeſterday; and I ſuppoſe they will tell me to-morrow whether it was preſented. The king's ſpeech tells me, there has nothing happened between the Ruſſians and the Turks. Lady Barrymore told me t'other day, that nothing was to happen between her and lord E———. I am as well ſatisfied with theſe negatives, as I ſhould have been with the contrary. I am much more intereſted about the rain, for it deſtroys all my roſes and orange-flowers, of which I have exuberance; and my hay is cut, and cannot be made. However, it is delightful to have no other diſtreſſes. When I compare my preſent tranquillity and indifference with all I ſuffered laſt year [1], I am thankful for my happineſs, and enjoy it—unleſs the bell rings at the gate early in the morning—and then I tremble, and think it an expreſs from Norfolk.

It is unfortunate, that when one has nothing to talk of but one's ſelf, one ſhould have nothing to ſay of one's ſelf. It is ſhameful too to ſend ſuch a ſcrap by the poſt. I think I ſhall reſerve it till Tueſday. If I have then nothing to add, as is probable, you muſt content yourſelf with my good intentions, as I hope you will with this ſpeculative campaign. Pray, for the future remain at home and build bridges: I wiſh you were here to expedite ours to Richmond, which they tell me will not be paſſable theſe two years. I have done looking ſo forward. Adieu!

LETTER XC.

Strawberry-hill, Auguſt 18, 1774.

IT is very hard, that becauſe you do not get my letters, you will not let me receive yours, who do receive them. I have not had a line from you theſe five weeks. Of your honours and glories Fame has told me [2]; and for aught I know, you may be a *veldt-marſhal* by this time, and deſpiſe ſuch a poor cottager as me. Take notice, I ſhall diſclaim you in my turn, if you

[1] During the illneſs of his nephew lord Orford.

[2] Alluding to the diſtinguiſhed notice taken of general Conway by the king of Pruſſia.

are

Hyatt Sculp.

M.rs Selwyn.

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are ſent on a command againſt Dantzick, or to uſurp a new diſtrict in Poland.

I have ſeen no armies, kings or empreſſes, and cannot ſend you ſuch auguſt gazettes; nor are they what I want to hear of. I like to hear you are well and diverted; nay, have pimped towards the latter, by deſiring lady Aileſbury to ſend you monſieur de Guiſnes's invitation to a military fête at Metz [1]. For my part, I wiſh you was returned to your plough. Your Sabine farm [2] is in high beauty. I have lain there twice within this week, going to and from a viſit to George Selwyn near Glouceſter: a tour as much to my taſte as yours to you. For fortified towns I have ſeen ruined caſtles. Unluckily, in that of Berkeley I found a whole regiment of militia in garriſon, and as many young officers as if ——————— was in poſſeſſion, and ready to ſurrender at indiſcretion. I endeavoured to comfort myſelf by figuring that they were guarding Edward II. I have ſeen many other ancient ſights without aſking leave of the king of Pruſſia: it would not pleaſe me ſo much to write *to* him, as it once did to write *for* him [3].

They have found at leaſt ſeventy thouſand pounds of lord Thomond's [4]. George Howard has decked himſelf with a red ribband, money and honours! —Charming things! and yet one may be very happy without them.

The young —— —— is returned from his travels in love with the pretender's queen, who has permitted him to have her picture. What can I tell you more? Nothing. Indeed, if I only write to poſtmaſters, my letter is long enough. Every body's head but mine is full of elections. I had the ſatisfaction at Glouceſter, where G. Selwyn is canvaſſing, of reflecting on my own wiſdom: Suave mari magno turbantibus æquora ventis, &c. I am certainly the greateſt philoſopher in the world, without ever having thought of being ſo: always employed, and never buſy; eager about trifles, and indifferent to every thing ſerious. Well, if it is not philoſophy, at leaſt it is content. I

[1] To ſee the review of the French regiment of carabineers, then commanded by monſieur de Guiſnes.

[2] Park-place.

[3] Alluding to the letter to Rouſſeau in the name of the king of Pruſſia.

[4] Percy Wyndham Obrien. He was the ſecond ſon of ſir Charles Wyndham, the chancellor of the exchequer to queen Anne, and took the name of Obrien purſuant to the will of his uncle the earl of Thomond in Ireland.

am as pleaſed here with my own nutſhell, as any monarch you have ſeen theſe two months aſtride his eagle—not but I was diſſatisfied when I miſſed you at Park-place, and was peeviſh at your being in an Aulic chamber. Adieu!

Yours ever,

HOR. WALPOLE.

P. S. They tell us from Vienna that the peace is made between Tiſiphone and the Turk: Is it true?

LETTER XCI.

Strawberry-hill, Sept. 7, 1774.

I DID not think you had been ſo like the reſt of the world, as, when you pretended to be viſiting armies, to go in ſearch of gold and ſilver mines[1]! The favours of courts and the ſmiles of emperors and kings, I ſee, have corrupted even you, and perverted you to a nabob. Have you brought away an ingot in the calf of your leg? What abomination have you committed? All the gazettes in Europe have ſent you on different negotiations: inſtead of returning with a treaty in your pocket, you will only come back with bills of exchange. I don't envy your ſubterraneous travels, nor the hoſpitality of the Hungarians. Where did you find a ſpoonful of Latin about you? I have not attempted to ſpeak Latin theſe thirty years, without perceiving I was talking Italian thickened with terminations in *us* and *orum*. I ſhould have as little expected to find an Ovid in thoſe regions; but I ſuppoſe the gentry of Preſbourg read him for a faſhionable author, as our 'ſquires and their wives do the laſt collections of ballads that have been ſung at Vauxhall and Marybone. I wiſh you may have brought away ſome ſketches of duke Albert's architecture. You know I deal in the works of royal authors, though I have never admired any of their own buildings, not excepting king Solomon's temple. Stanley[2] and Edmondſon in Hungary! What carried them thither? The chaſe of mines too? The firſt, perhaps,

[1] Mr. Conway had gone to ſee the gold and ſilver mines of Cremnitz in the neighbourhood of Grau in Hungary.

[2] Mr. Hans Stanley.

waddled

waddled thither obliquely, as a parrot would have done whoſe direction was to Naples.

Well, I am glad you have been entertained, and ſeen ſuch a variety of ſights. You don't mind fatigues and hardſhips, and hoſpitality, the two extremes that to me poiſon travelling. I ſhall never ſee any thing more, unleſs I meet with a ring that renders one inviſible. It was but the other day, that, being with George Selwyn at Glouceſter, I went to view Berkeley caſtle, knowing the earl was to dine with the mayor of Glouceſter. Alas! when I arrived, he had put off the party to enjoy his militia a day longer, and the houſe was full of officers. They might be in the Hungarian dreſs, for aught I knew; for I was ſo diſmayed, that I would fain have perſuaded the houſekeeper that ſhe could not ſhew me the apartments; and when ſhe opened the hall, and I ſaw it full of captains, I hid myſelf in a dark paſſage, and nothing could perſuade me to enter, till they had the civility to quit the place. When I was forced at laſt to go over the caſtle, I ran through it without ſeeing any thing, as if I had been afraid of being detained priſoner.

I have no news to ſend you: if I had any, I would not conclude, as all correſpondents do, that lady A. left nothing untold. Lady P. is gone to hold mobs at Ludlow, where there is actual war, and where a *knight*, I forget his name, one of their friends, has been *almoſt cut in two* with a ſcythe. When you have ſeen all the other armies in Europe, you will be juſt in time for many election-battles—perhaps for a war in America, whither more troops are going. Many of thoſe already ſent have deſerted; and to be ſure the proſpect there is not ſmiling. A-propos, lord M. whom lord S. his father will not ſuffer to wear powder becauſe wheat is ſo dear, was preſented t'other day in coal black hair and a white feather: they ſaid *he had been tarred and feathered.*

In France you will find a new ſcene[1]. The chancellor is ſent, a little before his time, to the devil. The old parliament is expected back. I am ſorry to ſay I ſhall not meet you there. It will be too late in the year for me to venture, eſpecially as I now live in dread of my biennial gout, and ſhould die of it in a hotel garni, and forced to receive all comers—I, who you know lock myſelf up when I am ill, as if I had the plague.

[1] Upon the death of Louis XV.

I wiſh I could fill my ſheet, in return for your five pages. The only thing you will care for knowing is, that I never ſaw Mrs. D. better in her life, nor look ſo well. You may truſt me, who am ſo apt to be frightened about her.

LETTER XCII.

Strawberry-hill, September 27, 1774.

I SHOULD be very ungrateful indeed if I thought of complaining of you, who are goodneſs itſelf to me: and when I did not receive letters from you, I concluded it happened from your eccentric poſitions. I am amazed, that, hurried as you have been, and your eyes and thoughts crowded with objects, you have been able to find time to write me ſo many and ſuch long letters, over and above all thoſe to lady A——, your daughter, brother, and other friends. Even lord Strafford brags of your frequent remembrance. That your ſuperabundance of royal beams would dazzle you, I never ſuſpected. Even I enjoy for you the diſtinctions you have received—though I ſhould hate ſuch things for myſelf, as they are particularly troubleſome to me, and I am particularly awkward under them, and as I abhor the king of Pruſſia, and, if I paſſed through Berlin, ſhould have no joy like avoiding him—like one of our countrymen, who changed horſes at Paris, and aſked what the name of that town was? All the other civilities you have received I am perfectly happy in. The Germans are certainly a civil well-meaning people, and I believe one of the leaſt corrupted nations in Europe. I don't think them very agreeable; but who do I think are ſo? A great many French women, ſome Engliſh men, and a few Engliſh women—exceedingly few French men. Italian women are the groſſeſt, vulgareſt of the ſex. If an Italian man has a grain of ſenſe, he is a buffoon——So much for Europe.

I have already told you, and ſo muſt lady A——, that my courage fails me, and I dare not meet you at Paris. As the period is arrived when the gout uſed to come, it is never a moment out of my head. Such a ſuffering, ſuch a helpleſs condition as I was in for five months and a half two years ago, makes me tremble from head to foot. I ſhould die at once if ſeized in a French inn; or what, if poſſible, would be worſe, at Paris, where I muſt admit every body.—I, who you know can hardly bear to ſee even you when

when I am ill, and who ſhut myſelf up here, and would not let lord and lady Hertford come near me—I, who have my room waſhed though in bed, how could I bear French dirt? In ſhort, I, who am ſo capricious, and whom you are pleaſed to call a philoſopher, I ſuppoſe becauſe I have given up every thing but my own will—how could I keep my temper, who have no way of keeping my temper but by keeping it out of every body's way! No; I muſt give up the ſatisfaction of being with you at Paris. I have juſt learnt to give up my pleaſures, but I cannot give up my pains, which ſuch ſelfiſh people as I, who have ſuffered much, grow to compoſe into a ſyſtem, that they are partial to becauſe it is their own. I muſt make myſelf amends when you return: you will be more ſtationary, I hope, for the future; and if I live I ſhall have intervals of health. In lieu of me you will have a charming ſuccedaneum, lady —— ——. Her father, who is more a hero than I, is packing up his decrepit bones, and goes too. I wiſh ſhe may not have him to nurſe, inſtead of diverting herſelf.

The preſent ſtate of your country is, that it is drowned and dead drunk; all water without and wine within. Oppoſition for the next elections every where, even in Scotland; not from party, but as laying out money to advantage. In the head quarters, indeed, party is not out of the queſtion: the day after to-morrow will be a great buſtle in the city for a lord mayor[1], and all the winter in Weſtminſter, where lord Mahon and Humphrey Cotes oppoſe the court. Lady —— is ſaving her money at Ludlow and Powis caſtles by keeping open-houſe day and night againſt ſir Watkin Williams, and fears ſhe ſhall be kept there till the general election. It has rained this whole month, and we have got another inundation. The Thames is as broad as your Danube, and all my meadows are under water. Lady Browne and I, coming laſt Sunday night from lady Blandford's, were in a piteous plight. The ferry-boat was turned round by the current, and carried to Iſleworth. Then we ran againſt the piers of our new bridge, and the horſes were frightened. Luckily my cicisbea was a catholic, and ſcreamed to ſo many ſaints, that ſome of them at the neareſt alehouſe came and ſaved us, or I ſhould have had no more gout, or what I dreaded I ſhould; for I concluded we ſhould be carried aſhore ſomewhere, and be forced to wade through the mud up to my middle. So you ſee one may wrap one's ſelf

[1] When Mr. Wilkes was elected.

up

up in flannel and be in danger, without viſiting all the armies on the face of the globe, and putting the immortality of one's chaiſe to the proof.

I am aſhamed of ſending you but three ſides of ſmaller paper in anſwer to ſeven large—but what can I do? I ſee nothing, know nothing, do nothing. My caſtle is finiſhed, I have nothing new to read, I am tired of writing, I have no new or old bit for my printer. I have only black hoods around me; or, if I go to town, the family-party in Groſvenor-ſtreet. One trait will give you a ſample of how I paſs my time, and made me laugh, as it put me in mind of you, at leaſt as it was a fit of abſence, much more likely to have happened to you than to me. I was playing at eighteenpenny tredrille with the ducheſs of Newcaſtle and lady Browne, and certainly not much intereſted in the game. I cannot recollect nor conceive what I was thinking of, but I puſhed the cards very gravely to the ducheſs, and ſaid, *Doctor*, you are to deal. You may gueſs at their aſtoniſhment, and how much it made us all laugh. I wiſh it may make you ſmile a moment, or that I had any thing better to ſend you. Adieu, moſt affectionately.

Yours ever,

HOR. WALPOLE.

LETTER XCIII.

Strawberry-hill, Sept. 28, 1774.

LADY Aileſbury brings you this[1], which is not a letter, but a paper of directions, and the counterpart of what I have written to madame du Deffand. I beg of you ſeriouſly to take a great deal of notice of this dear old friend of mine. She will perhaps expect more attention from *you*, as my friend, and as it is her own nature a little, than will be quite convenient to you: but you have an infinite deal of patience and good nature, and will excuſe it. I was afraid of her importuning lady A——, who has a vaſt deal to ſee and do, and therefore I have prepared mad. du D.

[1] Mr. Conway ended his military tour at Paris, whither lady Aileſbury and Mrs. Damer went to meet him, and where they ſpent the winter together.

and

and told her lady A. loves amuſements, and that, having never been at Paris before, ſhe muſt not confine her: ſo you muſt pay for both—and it will anſwer:—and I do not, I own, aſk this only for madame du Deffand's ſake, but for my own, and a little for yours. Since the late king's death ſhe has not dared to write to me freely, and I want to know the preſent ſtate of France exactly, both to ſatisfy my own curioſity, and for her ſake, as I wiſh to learn whether her penſion, &c. is in any danger from the preſent miniſtry, ſome of whom are not her friends. She can tell you a great deal if ſhe will—by that I don't mean that ſhe is reſerved, or partial to her own country againſt ours—quite the contrary; ſhe loves me better than all France together—but ſhe hates politics; and therefore, to make her talk on it, you muſt tell her it is to ſatisfy me, and that I want to know whether ſhe is well at court, whether ſhe has any fears from the government, particularly from Maurepas and Nivernois; and that I am eager to have monſieur de Choiſeul and *ma grandmaman* the ducheſs reſtored to power. If you take it on this foot eaſily, ſhe will talk to you with the utmoſt frankneſs and with amazing cleverneſs. I have told her you are ſtrangely abſent, and that, if ſhe does not repeat it over and over, you will forget every ſyllable: ſo I have prepared her to joke and be quite familiar with you at once. She knows more of perſonal characters, and paints them better than any body: but let this be between yourſelves, for I would not have a living ſoul ſuſpect that I get any intelligence from her, which would hurt her; and therefore I beg you not to let any human being know of this letter, nor of your converſations with her, neither Engliſh nor French.

Mad. du Deffand hates les philoſophes, ſo you muſt give them up to her. She and madame Geoffrin are no friends: ſo, if you go thither, don't tell her of it. Indeed you would be ſick of that houſe, whither all the pretended beaux eſprits and faux ſçavants go, and where they are very impertinent and dogmatic.

Let me give you one other caution, which I ſhall give lady A——— too. Take care of your papers at Paris, and have a very ſtrong lock to your porte-feuille. In the hotels garnis they have double keys to every lock, and examine every drawer and paper of the Engliſh that they can get at. They will pilfer too whatever they can.—I was robbed of half my clothes

there the firſt time, and they wanted to hang poor Louis to ſave the people of the houſe who had ſtolen the things.

Here is another thing I muſt ſay. Mad. du Deffand has kept a great many of my letters, and, as ſhe is very old, I am in pain about them. I have written to her to beg ſhe will deliver them up to you to bring back to me, and I truſt ſhe will. If ſhe does, be ſo good to take great care of them. If ſhe does not mention them, tell her juſt before you come away, that I begged you to bring them; and if ſhe heſitates, convince her how it would hurt me to have letters written in very bad French, and mentioning ſeveral people, both French and Engliſh, fall into bad hands, and, perhaps, be printed.

Let me deſire you to read this letter more than once, that you may not forget my requeſts, which are very important to me; and I muſt give you one other caution, without which all would be uſeleſs. There is at Paris a m^lle^ de l'Eſpinaſſe, a pretended bel eſprit, who was formerly an humble companion of mad. du Deffand; and betrayed her and uſed her very ill. I beg of you not to let any body carry you thither. It would diſoblige my friend of all things in the world, and ſhe would never tell you a ſyllable; and I own it would hurt me, who have ſuch infinite obligations to her, that I ſhould be very unhappy if a particular friend of mine ſhowed her this diſregard. She has done every thing upon earth to pleaſe and ſerve me, and I owe it to her to be earneſt about this attention. Pray do not mention it: it might look ſimple in me, and yet I owe it to her, as I know it would hurt her: and at her age, with her misfortunes, and with infinite obligations on my ſide, can I do too much to ſhow my gratitude, or prevent her any new mortification? I dwell upon it, becauſe ſhe has ſome enemies ſo ſpiteful that they try to carry all Engliſh to mad. de l'Eſpinaſſe.

I wiſh the ducheſs of Choiſeul may come to Paris while you are there; but I fear ſhe will not: you would like her of all things. She has more ſenſe and more virtues than almoſt any human being. If you chooſe to ſee any of the ſçavants, let me recommend monſieur Buffon. He has not only much more ſenſe than any of them, but is an excellent old man, humane, gentle, well-bred, and with none of the arrogant pertneſs of all the reſt. If he is at Paris, you will ſee a good deal of the comte de Broglie at mad. du Deffand's. He is not a genius of the firſt water, but lively and ſometimes

times agreeable. The court, I fear, will be at Fontainebleau, which will prevent your ſeeing many, unleſs you go thither. Adieu! at Paris! I leave the reſt of my paper for England, if I happen to have any thing particular to tell you.

LETTER XCIV.

Strawberry-hill, Sunday, October 16, 1774.

I RECEIVED this morning your letter of the 6th from Straſburg; and before you get this you will have had three from me by lady Aileſbury. One of them ſhould have reached you much ſooner; but lady A. kept it, not being ſure where you was. It was in anſwer to one in which you told me an anecdote, which in this laſt you aſk if I had received.

Your letters are always ſo welcome to me, that you certainly have no occaſion for excuſing what you ſay or do not ſay. Your details amuſe me, and ſo would what you ſuppreſs; for, though I have no military genius or curioſity, whatever relates to yourſelf muſt intereſt me. The honours you have received, though I have ſo little taſte for ſuch things myſelf, gave me great ſatisfaction; and I do not know whether there is not more pleaſure in *not* being a prophet in one's own country, when one is almoſt received like Mahomet in every other. To be an idol at home, is no aſſured touchſtone of merit. Stocks and ſtones have been adored in fifty regions, but do not bear tranſplanting. The Apollo Belvedere and The Hercules Farneſe may loſe their temples, but never loſe their eſtimation, by travelling.

Elections, you may be ſure, are the only topic here at preſent—I mean in England—not on this quiet hill, where I think of them as little as of the ſpot where the battle of Blenheim was fought. They ſay there will not be much alteration, but the phœnix will riſe from its aſhes with moſt of its old plumes, or as bright. Wilkes at firſt ſeemed to carry all before him, beſides having obtained the mayoralty of London at laſt. Lady H——— told me laſt Sunday, that he would carry twelve members. I have not been in town ſince, nor know any thing but what I collect from the papers; ſo, if my letter is opened, M. de Vergennes will not amaſs any very authentic intelligence from my *diſpatches*.

What I have taken notice of, is as follows: For the city Wilkes will have but three members: he will loſe Croſby; and Townſend will carry Oliver. In Weſtminſter, Wilkes will not have one; his Humphrey Cotes is by far the loweſt on the poll; lord Percy and lord T. Clinton are triumphant there. Her grace of Northumberland ſits at a window in Covent-garden, harangues the mob, and is "Hail, fellow, well met!" At Dover, Wilkes has carried one, and probably will come in for Middleſex himſelf with Glynn. There have been great endeavours to oppoſe him, but to no purpoſe.—Of this I am glad, for I do not love a mob ſo near as Brentford; eſpecially as my road lies through it. Where he has any other intereſt I am too ignorant in theſe matters to tell you. Lord John Cavendiſh is oppoſed at York, and at the beginning of the poll had the feweſt numbers. C—— F—, like the ghoſt in Hamlet, has ſhifted to many quarters; but in moſt the cock crew, and he walked off. In Southwark, there has been outrageous rioting; but I neither know the candidates, their connections, nor ſucceſs. This, perhaps, will appear a great deal of news at Paris: here, I dare to ſay, my butcher knows more.

I can tell you ſtill leſs of America. There are two or three more ſhips with forces going thither, and Sir William Draper as ſecond in command.

Of private news, except that Dyſon has had a ſtroke of palſy, and will die, there is certainly none; for I ſaw that ſhrill Morning Poſt, lady G———, two hours ago, and ſhe did not know a paragraph.

I forgot to mention to you M. de Maurepas. He was by far the ableſt and moſt agreeable man I knew at Paris: and if you ſtay, I think I could take the liberty of giving you a letter to him; though, as he is now ſo great a man, and I remain ſo little an one, I don't know whether it would be quite ſo proper—though he was exceedingly good to me, and preſſed me often to make him a viſit in the country.—But lord Stormont can certainly carry you to him—a better paſſport.

There was one of my letters on which I wiſh to hear from you. There are always Engliſh coming from Paris, who would bring ſuch a parcel; at leaſt you might ſend me one volume at a time, and the reſt afterwards: but I ſhould not care to have them ventured by the common conveyance. Mad. du Deffand is negotiating for an enamel picture for me; but if ſhe obtains

obtains it, I had rather wait for it till you come. The books I mean, are thoſe I told you lady A. and Mrs. D. would give you a particular account of, for they know my mind exactly. Don't reproach me with not meeting you at Paris. Recollect what I ſuffered this time two years; and if you can have any notion of fear, imagine my dread of torture for five months and a half! When all the quiet of Strawberry did but juſt carry me through it, could I ſupport it in the noiſe of a French hotel! and, what would be ſtill worſe, expoſed to receive all viſits? for the French, you know, are never more in public than in the act of death. I am like animals, and love to hide myſelf *when I am dying*. Thank God, I am now two days beyond the criſis when I expected my dreadful periodic viſitant, and begin to grow very ſanguine about the virtue of the bootikins. I ſhall even have courage to go to-morrow to Chalfont for two days, as it is but a journey of two hours. I would not be a day's journey from hence for all lord Clive's diamonds. This will ſatisfy *you*. I doubt madame du Deffand is not ſo eaſily convinced: therefore pray do not drop a hint before her of blaming me for not meeting you; rather aſſure her you are perſuaded it would have been too great a riſk for me at this ſeaſon. I wiſh to have her quite clear of my attachment to her; but that I do not always find ſo eaſy. You, I am ſure, will find her all zeal and *empreſſement* for you and yours. Adieu!

LETTER XCV.

Strawberry-hill, October 29, 1774.

I HAVE received your letter of the 23d, and it certainly overpays me, when you thank inſtead of ſcolding me, as I feared. A paſſionate man has very little merit in being in a paſſion, and is ſure of ſaying many things he repents, as I do. I only hope you think that I could not be ſo much in the wrong for every body; nor ſhould have been perhaps even for you, if I had not been certain I was the only perſon, at that moment, that could ſerve you eſſentially: and at ſuch a criſis, I am ſure I ſhould take exactly the ſame part again, except in ſaying ſome things I did, of which I am aſhamed[1]!

[1] This relates to Mr. Walpole having reſented in a very warm manner, ſome neglect on the part of his friends which deprived Mr. Conway of a ſeat in parliament at the general election, which took place in the year 1774. E.

I will

I will ſay no more now on that topic, nor on any thing relating to it, becauſe I have written my mind very fully, and you will know it ſoon. I can only tell you now, that I approve extremely your way of thinking, and hope you will not change it before you hear from me, and know ſome material circumſtances. You and lady A. and I agree exactly, and ſhe and I certainly conſider only *you*. I do not anſwer her laſt, becauſe I could not help telling you how very kindly I take your letter. All I beg is, that you would have no delicacy about my ſerving you any way. You know it is a pleaſure to me: any body elſe may have views that would embarraſs you; and therefore, till you are on the ſpot, and can judge for yourſelf (which I always inſiſt on, becauſe you are cooler than I, and becauſe, though I have no intereſts to ſerve, I have paſſions which equally miſlead one), it will be wiſer to decline all kind of propoſals and offers. You will avoid the plague of conteſted elections and ſolicitations; and I ſee no reaſons, at preſent, that can tempt you to be in a hurry.

You muſt not expect to be madame du Deffand's firſt favourite. Lady Aileſbury has made ſuch a progreſs there, that you will not eaſily ſupplant her. I have received volumes in her praiſe. You have a better chance with madame de C——, who is very agreeable; and I hope you are not ſuch an Engliſh huſband as not to conform to the manners of Paris while you are there.

I forgot to mention one or two of my favourite objects to lady A. nay, I am not ſure ſhe will taſte one of them, the church of the Celeſtines. It is crowded with beautiful old tombs: one of Francis II. whoſe beatitude is preſumed from his being huſband of the martyr Mary Stuart. Another is of the firſt wife of John duke of Bedford, the regent of France. I think you was once there with me formerly. The other is Richelieu's tomb, at the Sorbonne—but that every body is carried to ſee. The hotel de *Carnavalet*[1], near the Place royale, is worth looking at, even for the façade, as you drive by. But of all earthly things the moſt worth ſeeing is the houſe at Verſailles, where the king's pictures, not hung up, are kept. There is a treaſure paſt belief, though in ſad order, and piled one againſt another. Monſieur de Guerchy once carried me thither; and you may

[1] Where madame de Sevigné reſided.

certainly

certainly get leave. At the Luxembourg are ſome hung up, and one particularly is worth going to ſee alone: it is the Deluge by Nicolo Pouſſin, as winter. The three other ſeaſons are good for nothing—but the Deluge is the firſt picture in the world of its kind. You will be ſhocked to ſee the glorious pictures at the Palais royal tranſplanted to new canvaſſes, and new painted and varniſhed, as if they were to be ſcenes at the opera—at leaſt, they had treated half a dozen of the beſt ſo, three years ago, and were going on. The prince of Monaco has a few fine, but ſtill worſe uſed; one of them ſhines more than a looking-glaſs. I fear the expoſition of pictures is over for this year; it is generally very *diverting*[1]. I, who went into every church of Paris, can aſſure you there are few worth it, but the Invalids—except the *ſcenery* at St. Roch, about one or two o'clock at noon, when the ſun ſhines; the Carmelites, for the Guido and the portrait of madame de la Valiere as a Magdalen; the Val de Grace, for a moment; the *treaſure* at Notre Dame; the Sainte Chapelle, where in the anti-chapel are two very large enamelled portraits; the tomb of Condé at the Great Jeſuits in the rue St. Antoine, if not ſhut up; and the little church of St. Louis in the Louvre, where is a fine tomb of cardinal Fleury, but large enough to ſtand on Saliſbury-plain. One thing ſome of you *muſt* remember, as you return; nay, it is better to go ſoon to St. Denis, and madame du Deffand muſt get you a particular order to be ſhown (which is never ſhewn without) the effigies of the kings. They are in preſſes over the treaſure which is ſhown, and where is the glorious antique cameo-cup; but the countenance of Charles IX. is ſo horrid and remarkable, you would think he had died on the morrow of the St. Barthelemi, and waked full of the recollection. If you love enamels and exquiſite medals, get to ſee the collection of a monſieur d'Henery, who lives in the corner of the ſtreet where ſir John Lambert lives—I forget its name. There is an old man behind the rue de Colombier, who has a great but bad collection of old French portraits; I delighted in them, but perhaps you would not. *I*, you may be ſure, hunted out every thing of that ſort. The convent and collection of St. Germain, I mean that over againſt the hotel du Parc royal, is well worth ſeeing—but I forget names ſtrangely.—Oh! delightful—lord Cholmondeley ſends me word he goes to Paris on Monday: I ſhall ſend this and my other letter by him. It was him I meant; I knew he was going, and had prepared it.

[1] He means from their extreme bad taſte.

Pray

Pray take care to lock up your papers in a ſtrong box that nobody can open. They imagine you are at Paris on ſome commiſſion, and there is no truſting French hotels or ſervants. America is in a deſperate ſituation. The accounts from the Congreſs are not expected before the 10th, and expected very warm. I have not time to tell you ſome manœuvres againſt them that will make your blood curdle. Write to me when you can by private hands, as I will to you. There are always Engliſh paſſing backwards and forwards.

LETTER XCVI.

Strawberry-hill, November 12, 1774.

I HAVE received a delightful letter from you of four ſheets, and another ſince. I ſhall not reply to the campaigning part (though much obliged to you for it), becauſe I have twenty other ſubjects more preſſing to talk of. The firſt is to thank you for your exceſſive goodneſs to my dear old friend—ſhe has ſome indiſcretions, and *you muſt not have any to her*; but ſhe has the beſt heart in the world, and I am happy, at her great age, that ſhe has ſpirits enough not to be always upon her guard. A bad heart, eſpecially after long experience, is but too apt to overflow *inwardly* with prudence. At leaſt, as I am but too like her, and have corrected too few of my faults, I would fain perſuade myſelf that ſome of them flow from a good principle—but I have not time to talk of myſelf, though you are much too partial to me, and give me an opportunity; yet I ſhall not take it.

Now for Engliſh news, and then your letter again.

There has been a great mortality here; though death has rather been *prié* than a volunteer. ———, as I told lady Aileſbury laſt poſt, ſhot himſelf. He is dead, totally undone. Whether that alone was the cauſe, or whether he had not done ſomething worſe, I doubt. I cannot conceive that, with his reſources, he ſhould have been hopeleſs—and to ſuſpect him of delicacy, impoſſible!

A ſhip is arrived from America, and I doubt with very bad news, for none but trifling letters have yet been given out—but I am here, ſee nobody

that knows any thing, and only hear by accident from people that drop in. The ſloop that is to bring the reſult of the general aſſembly is not yet come. There are indeed rumours, that both the non-importation and even non-exportation have been decreed; and that the flame is univerſal. I hope this is exaggerated! yet I am told the ſtocks will fall very much in a day or two.

I have nothing to tell lady Aileſbury, but that I hear a deplorable account of the opera. There is a new puppet-ſhow at Drury-lane, as fine as ſcenes can make it, called The Maid of the Oaks, and as dull as the author could not help making it[1].

Except M. D'Herouville I know all the people you name. C. I doubt by things I have heard formerly, may have been a *concuſſionnaire*. The duke, your *protecteur*[2], is mediocre enough: you would have been more pleaſed with his wife. The chevalier's[3] bon-mot is excellent, and ſo is he. He has as much bouffonnerie as the Italians, with more wit and novelty. His impromptu verſes often admirable. Get madame du Deffand to ſhow you his Embaſſy to the princeſs Chriſtine, and his verſes on his eldeſt uncle, beginning, *Si monſieur de Veau*. His ſecond uncle has parts, but they are not ſo natural. Madame de Caraman is a very good kind of woman, but has not a quarter of her ſiſter's parts. Madame de Mirepoix is *the* agreeable woman of the world, when ſhe pleaſes—but there muſt not be a card in the room. Lord —— has acted like himſelf; that is, unlike any body elſe. You know, I believe, that I think him a very good ſpeaker; but I have little opinion of his judgment and knowledge of the world, and a great opinion of his affectation and inſincerity. The abbé Raynal, though he wrote that fine work on the commerce des deux Indes, is the moſt tireſome creature in the world. The firſt time I met him was at the dull baron d'Olbach's: we were twelve at table: I dreaded opening my mouth in French, before ſo many people and ſo many ſervants: he began queſtion-

[1] Mr. Walpole's opinion of this author totally changed upon the appearance of The Heireſs, which he always called "the genteeleſt comedy" in the Engliſh language. E.

[2] The duc de la Valiere; of whom Mr. Conway had ſaid, that, when preſented to him, "his reception was what might be called good, but rather *de protection*. E.

[3] The chevalier de Boufflers, well known for his Letters from Switzerland, addreſſed to his mother; his Reine de Golconde, a tale; and a number of very pretty vers de ſocieté. E.

ing me, croſs the table, about our colonies, which I underſtand as I do Coptic. I made him ſigns I was deaf. After dinner he found I was not, and never forgave me. Mademoiſelle Raucoux I never ſaw till you told me madame du Deffand ſaid ſhe was *demoniaque ſans chaleur!* What painting! I ſee her now. Le Kain ſometimes pleaſed me, oftener not. Molè is charming in genteel, or in pathetic comedy, and would be fine in tragedy, if he was ſtronger. Preville is always perfection. I like his wife in affected parts, though not animated enough. There was a delightful woman who did the lady Wiſhforts, I don't know if there ſtill, I think her name mademoiſelle Drouin; and a fat woman, rather elderly, who ſometimes acted the ſoubrette. But you have miſſed the Dumenil, and Caillaut! What irreparable loſſes! Madame du Deffand, perhaps—I don't know—could obtain your hearing the Clairon—yet the Dumenil was infinitely preferable.

I could now almoſt find in my heart to laugh at you for liking Boutin's garden[1]. Do you know, that I drew a plan of it, as the completeſt abſurdity I ever ſaw. What! a river that wriggles at right angles through a ſtone-gutter, with two tanſy puddings that were dug out of it, and three or four beds in a row, by a corner of the wall, with ſamples of graſs, corn, and of en friche, like a taylor's paper of patterns! And you like this! I will tell Park-place——Oh! I had forgot your audience in dumb ſhow—Well, as madame de Sevigné ſaid, Le roi de Pruſſe, c'eſt le plus grand roi du monde ſtill[2]. My love to the old parliament: I don't love new ones.

I went ſeveral times to madame de Monconſeil's, who is juſt what you ſay. Meſdames de Tingri & de la Vauguion I never ſaw: madame de Noailles once or twice, and enough. You ſay ſomething of madame Mallet,

[1] See another ludicrous deſcription of this garden in a letter to Mr. Chute.

[2] This alludes to Mr. Conway's preſentation to the king of France, Louis XVI. at Fontainebleau, of which in his letter to Mr. Walpole he gives the following account: E.

"On St. Hubert's day in the morning I had the honour of being preſented to the king: 'twas a good day and an excellent deed. You may be ſure I was well received, the French are ſo polite! and their court ſo poliſhed!—The emperor indeed talked to me every day; ſo did the king of Pruſſia regularly and much: but that was not to be compared to the extraordinary reception of his moſt chriſtian majeſty, who, when I was preſented, did not ſtop, nor look to ſee what ſort of an animal was offered to his notice, but carried his head as it ſeemed ſomewhat higher, and paſſed his way."

which

which I could not read; for, by the way, your brother and I agree that you are grown not to write legibly: is that lady in being? I knew her formerly. Madame de Blot I know, and monſieur de Paulmy I know, but for heaven's ſake who is col. Conway[1]? Mademoiſelle Sanadon is *la ſana donna*, and not mademoiſelle *Celadon*[2], as you call her. Pray aſſure my good monſieur Schoualow of my great regard: he is one of the beſt of beings.

I have ſaid all I could, at leaſt all I ſhould. I reſerve the reſt of my paper for a poſtſcript; for this is but Saturday, and my letter cannot depart till Tueſday: but I could not for one minute defer anſwering your charming volumes, which intereſt me ſo much. I grieve for lady Harriet's[3] ſwelled face, and wiſh for both their ſakes ſhe could transfer it to her father. I aſſure her I meant nothing by deſiring you to ſee the verſes to the princeſs Chriſtine[4], wherein there is very profane mention of a pair of ſwelled cheeks. I hear nothing of madame d'Olonne[5].—Oh! make madame du Deffand ſhow you the ſweet portrait of madame de Prie, the duke of Bourbon's miſtreſs[6]. Have you ſeen madame de Monaco, and the remains of madame de Brionne? If you wiſh to ſee Mrs. A——, aſk for the princeſſe de Ligne. If you have ſeen monſieur de Maurepas, you have ſeen the late lord Hardwicke[7]. By your not naming him, I ſuppoſe the duc de Nivernois is not at Paris. Say a great deal for me to M. de Guiſnes. You will not ſee my paſſion, the ducheſs de Chatillon. If you ſee madame de Nivernois, you will think the duke of Newcaſtle is come to life again. Alas! where is my poſtſcript?

[1] An officer in the French ſervice.

[2] Mademoiſelle Sanadon, a lady who lived with madame du Deffand.

[3] Lady Harriet Stanhope, afterwards married to lord Foley, was at this time at Paris with her father the earl of Harrington.

[4] By the chevalier de Boufflers.

[5] The beautiful enamel miniature of madame d'Olonne, now at Strawberry-hill.

[6] This portrait is now at Strawberry-hill.

[7] He means from their perſonal reſemblance.

LETTER XCVII.

Arlington-ſtreet, November 27, 1774.

I HAVE received your delightfully plump packet with a letter of ſix pages, one from madame du Deffand, the Eloges, and the Lit de juſtice. Now obſerve my gratitude: I appoint you my reſident at Paris; but you are not to reſemble all our miniſters abroad, and expect to live at home, which would deſtroy *my lord Caſtlecomer's* [1] view in your ſtaying at Paris. However, to prove to you that I have ſome gratitude that is not totally ſelfiſh, I will tell you what little news I know, before I anſwer your letter; for Engliſh news, to be ſure, is the moſt agreeable circumſtance in a letter from England.

On my coming to town yeſterday, there was nothing but more deaths—don't you think we have the plague? the biſhop of Worceſter, lord Breadalbane, lord Strathmore. The firſt fell from his horſe, or with his horſe, at Bath, and the biſhoprick was incontinently given to biſhop North.

America is ſtill more refractory, and I doubt will outvote the miniſtry. They have picked general Gage's pocket of three pieces of cannon, and intercepted ſome troops that were going to him. Sir William Draper is writing plans of pacification in our newſpapers; and lord Chatham flatters himſelf that he ſhall be ſent for when the patient is given over; which I don't think at all unlikely to happen. My poor nephew [2] is very political too: ſo we ſhall not want mad-doctors. A-propos, I hear Wilkes ſays he will propoſe M——— for ſpeaker.

The eccleſiaſtical court are come to a reſolution that the ducheſs of Kingſton is Mrs. Hervey; and the ſentence will be public in a fortnight. It is not ſo certain that ſhe will loſe the eſtate. Auguſtus [3] is not in a much more pleaſant predicament than ſhe is. I ſaw lord Briſtol laſt night: he looks perfectly well, but his ſpeech is much affected, and his right hand.

[1] A cant phraſe of Mr. Walpole's, which took its riſe from the following ſtory:

The tutor of a young lord Caſtlecomer, who lived at Twickenham with his mother, having broke his leg, ſomebody pitying the poor man, to the mother, lady Caſtlecomer, ſhe replied, "Yes, indeed, it is *very inconvenient to my lord Caſtlecomer*." E.

[2] George Walpole, earl of Orford.

[3] Auguſtus Hervey, to whom ſhe was firſt married.

Lady

Lady Lyttelton, who, you know, never hears any thing that has happened, wrote to me two days ago, to ask if it would not be necessary for *you* to come over for the meeting of the parliament. I answered, very gravely, that to be sure you ought: but though *sir James Morgan* threatened you loudly with a petition, yet, as it could not be heard till after Christmas, I was afraid you would not be persuaded to come sooner. I hope she will inquire who *sir James Morgan* is, and that people will persuade her she has made a confusion about sir James ———. Now for your letter.

I have been in the chambre de parlement, I think they call it the grande chambre; and was shown the corner in which the monarchs sit, and do not wonder you did not guess where it was they sat. It is just like the dark corner, under the window, where I always sat in the house of commons. What has happened, has passed exactly according to my ideas. When one king breaks one parliament, and another another, what can the result be but despotism? or of what else is it a proof? If a tory king displaces his father's whig lord chamberlain, neither lord chamberlain has the more or the less power over the theatres and court-mournings and birth-day balls. All that can arrive is, that the people will be still more attached to the old parliament, from this seeming restitution of a right—but the people must have some power before their attachment can signify a straw. The old parliament too may some time or other give itself more airs[1] on this confession of right; but that too cannot be but in a minority, or when the power of the crown is lessened by reasons that have nothing to do with the parliament. I will answer for it, they will be too *grateful* to give umbrage to their restorer. Indeed I did not think the people would be so quick-sighted at once, as to see the distinction of old and new was without a difference. Methinks France and England are like the land and the sea; one gets a little sense when the other loses it.

I am quite satisfied with all you tell me about my friend. My intention is certainly to see her again, if I am able; but I am too old to lay plans, especially when it depends on the despot gout to register or cancel them. It is even melancholy to see her, when it will probably be but once more; and still more melancholy, when we ought to say to one another, in a different sense from the common, *à revoir!* However, as mine is a pretty cheerful

[1] We have seen these *airs* not only the cause of its own destruction, but of one of the greatest revolutions that ever took place in Europe. E.

kind

kind of philoſophy, I think the beſt way is to think of dying, but to talk and act as if one was not to die; or elſe one tires other people, and dies before one's time. I have truly all the affection and attachment for her that ſhe deſerves from me, or I ſhould not be ſo very thankful as I am for your kindneſs to her. The Choiſeuls will certainly return at Chriſtmas, and will make her life much more agreeable. The ducheſs has as much attention to her as I could have; but that will not keep me from making her a viſit.

I have only ſeen, not known, the younger madame de Boufflers. For her muſical talents, I am little worthy of them—yet I am juſt going to lady Bingham's to hear the Baſtardella, whom, though the firſt ſinger in Italy, Mrs. Yates could not or would not agree with [1]; and ſhe is to have twelve hundred pounds for ſinging twelve times at the Pantheon, where, if ſhe had a voice as loud as lord Clare's, ſhe could not be heard. The two bons-mots you ſent me are excellent; but, alas! I had heard them both before: conſequently your own, which is very good too, pleaſed me much more. M. de Stainville I think you will not like: he has ſenſe, but has a dry military harſhneſs, that at leaſt did not ſuit me—and then I hate his barbarity to his wife [2].

You was very lucky indeed to get one of the ſixty tickets [3]. Upon the whole, your travels have been very fortunate, and the few mortifications amply compenſated. If a duke [4] has been ſpiteful when your back was turned, a hero-king has been all courteſy. If another king has been ſilent, an emperor has been ſingularly gracious. Frowns or ſilence may happen to any body: the ſmiles have been addreſſed to you particularly.—So was the ducal frown indeed—but would you have earned a ſmile at the price ſet on it? One cannot do right and be always applauded—but in ſuch caſes are not frowns tantamount?

As my letter will not ſet forth till the day after to-morrow, I reſerve the reſt for any additional news, and this time *will* reſerve it.

[1] To ſing at the opera.

[2] Upon a ſuſpicion of gallantry, ſhe was confined for life.

[3] To ſee the lit de juſtice held by Louis XVI. when he recalled the parliament of Paris baniſhed by Louis XV. at the inſtigation of the chancellor Maupou, and ſuppreſſed the new one of their creation. E.

[4] The duke de Choiſeul.

St. Parliament's day, 29th, after breakfaſt.

THE ſpeech is ſaid to be firm, and to talk of the *rebellion* of our province of Maſſachuſets. No ſloop is arrived yet to tell us how to call the reſt. Mr. Van is to move for the expulſion of Wilkes; which will diſtreſs, and may produce an odd ſcene. Lord Holland is certainly dead; the papers ſay, Robinſon too, but that I don't know:—ſo many deaths of late make report kill to right and left.

LETTER XCVIII.

Arlington-ſtreet, December 15, 1774.

AS I wrote to lady Aileſbury but on Tueſday, I ſhould not have followed it ſo ſoon with this, if I had nothing to tell you but of myſelf. My gouts are never dangerous, and the ſhades of them not important. However, to diſpatch this article at once, I will tell you, that the pain I felt yeſterday in my elbow made me think all former pain did not deſerve the name. Happily the torture did not laſt above two hours; and, which is more ſurpriſing, it is all the real pain I have felt; for though my hand has been as ſore as if flayed, and that both feet are lame, the bootikins demonſtrably prevent or extract the ſting of it, and I ſee no reaſon not to expect to get out in a fortnight more. Surely, if I am laid up but one month in two years, inſtead of five or ſix, I have reaſon to think the bootikins ſent from heaven.

The long expected ſloop is arrived at laſt, and is indeed a *man of war!* The general congreſs have voted,

A non-importation.

A non-exportation.

A non-conſumption.

That, in caſe of hoſtilities committed by the troops at Boſton, the ſeveral provinces will march to the aſſiſtance of their countrymen.

That the cargoes of ſhips now at ſea ſhall be ſold on their arrival, and the money ariſing thence given to the poor at Boſton.

That

That a letter, in the nature of a petition of rights, ſhall be ſent to the king; another to the houſe of *commons*; a third to the people of England; a demand of repeal of all the acts of parliament affecting North America paſſed during this reign, as alſo of the Quebec-bill: and theſe reſolutions not to be altered till ſuch repeal is obtained.

Well, I believe you do not regret being neither in parliament nor in adminiſtration! As you are an idle man, and have nothing elſe to do, you may ſit down and tell one a remedy for all this. Perhaps you will give yourſelf airs, and ſay you was a prophet, and that prophets are not honoured in their own country.—Yet, if you have any inſpiration about you, I aſſure you it will be of great ſervice—We are at our wit's end—which was no great journey. —Oh! you conclude lord Chatham's crutch will be ſuppoſed a wand, and be ſent for—They might as well ſend for *my* crutch; and they ſhould not have it; the ſtile is a little too high to help them over. His lordſhip is a little fitter for raiſing a ſtorm than laying one, and of late ſeems to have loſt both virtues. The Americans at leaſt have acted like men, gone to the bottom at once, and ſet the whole upon the whole. Our conduct has been that of pert children: we have thrown a pebble at a maſtiff, and are ſurpriſed it was not frightened. Now we muſt be worried by it, or muſt kill the guardian of the houſe, which will be plundered the moment little maſter has nothing but the old nurſe to defend it. But I have done with reflections; you will be fuller of them than I.

LETTER XCIX.

Arlington-ſtreet, December 26, 1774.

I BEGIN my letter to-day, to prevent the fatigue of dictating two to-morrow. In the firſt and beſt place, I am very near recovered; that is, though ſtill a mummy, I have no pain left, nor ſcarce any ſenſation of gout except in my right hand, which is ſtill in complexion and ſhape a lobſter's claw. Now, unleſs any body can prove to me that three weeks are longer than five months and a half, they will hardly convince me that the bootikins are not a cure for fits of the gout, and a very ſhort cure, though they cannot prevent it: nor perhaps is it to be wiſhed they ſhould; for, if the gout prevents every thing elſe, would not one have ſomething that does? I have

but

but one ſingle doubt left about the bootikins, which is, whether they do not weaken my breaſt: but as I am ſenſible that my own ſpirits do half the miſchief, and that, if I could have held my tongue, and kept from talking and dictating letters, I ſhould not have been half ſo bad as I have been, there remains but half due to bootikins on the balance: and ſurely the ravages of the laſt long fit, and two years more in age, ought to make another deduction. Indeed, my forcing myſelf to dictate my laſt letter to you almoſt killed me; and ſince the gout is not dangerous to me if I am kept perfectly quiet, my good old friend muſt have patience, and not inſiſt upon letters from me but when it is quite eaſy to me to ſend them. So much for me and my gout. I will now endeavour to anſwer ſuch parts of your laſt letters as I can in this manner, and conſidering how difficult it is to read *your* writing in a dark room.

I have not yet been able to look into the French harangues you ſent me. Voltaire's verſes to Robert Covelle are not only very bad, but very contemptible.

I am delighted with all the honours you receive, and with all the amuſements they procure you, which is the beſt part of honours. For the glorious part, I am always like the man in Pope's Donne,

"Then happy he who ſhows the tombs, ſaid I."

That is, they are leaſt troubleſome there. The *ſereniſſime*[1] you met at Montmorency is one of the leaſt to my taſte; we quarrelled about Rouſſeau, and I never went near him after my firſt journey. Madame du D. will tell you the ſtory, if ſhe has not forgotten it.

It is ſuppoſed here, that the new proceedings of the French parliament will produce great effects: I don't ſuppoſe any ſuch thing. What America will produce I know ſtill leſs; but certainly ſomething very ſerious. The merchants have ſummoned a meeting for the ſecond of next month, and the petition from the congreſs to the king is arrived. The heads have been ſhown to lord D———; but I hear one of the agents is againſt preſenting it: yet it is thought it will be delivered, and then be ordered to be laid before parliament. The whole affair has already been talked of there on the army

[1] The prince de Conti.

and navy-days; and Burke, they ſay, has ſhone with amazing wit and ridicule on the late inactivity of Gage, and his loſing his cannon and ſtraw; on his being intrenched in a town with an army of obſervation; with that army being, as ſir William Meredith had ſaid, an aſylum for magiſtrates, and to ſecure the port. Burke ſaid, he had heard of an aſylum for debtors and whores, never for magiſtrates; and of ſhips, never of armies, ſecuring a port. This is all there has been in parliament, but elections. C—— F——'s place did not come into queſtion. Mr. ———, who is one of the new elect, has opened, but with no ſucceſs. There is a ſeaman, Luttrell, that promiſes much better.

I am glad you like the ducheſs de Lauzun [1]: ſhe is one of my favourites. The hotel du Chatelet promiſed to be very fine, but was not finiſhed when I was laſt at Paris. I was much pleaſed with the perſon that ſlept againſt St. Lambert's poem: I wiſh I had thought of the noſtrum, when Mr. ——, a thouſand years ago, at Lyons, would read an epic poem to me juſt as I had received a dozen letters from England. St. Lambert is a great jackanapes, and a very tiny genius. I ſuppoſe the poem was The Seaſons, which is four fans ſpun out into a Georgic.

If I had not been too ill, I ſhould have thought of bidding you hear midnight maſs on Chriſtmas-eve in madame du Deffand's tribune, as I uſed to do.

[1] She became ducheſſe de Biron upon the death of her huſband's grandfather, the marechal duc de Biron.

This amiable, intereſting, and virtuous woman, the purity of whoſe character, even under all the unfavourable circumſtances of an ill-ſuited marriage and a huſband's ſtrange neglect, neither French profligacy nor French levity had ever dared aſperſe, having twice fled to this country, after the revolution in her own, to avoid that violence and thoſe perſecutions to which her noble birth and great perſonal fortune could alone make *her* liable, unadviſedly returned to Paris in the ſpring of the year 1794, deluded by fallacious promiſes of ſecurity, and by hopes of preſerving ſome of the very large fortune to which ſhe was heireſs, to aſſiſt thoſe of her friends and dependants, who, involved in the ſame circumſtances with herſelf, had no ſuch reſources of their own.

This amiable Being, in the prime of life, and unaccuſed of any crime, was firſt confined in her own houſe, then ſent to a common jail, and ſoon after fell an undiſtinguiſhed victim to the bloody and ruthleſs tyranny of Robeſpierre.

That there may have periſhed, in the courſe of his indiſcriminate ſlaughter, many victims equally innocent, is hardly to be doubted; but thoſe who were perſonally acquainted with the mild unmeddling character, the quiet unaſſuming ſenſe, and the modeſt diffident manners of the ducheſſe de Biron, can never figure her to themſelves, hurried by ruffians to a priſon, and periſhing publicly on a ſcaffold, without peculiar ſentiments of horror, melancholy, and diſguſt.

E.

To

To be ſure, you know that her apartment was part of madame du Monteſpan's, whoſe arms are on the back of the grate in madame du Deffand's own bed-chamber. A-propos, aſk her to ſhow you madame de Prie's picture, M. le Duc's miſtreſs—I am very fond of it—and make her tell you her hiſtory.

I have but two or three words more. Remember my parcel of letters from madame du D. and pray remember this injunction, not to ruin yourſelves in bringing preſents. A very ſlight fairing of a guinea or two obliges as much, is more faſhionable, and not a moment ſooner forgotten than a magnificent one; and then you may very cheaply oblige the more perſons: but as the ſick fox, in Gay's Fables, ſays (for one always excepts oneſelf),

"A chicken too might do me good——"

I allow you to go as far as three or even five guineas for a ſnuff-box for me: and then, as ——— ——— told the king, when he aſked for the reverſion of the Light-houſe for two lives, and the king reproached him with having always adviſed him againſt granting reverſions; he replied, "Oh ſir, but if your majeſty will give me this, I will take care you ſhall never give away another."

Adieu, with my own left hand,

HOR. WALPOLE.

LETTER C.

Arlington-ſtreet, December 31, 1774.

NO child was ever ſo delighted to go into breeches, as I was this morning to get on a pair of cloth ſhoes as big as Jack Harris's: this joy may be the ſpirits of dotage—but what ſignifies whence one is happy? Obſerve too that this is written with my own *right* hand, with the bootikin actually upon it, which has no diſtinction of fingers: ſo I no longer ſee any miracle in Buckinger, who was famous for writing without hands or *feet* [as if it was

indifferent which one uſes, provided one has a pair of either]. Take notice, I write ſo much better without fingers than with, that I adviſe *you* to try a bootikin. To be ſure, the operation is a little ſlower; but to a priſoner, the duration of his amuſement is of far more conſequence than the vivacity of it.

Laſt night I received your very kind, I might ſay *your* letter tout court, of Chriſtmas-day. By this time I truſt you are quite out of pain about me. My fit has been as regular as poſſible; only, as if the bootikins were poſt-horſes, it made the grand tour of all my limbs in three weeks. If it will always uſe the ſame expedition, I am content it ſhould take the journey once in two years. You muſt not mind my breaſt: it was always the weakeſt part of a very weak ſyſtem; yet did not ſuffer now by the gout, but in conſequence of it; and would not have been near ſo bad, if I could have kept from talking and dictating letters. The moment I am out of pain I am in high ſpirits; and though I never take any medicines, there is one thing abſolutely neceſſary to be put into my mouth—a gag. At preſent the town is ſo empty that my tongue is a fine-cure.

I am well acquainted with the Bibliotheque du Roi, and the medals, and the prints. I ſpent an entire day in looking over the Engliſh portraits, and kept the librarian without his dinner till dark night, till I was ſatisfied. Though the Choiſeuls [1] will not *acquaint* with you, I hope their abbé Barthelemi [2] is not put under the ſame quarantine. Beſides great learning, he has infinite wit and poliſſonnerie, and is one of the beſt kind of men in the world. As to the grandpapa [3], il ne nous aime pas nous autres, and has never forgiven lord Chatham. Though exceedingly agreeable himſelf, I don't think his taſte exquiſite.—Perhaps I was piqued; but he ſeemed to like —— better than any of us. Indeed I am a little afraid that my dear friend's impetuous zeal may have been a little too prompt in preſſing you upon them d'abord:—but don't ſay a word of this—it is her great goodneſs.—I thank you a million of times for all yours to her:—ſhe is perfectly grateful for it.

[1] Mr. Conway and the ladies of his party had met with the moſt flattering and diſtinguiſhed reception at Paris from every body but the duc and ducheſſe de Choiſeul, who rather ſeemed to decline their acquaintance. E.

[2] The author of the Voyage du jeune Anacharſis.

[3] A name given to the duc de Choiſeul by madame du Deffand.

The

The chevalier's [1] verſes are pretty enough. I own I like Saurin's [2] much better than you ſeem to do. Perhaps I am prejudiced by the curſe on the chancellor at the end.

Not a word of news here. In a ſick-room one hears all there is, but I have not heard even a lie: but as this will not ſet out theſe three days, it is to be hoped ſome charitable chriſtian will tell a body one. Lately indeed we heard that the king of Spain had abdicated; but I believe it was ſome ſtock-jobber that had depoſed him.

Lord George Cavendiſh, for my ſolace in my retirement, has given me a book, the Hiſtory of his own Furneſs-abbey, written by a Scotch ex-jeſuit. I cannot ſay that this unnatural conjunction of a Cavendiſh and a jeſuit has produced a lively colt; but I found one paſſage worth any money. It is in an extract of a conſtable's journal kept during the civil war; and ends thus: "And there was never heard of ſuch troubleſome and diſtracted times as

[1] Verſes written by the chevalier de Boufflers, to be preſented by madame du Deffand to the duke and ducheſs of Choiſeul. They are mere vers de ſocieté, and would not be tolerable out of the ſociety for which they were written. E.

[2] They were addreſſed to Mr. de Maleſherbes, then premier preſident de la cour des aides; ſince ſtill more diſtinguiſhed by his having been the intrepid, though unſucceſsful advocate choſen by the unfortunate Louis XVI. on his trial. He ſoon after periſhed by the ſame guillotine, from which he could not preſerve his ill-fated maſter. E.

The verſes were as follow:

Sur monſieur de Maleſherbes, premier preſident de la cour des aides.

O! qu'on aime la bonhommie
Qui dans ta grande ame s'allie
Aux grands talents!
Tout Paris fête Maleſherbes,
Le plus grand et le moins ſuperbe
Des *revenans* [1].

Jadis l'orateur qu'on renomme,
De l'exil revenu à Rome,
Eût même accueil:
Mais le Ciceron de la France
De l'autre a toute l'éloquence
Sans ſon orgueil.

Amis, ſa gloire l'embarraſſe,
Il faudra pourtant qu'il s'y faſſe:
Mais filons doux,
Et nous repoſons ſur l'hiſtoire;
Sans plus lui parler de ſa gloire,
Buvons y tous—

À celui qui ſi bien conſeille
Son maître, dont il a l'oreille [2],
Buvons auſſi
A ſa ſanté——Je vous la porte,
Mais diſons que le diable emporte
On ſçait bien qui!

[1] The members of the recalled parliament were called *les revenans*.

[2] Le duc de Choiſeul.

theſe

theſe five years have been, *but eſpecially for conſtables.*" It is ſo natural, that *inconvenient to my lord Caſtlecomer* is ſcarce a better proverb.

Pray tell lady A. that though ſhe has been ſo very good to me, I addreſs my letters to you rather than to her, becauſe my pen is not always upon its guard, but is apt to ſay whatever comes into its nib; and then if ſhe peeps over your ſhoulder, I am cenſé not to know it. Lady Harriet's wiſhes have done me great good: nothing but a father's gout could be obdurate enough to reſiſt them. My Mrs. D. ſays nothing to me; but I give her intentions credit, and lay her ſilence on you.

January 1, 1775; and a happy new year!

I WALK! I walk! walk alone!—I have been five times quite round my room to-day, and my month is not up! The day after to-morrow I ſhall go down into the dining-room; the next week to take the air; and then if Mrs. ——— is very preſſing, why, I don't know what may happen. Well! but you want news—there are none to be had. They think there is a ſhip loſt with Gage's diſpatches. Lady Temple gives all her diamonds to miſs Nugent. Lord Pigot loſt 400 pounds the other night at princeſs Amelia's. Miſs Davis has carried her cauſe againſt Mrs. Yates, and is to ſing again at the opera. This is all my coffee-houſe furniſhed this morning.

LETTER CI.

Arlington-ſtreet, January 15, 1775.

YOU have made me very happy by ſaying your journey to Naples is laid aſide. Perhaps it made too great impreſſion on me; but you muſt reflect, that all my life I have ſatisfied myſelf with your being perfect, inſtead of trying to be ſo myſelf. I don't aſk you to return, though I wiſh it: in truth, there is nothing to invite you. I don't want you to come and breathe fire and ſword againſt the Boſtonians, like that ſecond duke of Alva the inflexible lord G—— G———; or to anathematize the court and all its works, like the incorruptible B. who ſcorns lucre, except when he can buy an hundred thouſand acres from naked Caribs for a ſong. I don't want you to do any thing like a party-man. I truſt you think of every party as I do,

with contempt, from lord Chatham's muſtard-bowl down to lord Rockingham's hartſhorn. All perhaps will be tried in their turns; and yet, if they had genius, might not be mighty enough to ſave us—From ſome ruin or other I think nobody can, and what ſignifies an option of miſchiefs?

An account is come of the Boſtonians having voted an army of ſixteen thouſand men, who are to be called *minute-men*, as they are to be ready at a minute's warning. Two directors or commiſſioners, I don't know what they are called, are appointed. There has been too a kind of mutiny in the 5th regiment. A ſoldier was found drunk on his poſt. Gage, in this time of *danger*, thought rigour neceſſary, and ſent the fellow to a court-martial. They ordered 200 laſhes. The general ordered them to improve their ſentence. Next day it was publiſhed in the Boſton Gazette. He called them before him, and required them on oath to abjure the communication: three officers refuſed. Poor G. is to be ſcape-goat, not for this, but for what was a reaſon againſt employing him, incapacity. I wonder at the precedent! Howe is talked of for his ſucceſſor.—Well, I have done with *you!*—Now I ſhall go goſſip with lady A———.

You muſt know, madam, that near Bath is erected a new Parnaſſus, compoſed of three laurels, a myrtle tree, a weeping-willow, and a view of the Avon, which has been new chriſtened Helicon. Ten years ago there lived a madam ——, an old rough humouriſt who paſſed for a wit; her daughter who paſſed for nothing, married to a captain ——, full of good-natured officiouſneſs. Theſe good folks were friends of miſs Rich[1], who carried me to dine with them at ———, now Pindus. They caught a little of what was then called taſte, built and planted, and begot children, till the whole caravan were forced to go abroad to retrieve. Alas! Mrs. —— is returned a beauty, a genius, a Sappho, a tenth muſe, as romantic as mad^lle^ Scuderi, and as ſophiſticated as Mrs. V———. The captain's fingers are loaded with cameos, his tongue runs over with virtù; and that both may contribute to the improvement of their own country, they have introduced bouts-rimés as a new diſcovery. They hold a Parnaſſus-fair every Thurſday, give out rhymes and themes, and all the flux of quality at Bath contend for the prizes. A Roman vaſe dreſſed with pink ribbands and myrtles receives

[1] Daughter of ſir Robert Rich, and ſiſter to the ſecond wife of George lord Lyttelton.

the

the poetry, which is drawn out every feſtival: ſix judges of theſe Olympic games retire and ſelect the brighteſt compoſitions, which the reſpective ſucceſsful acknowledge, kneel to Mrs. Calliope ———, kiſs her fair hand, and are crowned by it with myrtle, with—I don't know what. You may think this a fiction, or exaggeration.—Be dumb, unbelievers! The collection is printed, publiſhed—Yes, on my faith! there are bouts-rimés on a buttered muffin, by her grace the ducheſs of Northumberland; receipts to make them by Corydon the venerable, alias ———; others very pretty, by lord P———; ſome by lord C———; many by Mrs. —— herſelf, that have no fault but wanting metre; and immortality promiſed to her without end or meaſure. In ſhort, ſince folly, which never ripens to madneſs but in this hot climate, ran diſtracted, there never was any thing ſo entertaining, or ſo dull—for you cannot read ſo long as I have been telling.

January 17.

BEFORE I could finiſh this, I received your diſpatches by ſir T. Clarges, and a moſt entertaining letter in three tomes. It is being very dull not to be able to furniſh a quarter ſo much from your own country—but what can I do? You are embarked in a new world, and I am living on the ſcraps of an old one, of which I am tired. The beſt I can do is to reply to your letter, and not attempt to amuſe you when I have nothing to ſay. I think the parliament meets to-day or in a day or two—but I hope you are coming—Your brother ſays ſo, and mad. du Deff. ſays ſo; and ſure it is time to leave Paris, when you know ninety of the inhabitants. There ſeems much affectation in thoſe that will not know you[1]; and affectation is always a littleneſs—it has been even rude; but to be ſure the rudeneſs one feels leaſt is that which is addreſſed to one before there has been any acquaintance.

Ninon came[2], becauſe, on mad. du D.'s mentioning it, I concluded it a new work, and am diſappointed. I can ſay this by heart. The picture of mad. de Prie[3], which you don't ſeem to value, and ſo mad. du D. ſays, I believe I ſhall diſpute with you: I think it charming, but when offered to me years ago, I would not take it—it was now given to you a little à mon intention.

I am ſorry that, amongſt all the verſes you have ſent me, you ſhould have

[1] The duke de Choiſeul. [2] The Life of Ninon de l'Enclos. [3] It is now at Strawberry-hill.

forgotten

forgotten what you commend the moſt, *Les trois exclamations*; I hope you will bring them with you. Voltaire's are intolerably ſtupid, and not above the level of officers in garriſon. Some of M. de Pezay's are very pretty, though there is too much of them; and in truth I had ſeen them before. Thoſe on mad. de la Valiere pretty too, but one is a little tired of Venus and the Graces. I am moſt pleaſed with your[1] own—and if you have a mind to like them ſtill better, make mad. du D. ſhow you mine[2], which are neither French, nor meaſure, nor metre. She is unwilling to tell me ſo; which diverts me. Yours are really genteel and new.

I envy you the Ruſſian anecdotes[3] more than M. de Chamfort's fables, of which I know nothing; and as you ſay no more, I conclude I loſe not much. The ſtories of ſir Charles[4] are ſo far not new to me, that I heard them of him from abroad after he was mad: but I believe no mortal of his acquaintance ever heard them before; nor did they at all correſpond with his former life, with his treatment of his wife, or his hiſtory with Mrs. Woffington, qui n'étoit pas dupe. I ſay nothing on the other ſtories you tell me of billets dropped[5], et pour cauſe.

I think I have touched all your paragraphs, and have nothing new to ſend you in return. In truth, I go no where but into private rooms; for I am not enough recovered to re-launch into the world, when I have ſo good an excuſe for avoiding it. The bootikins have done wonders; but even two or three ſuch victories will coſt too dear. I ſubmit very patiently to my

[1] They were the following lines, ſent with a porcelaine dejeuné to the vicomteſſe de Cambis at the beginning of the new-year, when it was the univerſal cuſtom at Paris to interchange ſmall preſents known by the name of *etrennes*. E.

L'etrenne qu'on vous offre ici
N'eſt rare ni mignonne;
Mais les vetilles ont du prix
Quand c'eſt le cœur qui donne.

De plus encor pour ſatisfaire
Au ſcrupule le plus ſevere,
If faut penſer qu'en acceptant
C'eſt vous qui faites le preſent.

[2] Theſe lines do not appear.

[3] The account of the revolution in Ruſſia which placed Catherine II. on the throne, by M. de la Rulhiere, now publiſhed. Mr. Conway had heard it read in manuſcript in a private ſociety. E.

[4] Sir Charles Hanbury Williams.

[5] This alludes to circumſtances Mr. Conway mentions as having taken place at a ball at Verſailles.

lot. I am old and broken, and it never was my ſyſtem to impoſe upon myſelf when one can deceive nobody elſe. I have ſpirits enough for my uſe, that is, amongſt my friends and cotemporaries: I like young people and their happineſs for every thing but to live with; but I cannot learn their language, nor tell them old ſtories, of which I muſt explain every ſtep as I go. Politics, the proper reſource of age, I deteſt—I am contented, but ſee few that are ſo—and I never will be led by any man's ſelf-intereſt. A great ſcene is opening, of which I cannot expect to ſee the end; I am pretty ſure not a happy end—ſo that, in ſhort, I am determined to think the reſt of my life but a poſtſcript: and as this has been too long an one, I will wiſh you good night, repeating what you know already, that the return of you three is the moſt agreeable proſpect I expect to ſee realized. Adieu!

LETTER CII.

Strawberry-hill, July 9, 1775.

THE whole buſineſs of this letter would lie in half a line. Shall you have room for me on Tueſday the 18th? I am putting myſelf into motion that I may go farther. I told madame du Deffand how you had ſcolded me on her account, and ſhe has charged me to thank you, and tell you how much ſhe wiſhes to ſee you too. I would give any thing to go——But the going!——However, I really think I ſhall—but I grow terribly affected with a maladie de famille, that of taking root at home.

I did but put my head into London on Thurſday, and more bad news from America. I wonder when it will be bad enough to make folks think it ſo, without going on! The ſtocks indeed begin to grow a little nervous, and they are apt to affect other pulſes. I heard this evening here that the Spaniſh fleet is ſailed, and that we are not in the ſecret whither—but I don't anſwer for Twickenham gazettes, and I have no better. I have a great mind to tell you a Twickenham ſtory; and yet it will be good for nothing, as I cannot ſend you the accent in a letter. Here it is; and you muſt try to ſet it to the right emphaſis. One of our maccaronis is dead, a captain M———, the tea-man's ſon. He had quitted the army, becauſe his comrades

comrades called him captain Hyſon, and applied himſelf to learn the claſſics and free-thinking; and was always diſputing with the parſon of the pariſh about Dido and his own ſoul. He married miſs Paulin's warehouſe, who had ſix hundred a year; but, being very much out of conceit with his own caniſter, could not reconcile himſelf to her riding-hood—ſo they parted beds in three nights. Of late he has taken to writing comedies, which every body was welcome to hear him read, as he could get nobody to act them. Mrs. M—— has a friend, one Mrs. V———, a mighty plauſible good ſort of body, who feels for every body, and a good deal for herſelf, is of a certain age, wears well, has ſome pretenſions that ſhe thinks very reaſonable ſtill, and a gouty huſband. Well! ſhe was talking to Mr. Raſtor about captain M——— a little before he died. Pray, ſir, does the captain ever communicate his writings to Mrs. M———?—Oh dear, no, madam; he has a ſovereign contempt for her underſtanding.—Poor woman!—And pray, ſir,—give me leave to aſk you: I think I have heard that they very ſeldom ſleep together?—Oh, never, madam! Don't you know all that?—*Poor woman!*—I don't know whether you will laugh; but Mr. Raſtor, who tells a ſtory better than any body, made me laugh for two hours. Good night.

LETTER CIII.

Paris, September 8, 1775.

THE delays of the poſt, and its departure before its arrival, ſaved me ſome days of anxiety for lady A——, and prevented my telling you how concerned I am for her accident; though I truſt by this time ſhe has not even pain left. I feel the horror you muſt have felt during her ſuffering in the dark, and on the ſight of her arm[1]; and though nobody admires her needle-work more than I, ſtill I am rejoiced that it will be the greateſt ſufferer—However, I am very impatient for a farther account. Madame du Deffand, who you know never loves her friends by halves, and whoſe impatience never allows itſelf time to inform itſelf, was out of her wits becauſe I could not explain exactly how the accident happened, and where. She wanted to write directly, though the poſt was juſt gone; and as ſoon as I could make her eaſy about the accident, ſhe fell into a new diſtreſs about her fans for

[1] Lady Aileſbury had been overturned in her carriage at Park-place, and diſlocated her wriſt.

madame de Marchais, and concludes they have been overturned and broken too. In ſhort, I never ſaw any thing like her—She has made engagements for me till Monday ſe'nnight; in which are included I don't know how many journeys into the country; and as nobody ever leaves her without her engaging them for another time, all theſe parties will be ſo many polypuſes, that will ſhoot out into new ones every way. Madame de Jonſac, a great friend of mine, arrived the day before yeſterday, and madame du Deffand has pinned her down to meeting me at her houſe four times before next Tueſday, all parentheſes, that are not to interfere with our other ſuppers; and from thoſe ſuppers I never get to bed before two or three o'clock. In ſhort, I need have the activity of a ſquirrel, and the ſtrength of a Hercules, to go through my labours—not to count how many demêlés I have had to raccommode, and how many *memoires* to preſent againſt Tonton [1], who grows the greater favourite the more people he devours. As I am the only perſon who dare correct him, I have already inſiſted on his being confined in the Baſtile every day after five o'clock. T'other night he flew at lady Barrymore's face, and I thought would have torn her eye out; but it ended in biting her finger. She was terrified; ſhe fell into tears. Madame du Deffand, who has too much parts not to ſee every thing in its true light, perceiving that ſhe had not beaten Tonton half enough, immediately told us a ſtory of a lady, whoſe dog having bitten a piece out of a gentleman's leg, the tender dame, in a great fright, cried out, "Won't it make my dog ſick?"

Lady Barrymore has taken a houſe. She will be glutted with conqueſts: I never ſaw any body ſo much admired. I doubt her poor little head will be quite overſet.

Madame de Marchais is charming: eloquence and attention itſelf. I cannot ſtir for peaches, nectarines, grapes and bury-pears. You would think Pomona was in love with me. I am not ſo tranſported with N—— cock and hen. They are a tabor and pipe that I do not underſtand. He mouths and ſhe ſqueaks, and neither articulates. M. d'Entragues I have not ſeen. Upon the whole, I am much more pleaſed with Paris than ever I was; and, perhaps, ſhall ſtay a little longer than I intended. The Harry

[1] A favourite dog of madame du Deffand's.

Grenvilles[1] are arrived. I dined with them at madame de Viry's[2], who has completed the conqueſt of France by her behaviour on madame Clotilde's wedding, and by the fêtes ſhe gave. Of other Engliſh I wot not, but grieve the Richmonds do not come.

I am charmed with doctor Bally; nay, and with the king of Pruſſia—as much as I can be with a northern monarch. For your Kragen, I think we ought to procure a female one, and marry it to Ireland, that we may breed ſome new iſlands againſt we have loſt America. I know nothing of ſaid America. There is not a Frenchman that does not think us diſtracted.

I uſed to ſcold you about your bad writing, and perceive I have written in ſuch a hurry and blotted my letter ſo much, that you will not be able to read it: but conſider how few moments I have to myſelf. I am forced to ſtuff my ears with cotton to get any ſleep.—However, my journey has done me good. I have thrown off at leaſt fifteen years. Here is a letter for my dear Mrs. D——— from madame de ———, who thinks ſhe dotes on you all. Adieu!

P. S. I ſhall bring you two eloges of marſhal Catinat, not becauſe I admire them, but becauſe I admire him, becauſe I think him very like you.

LETTER CIV.

Paris, October 6, 1775.

IT will look like a month ſince I wrote to you; but I have been coming, and am. Madame du Deffand has been ſo ill, that the day ſhe was ſeized I thought ſhe would not live till night. Her Herculean weakneſs, which could not reſiſt ſtrawberries and cream after ſupper, has ſurmounted all the *ups* and *downs* which followed her exceſs; but her impatience to go every where and do every thing has been attended with a kind of relapſe, and

[1] Henry Grenville, brother to the firſt earl Temple. He married miſs Margaret Banks, the celebrated beauty.

[2] Miſs Harriet Speed. She had married M. le comte de Viry when he was miniſter at London from the court of Turin. She is one of the ladies to whom Gray's long ſtory is addreſſed. E.

another

another kind of giddineſs: ſo that I am not quite eaſy about her, as they allow her to take no nouriſhment to recruit, and ſhe will die of inanition, if ſhe does not live upon it. She cannot lift her head from the pillow without étourdiſſemens; and yet her ſpirits gallop faſter than any body's, and ſo do her repartees. She has a great ſupper to-night for the duc de Choiſeul, and was in ſuch a paſſion yeſterday with her cook about it, and that put Tonton into ſuch a rage, that nos dames de ſaint Joſeph thought the devil or the philoſophers were flying away with their convent! As I have ſcarce quitted her, I can have had nothing to tell you. If ſhe gets well, as I truſt, I ſhall ſet out on the 12th; but I cannot leave her in any danger—though I ſhall run many myſelf, if I ſtay longer. I have kept ſuch bad hours with this *malade*, that I have had alarms of gout; and bad weather, worſe inns, and a voyage in winter, will ill ſuit me. The fans arrived at a propitious moment, and ſhe immediately had them opened on her bed, and felt all the patterns, and had all the papers deſcribed. She was all ſatiſfaction and thanks, and ſwore me to do her full juſtice to lady A—— and Mrs. D——. Lord Harrington and lady Harriet are arrived; but have announced and perſiſted in a ſtrict inviſibility.

I know nothing of my chere patrie, but what I learn from the London Chronicle; and that tells me, that the trading towns are ſuing out lettres de nobleſſe, that is, entreating the king to put an end to commerce, that they may all be gentlemen. Here agriculture, œconomy, reformation, philoſophy, are the bon-ton even at court. The two nations ſeem to have croſſed over and figured in; but as people that copy take the bad with the good, as well as the good with the bad, there was two days ago a great horſe-race in the plain de Sablon, between the comte d'Artois, the duc de Chartres, monſieur de Conflans, and the duc de Lauzun. The latter won by the addreſs of a little Engliſh poſtillion, who is in ſuch faſhion, that I don't know whether the Academy will not give him for the ſubject of an eloge.

The duc de Choiſeul, I ſaid, is here; and as he has a ſecond time put off his departure, cela fait beaucoup de bruit. I ſhall not be at all ſurpriſed if he reſumes the reins, as (forgive me a pun) he has the *Reine* already. Meſſrs. de Turgot and Maleſherbes certainly totter—but I ſhall tell you no more till I ſee you; for, though this goes by a private hand, it is ſo private, that I don't know it, being an Engliſh merchant's, who lodges in this hotel,

and

and whom I do not know by ſight: ſo perhaps I may bring you word of this letter myſelf. I flatter myſelf lady A——'s arm has recovered its ſtraightneſs and its cunning.

Madame du Deffand ſays I love you better than any thing in the world. If true, I hope you have not leſs penetration: if you have not, or it is not true, what would profeſſions avail?—So I leave that matter in ſuſpenſe. Adieu!

October 7.

MADAME du Deffand was quite well yeſterday; and at near one this morning I left the duc de Choiſeul, the ducheſs de Grammont, the prince and princeſs of Beauveau, princeſs of Poix, the marechale de Luxembourg, ducheſs de Lauzun, ducs de Gontaut et de Chabot, and Caraccioli, round her chaiſe longue; and ſhe herſelf was not a dumb perſonage. I have not heard yet how ſhe has ſlept, and muſt ſend away my letter this moment, as I muſt dreſs to go to dinner with monſieur de Maleſherbes at madame de Villegagnon's. I muſt repoſe a great while after all this living in company; nay, intend to go very little into the world again, as I do not admire the French way of burning one's candle to the very ſnuff in public. Tell Mrs. D——, that the faſhion now is to erect the toupée into a high detached tuft of hair, like a cockatoo's creſt; and this toupée they call *la phyſionomie* —I don't gueſs why.

My laquais is come back from ſaint Joſeph's, and ſays Marie de Vichy[1] has had a very good night and is quite well.—Philip[2], let my chaiſe be ready on Thurſday.

LETTER CV.

Strawberry-hill, June 30, 1776.

I WAS very glad to receive your letter, not only becauſe always moſt glad to hear of you, but becauſe I wiſhed to write to you, and had abſolutely nothing to ſay till I had ſomething to anſwer. I have lain but two nights in town ſince I ſaw you, have been elſe conſtantly here, very

[1] The maiden name of madame du Deffand.
[2] Mr. Walpole's valet de chambre.

much employed, though doing, hearing, knowing exactly nothing. I have had a gothic architect from Cambridge to design me a gallery, which will end in a mouse, that is, in an hexagon closet of seven feet diameter. I have been making a beauty-room, which was effected by buying two dozen of small copies of sir Peter Lely, and hanging them up; and I have been making hay, which is not made, because I put it off for three days, as I chose it should adorn the landscape when I was to have company; and so the rain is come, and has drowned it.—However, as I can even turn calculator when it is to comfort me for not minding my interest, I have discovered that it is five to one better for me that my hay should be spoiled than not; for, as the cows will eat it if it is damaged, which horses will not, and as I have five cows and but one horse, is not it plain that the worse my hay is, the better? Do not you with your refining head go, and, out of excessive friendship, find out something to destroy my system. I had rather be a philosopher than a rich man; and yet have so little philosophy, that I had much rather be content than be in the right.

Mr. —— and lady —— have been here four or five days—so I had both content and exercise for my philosophy. I wish lady —— was as fortunate! The Pembrokes, Churchills, Le Texier, as you will have heard, and the Garricks, have been with us. Perhaps, if alone, I might have come to you—but you are all too healthy and harmonious. I can neither walk nor sing—nor, indeed, am fit for any thing but to amuse myself in a sedentary trifling way. What I have most certainly not been doing, is writing any thing: a truth I say to you, but do not desire you to repeat. I deign to satisfy scarce any body else. Whoever reported that I was writing any thing, must have been so totally unfounded, that they either blundered by guessing without reason, or knew they lied—and that could not be with any kind intention; though saying I am going to do what I am not going to do, is wretched enough. Whatever is said of me without truth, any body is welcome to believe that pleases. In fact, though I have scarce a settled purpose about any thing, I think I shall never write any more. I have written a great deal too much, unless I had written better, and I know I should now only write still worse. One's talent, whatever it is, does not improve at near sixty—yet, if I liked it, I dare to say a good reason would not stop my inclination:—but I am grown most indolent in that respect, and most absolutely indifferent to every purpose of vanity. Yet without vanity I am become still prouder and more contemptuous. I have a contempt

tempt for my countrymen that makes me deſpiſe their approbation. The applauſe of ſlaves and of the fooliſh mad is below ambition. Mine is the haughtineſs of an ancient Briton, that cannot write what would pleaſe this age, and would not if he could. Whatever happens in America, this country is undone. I deſire to be reckoned of the laſt age, and to be thought to have lived to be ſuperannuated, preſerving my ſenſes only for myſelf and for the few I value. I cannot aſpire to be traduced like Algernon Sydney, and content myſelf with ſacrificing to him amongſt my lares. Unalterable in my principles, careleſs about moſt things below eſſentials, indulging myſelf in trifles by ſyſtem, annihilating myſelf by choice, but dreading folly at an unſeemly age, I contrive to paſs my time agreeably enough, yet ſee its termination approach without anxiety. This is a true picture of my mind; and it muſt be true, becauſe drawn for you, whom I would not deceive, and could not if I would. Your queſtion on my being writing drew it forth, though with more ſerioufneſs than the report deſerved—yet talking to one's deareſt friend is neither wrong nor out of ſeaſon. Nay, you are my beſt apology. I have always contented myſelf with your being perfect, or, if your modeſty demands a mitigated term, I will ſay, unexceptionable. It is comical, to be ſure, to have always been more ſolicitous about the virtue of one's friend than about one's own—yet I repeat it, you are my apology—though I never was ſo unreaſonable as to make you anſwerable for my faults in return: I take them wholly to myſelf——But enough of this. When I know my own mind, for hitherto I have ſettled no plan for my ſummer, I will come to you. Adieu!

LETTER CVI.

Thurſday, 31.

THANK you for your letter. I ſend this by the coach. You will have found a new ſcene [1]—not an unexpected one by you and me, though I do not pretend I thought it ſo near. I rather imagined France would have inſtigated or winked at Spain's beginning with us. Here is a ſolution of the Americans declaring themſelves independent. Oh! the folly, the madneſs, the guilt of having plunged us into this abyſs! Were we and a few more endued with any uncommon penetration?—No—They who did

[1] On the opening of the parliament in the year 1776.

not ſee as far, *would* not. I am impatient to hear the complexion of to-day. I ſuppoſe it will on the part of adminiſtration have been a wretched farce of fear daubed over with airs of bullying. You, I do not doubt, have acted like yourſelf, feeling for our ſituation, above inſulting, and unprovoked but at the criminality that has brought us to this paſs. Purſue your own path, nor lean to the court that may be paid to you on either ſide, as I am ſure you will not regard their being diſpleaſed that you do not go as far as their intereſted views may wiſh.

If the court ſhould receive any more of what they call good news, I think the war with France will be unavoidable. It was the victory at Long Iſland, and the frantic preſumption it occaſioned, that has ripened France's meaſures——And now we are to awe them by preſſing—an act that ſpeaks our impotence!—which France did not want to learn!

I would have come to town, but I had declared ſo much I would not, that I thought it would look as if I came to enjoy the diſtreſs of the miniſters—but I do not enjoy the diſtreſs of my country. I think we are undone—I have always thought ſo—whether we enſlaved America or loſt it totally—So we that were againſt the war could expect no good iſſue. If you do return to Park-place to-morrow, you will oblige me much by breakfaſting here: you know it waſtes you very little time.

I am glad I did not know of Mrs. D——'s ſore throat till it is almoſt well. Pray take care and do not catch it.

Thank you for your care of me: I will not ſtay a great deal here, but at preſent I never was better in my life—and here I have no vexatious moments. I hate to diſpute; I ſcorn to triumph myſelf, and it is very difficult to keep my temper when others do. I own I have another reaſon for my retirement, which is prudence. I have thought of it late, but at leaſt I will not run into any new expence. It would coſt me more than I care to afford to buy a houſe in town, unleſs I do it to take ſome of my money out of the ſtocks, for which I tremble a little. My brother is ſeventy; and if I live myſelf, I muſt not build too much on his life; and you know, if he fails, I loſe the moſt ſecure part of my income. I refuſed from lord Holland, and laſt year from lord North, to accept the place for my own life; and having never done a dirty thing, I will not diſgrace

myſelf at fifty-nine. I ſhould like to live as well as I have done; but what I wiſh more, is to ſecure what I have already ſaved for thoſe I would take care of after me. Theſe are the true reaſons of my dropping all thoughts of a better houſe in town, and of living ſo privately here. I will not ſacrifice my health to my prudence; but my temper is ſo violent, that I know the tranquillity I enjoy here in ſolitude, is of much more benefit to my health, than the air of the country is detrimental to it. You ſee I can be reaſonable when I have time to reflect; but philoſophy has a poor chance with me when my warmth is ſtirred—and yet I know, that an angry old man out of parliament, and that can do nothing but be angry, is a ridiculous animal.

LETTER CVII.

Strawberry-hill, July 10, 1777.

DON'T be alarmed at this thouſandth letter in a week. This is more to lady Hamilton[1] than to you. Pray tell her I have ſeen *monſieur la Bataille d'Agincourt*[2]. He brought me her letter yeſterday: and I kept him to ſup, *ſleep* in the modern phraſe, and breakfaſt here this morning; and flatter myſelf he was, and ſhe will be, content with the regard I paid to her letter.

The weather is a thought warmer to-day, and I am as buſy as bees are about their hay. My *hayſſians*[3] have coſt me as much as if I had hired them of the landgrave.

I am glad your invaſion[4] is blown over. I fear I muſt invite thoſe flat-bottomed veſſels hither, as the Swiſſeſs Necker has directed them to the port of Twickenham. Madame de Blot is too fine, and monſieur Schomberg one of the moſt diſagreeable, croſs, contemptuous ſavages I ever ſaw. I have often ſupped with him at the ducheſs de Choiſeul's, and could not bear him; and now I muſt be *charmé* and *penetré* and *comblé* to ſee him:

[1] The firſt wife of ſir William Hamilton, envoy extraordinary at the court of Naples.

[2] M. le chevalier d'Azincourt, a French antiquary, long ſettled in Italy.

[3] Heſſians.

[4] A party of French nobility then in England, who were to have made a viſit at Parkplace.

and I ſhall act it very ill, as I always do when I don't do what I like. Madame Necker's letter is as affected and précieuſe, as if Marmontel had written it for a Peruvian milk-maid. She ſays I am a philoſopher, and as like madame de Sevigné as two peas—who was as unlike a philoſopher as a gridiron. As I have none of madame de Sevigné's natural eaſy wit, I am rejoiced that I am no more like a philoſopher neither, and ſtill leſs like a *philoſophe*; which is a being compounded of D'Urfey and Diogenes, a paſtoral coxcomb and a ſupercilious brute.

LETTER CVIII.

Tueſday evening, Sept. 16, 1777.

I HAVE got a delightful plaything, if I had time for play. It is a new ſort of camera-obſcura[1] for drawing the portraits of perſons, or proſpects, or inſides of rooms, and does not depend on the ſun or any thing. The misfortune is, that there is a vaſt deal of machinery and putting together, and I am the worſt perſon living for managing it. You know I am impenetrably dull in every thing that requires a grain of common ſenſe. The inventor is to come to me on Friday, and try if he can make me remember my right hand from my left. I could as ſoon have invented my machine as manage it; yet it has coſt me ten guineas, and may coſt me as much more as I pleaſe for improving it. You will conclude it was the dearneſs tempted me. I believe I muſt keep an aſtronomer, like Mr. Beauclerc, to help me to play with my rattle. The inventor, who ſeems very modeſt and ſimple, but I conclude an able flatterer, was in love with my houſe, and vowed nothing ever ſuited his camera ſo well. To be ſure, the painted windows and the proſpects, and the gothic chimneys, &c. &c. were the delights of one's eyes, when no bigger than a ſilver penny. *You* would know how to manage it, as if you had never done any thing elſe. Had not you better come and ſee it? You will learn how to conduct it, with the pleaſure of correcting my awkwardneſs and *unlearnability*. Sir Joſhua Reynolds and Weſt have each got one; and the duke of Northumberland is ſo charmed with the invention, that I dare ſay he can talk upon and explain it till I ſhould underſtand ten times leſs of the matter than I

[1] The machine called a delineator.

do,

do. Remember, neither lady A. nor you, nor Mrs. D. have ſeen my new divine cloſet, nor the billiard-ſticks with which the counteſs of Pembroke and Arcadia uſed to play with her brother ſir Philip; nor the portrait of la belle Jennings in the ſtate bedchamber. I go to town this day ſe'nnight for a day or two; and as, *to be ſure*, Mount-Edgecumbe has put you out of humour with Park-place, you may deign to leave it for a moment. I never did ſee Cotchel[1], and am ſorry. Is not the old wardrobe there ſtill? There was one from the time of Cain; but Adam's breeches and Eve's under petticoat were eaten by a goat in the ark. Good-night.

LETTER CIX.

October 5, 1777.

YOU are exceedingly good, and I ſhall aſſuredly accept your propoſal in the fulleſt ſenſe, and, to enſure Mrs. D——, beg I may expect you on Saturday next the 11th. If lord and lady William Campbell will do me the honour of accompanying you, I ſhall be moſt happy to ſee them, and expect miſs Caroline[2]. Let me know about them, that the ſtate bedchamber may be aired.

My difficulties about removing from home ariſe from the conſciouſneſs of my own weakneſs. I make it a rule, as much as I can, to conform wherever I go. Though I am threeſcore to-day, I ſhould not think that an age for giving every thing up; but it is for whatever one has not ſtrength to perform. You, though not a vaſt deal younger, are as healthy and ſtrong, thank God, as ever you was: and you cannot have ideas of the mortification of being ſtared at by ſtrangers and ſervants, when one hobbles, or cannot do as others do. I delight in being with you, and the Richmonds, and thoſe I love and know; but the crowds of young people, and Chicheſter folks, and officers, and ſtrange ſervants, make me afraid of Goodwood, I own. My ſpirits are never low, but they will ſeldom laſt out the whole day; and though I dare to ſay I appear to many capricious, and different from the reſt of the world, there is more reaſon in my behaviour than there ſeems. You

[1] The old reſidence of the family of Edgecumbe, 12 miles diſtant from Mount Edgecumbe.
[2] Miſs Caroline Campbell, eldeſt daughter of lord William Campbell.

know in London I ſeldom ſtir out in a morning, and always late; and it is becauſe I want a great deal of reſt. Exerciſe never did agree with me: and it is hard if I do not know myſelf by this time; and what has done ſo well with me will probably ſuit me beſt for the reſt of my life. It would be ridiculous to talk ſo much of myſelf, and to enter into ſuch trifling details, but *you* are the perſon in the world that I wiſh to convince that I do not act merely from humour or ill-humour; though I confeſs at the ſame time that I want your bonhommie, and have a diſpoſition not to care at all for people that I do not abſolutely like. I could ſay a great deal more on this head, but it is not proper; though, when one has pretty much done with the world, I think with lady Blandford that one may indulge one's ſelf in one's own whims and partialities in one's own houſe. I do not mean, ſtill leſs to profeſs, retirement, becauſe it is leſs ridiculous to go on with the world to the laſt, than to return to it: but in a quiet way it has long been my purpoſe to drop a great deal of it. Of all things I am fartheſt from not intending to come often to Park-place, whenever you have little company; and I had rather be with you in November than in July, becauſe I am ſo totally unable to walk farther than a ſnail. I will never ſay any more on theſe ſubjects, becauſe there may be as much affectation in being over-old, as folly in being over-young. My idea of age is, that one has nothing really to do but what one ought, and what is reaſonable. All affectations are pretenſions; and pretending to be any thing one is not, cannot deceive when one is known, as every body muſt be that has lived long. I do not mean that old folks may not have pleaſures, if they can; but then I think thoſe pleaſures are confined to being comfortable, and to enjoying the few friends one has not outlived. I am ſo fair as to own, that one's duties are not pleaſures. I have given up a great deal of my time to nephews and nieces, even to ſome I can have little affection for. I do love my nieces, nay like them; but people above forty years younger are certainly not the ſociety I ſhould ſeek. They can only think and talk of what is, or is to come; I certainly am more diſpoſed to think and talk of what is paſt: and the obligation of paſſing the end of a long life in ſets of totally new company is more irkſome to me than paſſing a great deal of my time, as I do, quite alone. Family love and pride make me intereſt myſelf about the young people of my own family—for the whole reſt of the young world, they are as indifferent to me as puppets or black children. This is my creed, and a key to my whole conduct, and the more likely to remain my

creed,

creed, as I think it is *raiſonné*. If I could paint my opinions inſtead of writing them, and I don't know whether it would not make a new ſort of alphabet, I ſhould uſe different colours for different affections at different ages[1]. When I ſpeak of love, affection, friendſhip, taſte, liking, I ſhould draw them roſe colour, carmine, blue, green, yellow, for my cotemporaries: for new comers, the firſt would be of no colour; the others, purple, brown, crimſon, and changeable. Remember, one tells one's creed only to one's confeſſor, that is ſub ſigillo. I write to you as I think; to others as I muſt. Adieu!

LETTER CX.

July 8, 1778.

I HAVE had ſome converſation with a miniſterial perſon, on the ſubject of pacification with France; and he dropped a hint, that as we ſhould not have much chance of a good peace, the oppoſition would make great clamour on it. I ſaid a few words on the duty of miniſters to do what they thought right, be the conſequence what it would. But as honeſt men do not want ſuch lectures, and diſhoneſt will not let them weigh, I waved that theme, to dwell on what is more likely to be perſuaſive, and which I am firmly perſuaded is no leſs true than the former maxim; and that was, that the miniſters are *ſtill* ſo ſtrong, that if they could get a peace that would ſave the nation, though not a brilliant or glorious one, the nation in general would be pleaſed with it, and the clamours of the oppoſition be inſignificant.

I added, what I think true too, that no time is to be loſt in treating; not only for preventing a blow, but from the conſequences the firſt misfortune would have. The nation is not yet alienated from the court, but it is growing ſo; is grown ſo enough, for any calamity to have violent effects. Any internal diſturbance would advance the hoſtile deſigns of France. An inſurrection from diſtreſs would be a double invitation to invaſion; and, I am ſure, much more to be dreaded, even perſonally, by the miniſters, than the ill-humours of oppoſition for even an inglorious peace. To do the oppoſition juſtice, it is not compoſed of incendiaries. Parliamentary ſpeeches

[1] This whimſical appropriation of colours to affections of the mind, can appear appoſite only to thoſe acquainted with Mr. Walpole's particular opinion of particular colours. E.

raiſe

raiſe no tumults; but tumults would be a dreadful thorough baſs to ſpeeches. The miniſters do not know the ſtrength they have left (ſuppoſing they apply it in time), if they are afraid of making any peace. They were too ſanguine in making war; I hope they will not be too timid of making peace.

What do you think of an idea of mine, of offering France a neutrality? that is, to allow her to aſſiſt both us and the Americans. I know ſhe would aſſiſt only them: but were it not better to connive at her aſſiſting them, without attacking us, than her doing both? A treaty with her would perhaps be followed by one with America. We are ſacrificing all the eſſentials we *can* recover, for a few words; and riſking the independence of this country, for the nominal ſupremacy over America. France ſeems to leave us time for treating. She made no ſcruple of begging peace of us in 63, that ſhe might lie by and recover her advantages. Was not that a wiſe precedent? Does not ſhe *now* ſhow that it was? Is not policy the honour of nations? I mean, not morally, but has Europe left itſelf any other honour? And ſince it has really left itſelf no honour, and as little morality, does not the morality of a nation conſiſt in its preſerving itſelf in as much happineſs as it can? The invaſion of Portugal by Spain in the laſt war, the partition of Poland, have abrogated the law of nations. Kings have left no ties between one another. Their duty to their people is ſtill allowed. He is a good king that preſerves his people; and if temporiſing anſwers that end, is it not juſtifiable? You, who are as moral as wiſe, anſwer my queſtions. Grotius is obſolete. Dr. Joſeph [1] and Dr. Frederic [2], with four hundred thouſand commentators, are reading new lectures—and I ſhould ſay, thank God, to one another, if the four hundred thouſand commentators were not in worſe danger than they. Louis XIV. is grown a caſuiſt compared to thoſe partitioners. Well, let us ſimple individuals keep our honeſty, and bleſs our ſtars that we have not armies at our command, leſt we ſhould divide kingdoms that are at our bienſéance! What a dreadful thing it is for ſuch a wicked little imp as man to have abſolute power!—— But I have travelled into Germany, when I meant to talk to you only of England; and it is too late to recall my text. Good-night.

[1] The emperor of Germany.

[2] Frederic II. king of Pruſſia.

LETTER

LETTER CXI.

Saturday, July 18, 1778.

YESTERDAY evening the following notices were fixed up in Lloyd's coffee-houſe:

That a merchant in the City had received an expreſs from France, that the Breſt fleet, conſiſting of 28 ſhips of the line, were ſailed, with orders to burn, ſink, and deſtroy.

That admiral Keppel was at Plymouth, and had ſent to demand three more ſhips of the line to enable him to meet the French.

On theſe notices the ſtocks ſunk $3\frac{1}{2}$ per cent.

An account I have received this morning from a good hand ſays, that on Thurſday the Admiralty received a letter from admiral Keppel, who was off the Land's End, ſaying, that the Worceſter was in ſight; that the Peggy had joined him, and had ſeen the Thunderer making ſail for the fleet; that he was waiting for the Centaur, Terrible, and Vigilant; and that having received advice from lord Shuldham that the Shrewſbury was to ſail from Plymouth on Thurſday, he ſhould likewiſe wait for her. His fleet will then conſiſt of 30 ſhips of the line; and he hoped to have an opportunity of trying his ſtrength with the French fleet on our own coaſt: if not, he would ſeek them on theirs.

The French fleet ſailed on the 7th, conſiſting of 31 ſhips of the line, 2 fifty gun ſhips, and 8 frigates.

This ſtate is probably more authentic than thoſe at Lloyd's.

Thus you ſee how big the moment is! and, unleſs far more favourable to us in its burſt than good ſenſe allows one to promiſe, it muſt leave us greatly expoſed. Can we expect to beat without conſiderable loſs?—and then, where have we another fleet? I need not ſtate the danger from a reverſe.

The Spaniſh ambaſſador certainly arrived on Monday.

I ſhall go to town on Monday for a day or two; therefore, if you write to-morrow, direct to Arlington-ſtreet.

I add no more: for words are unworthy of the ſituation; and to blame now, would be childiſh. It is hard to be gamed for againſt one's conſent; but when one's country is at ſtake, one muſt throw one's ſelf out of the queſtion. When one is old, and nobody, one muſt be whirled with the current, and ſhake one's wings like a fly, if one lights on a pebble. The proſpect is ſo dark, that one ſhall rejoice at whatever does not happen, that may. Thus I have compoſed a ſort of philoſophy for myſelf, that reſerves every poſſible chance. You want none of theſe artificial aids to your reſolution. Invincible courage and immaculate integrity are not dependent on the folly of miniſters or on the events of war. Adieu!

LETTER CXII.

Strawberry-hill, Auguſt 21, 1778.

I THINK it ſo very uncertain whether this letter will find you, that I write it merely to tell you I received yours to-day.

I recollect nothing particularly worth ſeeing in Suſſex that you have not ſeen (for I think you have ſeen Coudray and Stanſted, and I know you have Petworth), but Hurſt Monceaux near Battle; and I don't know whether it is not pulled down. The ſite of Arundel caſtle is fine, and there are ſome good tombs of the Fitzalans at the church, but little remains of the caſtle; in the room of which is a modern brick-houſe; and in the late duke's time the ghoſt of a giant walked there his grace ſaid—but I ſuppoſe the preſent duke has laid it in the Red Sea—of claret.

Beſide Knowle and Penſhurſt, I ſhould think there were ſeveral ſeats of old families in Kent worth ſeeing; but I do not know them. I poked out Summer-hill for the ſake of the *Babylonienne* in Grammont; but it is now a mere farm-houſe. Don't let them perſuade you to viſit Leeds caſtle, which is not worth ſeeing.

You have been near loſing me and half-a-dozen fair couſins to-day. The

Goldſmiths company dined in Mr. Shirley's field, next to Pope's. I went to Ham with my three Waldegrave nieces and miſs Keppel, and ſaw them land, and dine in tents erected for them from the oppoſite ſhore. You may imagine how beautiful the ſight was in ſuch a ſpot and in ſuch a day! I ſtaid and dined at Ham, and after dinner lady Dyſart with lady Bridget Tollemache took our four nieces on the water to ſee the return of the barges, but were to ſet me down at lady Browne's. We were, with a footman and the two watermen, ten in a little boat. As we were in the middle of the river, a larger boat full of people drove directly upon us on purpoſe. I believe they were drunk. We called to them, to no purpoſe; they beat directly againſt the middle of our little ſkiff—but, thank you, did not do us the leaſt harm—no thanks to them. Lady Malpas was in lord Strafford's garden, and gave us for gone. In ſhort, Neptune never would have had ſo beautiful a prize as the four girls.

I hear an expreſs has been ſent to —— to offer him the maſterſhip of the horſe. I had a mind to make you gueſs, but you never can——to lord Exeter.

Pray let me know the moment you return to Park-place.

LETTER CXIII.

October 23, 1778.

———having thus told you all I know, I ſhall add a few words, to ſay I conclude you have known as much, by my not having heard from you. Should the poſt-office or ſecretary's office ſet their wits at work to bring to light all the intelligence contained under the above hiatus, I am confident they will diſcover nothing, though it gives an exact deſcription of all they have been about themſelves.

My perſonal hiſtory is very ſhort. I have had an aſſembly and the rheumatiſm—and am buying a houſe—and it rains—and I ſhall plant the roſes againſt my treillage to-morrow. Thus you know what I have done, ſuffered, am doing, and ſhall do. Let me know as much of you, in quantity, not in quality. Introductions to and concluſions of letters are as much out of faſhion, as *to*, *at*, &c. on letters. This ſublime age reduces every

thing to its quinteſſence: all periphraſes and expletives are ſo much in diſuſe, that I ſuppoſe ſoon the only way of making love will be to ſay "*Lie down.*" Luckily, the lawyers will not part with any ſynonymous words, and will, conſequently, preſerve the redundancies of our language—Dixi.

LETTER CXIV.

Arlington-ſtreet, January 9, 1779.

YOUR flight to Bath would have much ſurpriſed me, if Mr. C. who, I think, heard it from Stanley, had not prepared me for it. Since you was amuſed, I am glad you went, eſpecially as you eſcaped being initiated in Mrs. ———'s follies at ———, which you would have mentioned. She would certainly have ſent ſome trapes of a muſe to preſs you, had ſhe known what good epigrams you write.

I went to Strawberry partly out of prudence, partly from ennui. I thought it beſt to air myſelf before I go in and out of hot rooms here, and had my houſe thoroughly warmed for a week previouſly, and then only ſtirred from the red room to the blue on the ſame floor. I ſtaid five days, and was neither the better nor the worſe for it. I was quite tired with having neither company, books, nor amuſement of any kind. Either from the emptineſs of the town, or that ten weeks of gout have worn out the patience of all my acquaintance, but I do not ſee three perſons in three days. This gives me but an uncomfortable proſpect for my latter days: it is but probable that I may be a cripple in a fit or two more, if I have ſtrength to go through them; and as that will be long life, one outlives one's acquaintance. I cannot make new acquaintance, nor intereſt myſelf at all about the young, except thoſe that belong to me; nor does that go beyond contributing to their pleaſures, without having much ſatisfaction in their converſation——But—one muſt take every thing as it comes, and make the beſt of it. I have had a much happier life than I deſerve, and than millions that deſerve better. I ſhould be very weak, if I could not bear the uncomfortableneſs of old age, when I can afford what comforts it is capable of. How many poor old people have none of them! I am aſhamed whenever I am peeviſh, and recollect that I have fire and ſervants to help me!

I hear

I hear admiral Keppel is in high ſpirits with the great reſpect and zeal expreſſed for him. In my own opinion, his conſtitution will not ſtand the ſtruggle. I am very uneaſy too for the duke of R———, who is at Portſmouth, and will be at leaſt as much agitated.

Sir —— —— has written a large pamphlet, and a very good one. It is to ſhow, that whenever the Grecian republics taxed their dependents, the latter reſiſted, and ſhook off the yoke. He has printed but twelve copies: the duke of G. ſent me one of them. There is an anecdote of my father, on the authority of old Jack White, which I doubt. It ſays, he would not go on with the exciſe ſcheme, though his friends adviſed it. I cannot ſpeak to the particular event, as I was then at ſchool; but it was more like him to have yielded againſt his ſentiments, to Mr. Pelham and his candid—or ſay, plauſible and timid friends. I have heard him ſay, that he never did give up his opinion to ſuch men, but he always repented it. However, the anecdote in the book would be more to his honour. But what a ſtrange man is ſir ——! I ſuppoſe now he has written this book, he will change his opinion, and again be for carrying on the war—or, if he does not know his own mind for two years together, why will he take places, to make every body doubt his honeſty?

LETTER CXV.

Arlington-ſtreet, May 22, 1779.

IF you hear of us no oftener than we of you, you will be as much behind hand in news as my lady Lyttelton. We have ſeen a traveller that ſaw you in your iſland[1], but it ſounds like hearing of Ulyſſes.—Well! we muſt be content. You are not only not dethroned, but owe the ſafety of your dominions to your own ſkill in fortification. If we do not hear of your extending your conqueſts, why, it is not leſs than all our modern heroes have done, whom prophets have foretold and gazettes celebrated—or who have foretold and celebrated themſelves. Pray be content to be cooped up in an iſland that has no neighbours, when the Howes and Clin-

[1] Mr. Conway was now at his government, Jerſey.

tons,

tons, and Dunmores and Burgoynes and Campbells are not yet got beyond the great river—Inquiry[1]! To-day's papers ſay, that the *little* prince of Orange[2] is to invade you again—but we truſt ſir James Wallace has clipped his wings ſo cloſe, that they will not grow again this ſeaſon, though he is ſo ready to *fly*.

Nothing material has happened ſince I wrote laſt—ſo, as every moment of a civil war is precious, every one has been turned to the intereſt of diverſion. There have been three maſquerades, an inſtallation, and the ball of the knights at the Haymarket this week; not to mention Almack's, Feſtino, lady Spencer's, Ranelagh and Vauxhall, operas and plays. The ducheſs of Bolton too ſaw maſks—ſo many, that the floor gave way, and the company in the dining-room were near falling on the heads of thoſe in the parlour, and exhibiting all that has not yet appeared in Doctor's Commons. At the knights' ball was ſuch a profuſion of Strawberries, that people could hardly get into the ſupper-room.—I could tell you more, but I do not love to exaggerate.

Lady A. told me this morning, that lord Briſtol has got a calf with two feet to each leg—I am convinced it is by the ducheſs of Kingſton, who has two of every thing, where others have but one.

Adieu!—I am going to ſup with Mrs. Abington—and hope Mrs. Clive will not hear of it.

Yours ever,

HOR. WALPOLE.

[1] The parliamentary inquiry which took place in the houſe of commons on the conduct of the American war.

[2] The prince of Naſſau, who had commanded the attack upon Jerſey, claiming relationſhip to the great houſe of Naſſau, Mr. Walpole calls the "*little prince of Orange.*" E.

LETTER

LETTER CXVI.

Strawberry-hill, Saturday June 5, 1779.

I WRITE to you more ſeldom than I am diſpoſed to do, from having nothing poſitive to tell you, and from being unwilling to ſay and unſay every minute ſomething that is reported poſitively. The confident aſſertions of the victory over D'Eſtaing are totally vaniſhed—and they who invented them, now declaim as bitterly againſt Byron, as if he had deceived them—and as they did againſt Keppel. This day ſe'nnight there was a great alarm about Ireland—which was far from being all invention, though not an abſolute inſurrection, as was ſaid. The caſe, I believe, was this: The court, in order to break the volunteer army eſtabliſhed by the Iriſh themſelves, endeavoured to perſuade a body in lady Blayney's county of Monaghan to inliſt in the militia—which they took indignantly. They ſaid, they had great regard for lady Blayney and lord Clermont; but to act under them, would be acting under the king, and that was by no means their intention. There have ſince been motions for inquiries what ſteps the miniſters have taken to ſatisfy the Iriſh—and theſe they have imprudently rejected—which will not tend to pacification. The miniſters have been puſhed too on the article of Spain, and could not deny that all negotiation is at an end—though they will not own farther. However, the Spaniſh ambaſſador is much out of humour. From Paris they write confidently of the approaching declaration; and lord Sandwich, I hear, has ſaid in a very mixed company, that it was folly not to expect it. There is another million aſked, and given on a vote of credit; and lord North has boaſted of ſuch mines for next year, that one would think he believed next year would never come.

The inquiry[1] goes on, and lord Harrington did himſelf and Burgoyne honour. Barré and governor Johnſtone have had warm words, and Burke has been as frantic for the Roman catholics as lord George Gordon againſt them. The parliament, it is ſaid, is to riſe on the 21ſt.

You will not collect from all this that our proſpect clears up. I fear there is not more diſcretion in the treatment of Ireland than of America.

[1] Into the conduct of the American war.

The

The court ſeems to be infatuated, and to think that nothing is of any conſequence but a majority in parliament—though they have totally loſt all power but that of provoking. Fortunate it had been for the king and kingdom, had the court had no majority for theſe ſix years! America had ſtill been ours!—and all the lives and all the millions we have ſquandered! A majority that has loſt thirteen provinces by bullying and vapouring, and the moſt childiſh menaces, will be a brave countermatch for France and Spain, and a rebellion in Ireland! In ſhort, it is plain that there is nothing a majority in parliament can do, but outvote a minority; and yet by their own accounts one would think they could not do even that. I ſaw a paper t'other day that began with this Iriſciſm, "As the minority have loſt us thirteen provinces, &c." I know nothing the minority have done, or been ſuffered to do, but reſtore the Roman catholic religion—and that too was by the deſire of the court.

This is however the preſent ſtyle. They announced with infinite applauſe a new production of Tickell:—it has appeared, and is a moſt paltry performance. It is called the Caſſette verte of M. de Sartine, and pretends to be his correſpondence with the oppoſition. Nay, they are ſo pitifully mean as to laugh at doctor Franklin, who has ſuch thorough reaſon to ſit and laugh at them. What triumph it muſt be to him to ſee a miſerable pamphlet all the revenge they can take! There is another, ſtill duller, called Oppoſition Mornings, in which you are lugged in. In truth, it is a compliment to any man to except him out of the number of thoſe that have contributed to the ſhocking diſgraces inflicted on this undone country! When lord Chatham was miniſter, he never replied to abuſe but by a victory.

I know no private news: I have been here ever ſince Tueſday, enjoying my tranquillity, as much as an honeſt man can do who ſees his country ruined. It is juſt ſuch a period as makes philoſophy wiſdom. There are great moments when every man is called on to exert himſelf—but when folly, infatuation, deluſion, incapacity and profligacy fling a nation away, and it concurs itſelf, and applauds its deſtroyers, a man who has lent no hand to the miſchief, and can neither prevent nor remedy the maſs of evils, is fully juſtified in ſitting aloof and beholding the tempeſt rage, with ſilent ſcorn and indignant compaſſion. Nay, I have, I own, ſome comfortable

reflections.

reflections. I rejoice that there is ſtill a great continent of Engliſhmen who will remain free and independent, and who laugh at the impotent majorities of a proſtitute parliament. I care not whether general Burgoyne and governor Johnſtone croſs over and figure in, and ſupport or oppoſe; nor whether Mr. Burke, or the ſuperior of the jeſuits, is high commiſſioner to the kirk of Scotland. My ideas are ſuch as I have always had, and are too plain and ſimple to comprehend modern confuſions; and, therefore, they ſuit with thoſe of few men. What will be the iſſue of this chaos, I know not, and, probably, ſhall not ſee. I do ſee with ſatisfaction, *that what was meditated* has failed by the groſſeſt folly; and when one has eſcaped the worſt, leſſer evils muſt be endured with patience.

After this dull effuſion, I will divert you with a ſtory that made me laugh this morning till I cried. You know my Swiſs David, and his incomprehenſible pronunciation. He came to me, and ſaid, "Auh! dar is meſes —— wants ſome of your large flags to put in her great O." With much ado I found out that Mrs. —— had ſent for leave to take up ſome flags out of my meadow for her grotto.

I hope in a few days to ſee lady A—— and miſs J—— here; I have writ to propoſe it.—What are your intentions? Do you ſtay till you have made your iſland impregnable? I doubt it will be our only one that will be ſo.

LETTER CXVII.

Strawberry-hill, June 16, 1779.

YOUR counteſs was here laſt Thurſday, and received a letter from you, that told us how ſlowly you receive ours. When you will receive this I cannot gueſs; but it dates a new æra, which you with reaſon did not care to look at as poſſible. In a word, behold a Spaniſh war! I muſt detail a little to increaſe your wonder. I heard here the day before yeſterday that it was likely; and that night received a letter from Paris, telling me (it was of the 6th) that monſieur de Beauveau was going, they knew not whither, at the head of 25,000 men, with three lieutenant-generals and ſix or eight marechaux de camp under him. Yeſterday I went to town, and T. W. happened

to call on me.—He, who uſed to be informed early, did not believe a word either of a Spaniſh war or a French expedition. I ſaw ſome other perſons in the evening as ignorant. At night I went to ſup at Richmond-houſe. The duke ſaid the Breſt fleet was certainly ſailed, and had got the ſtart of ours by twelve days; that monſieur de Beauveau was on board with a large ſum of money, and with white and *red* cockades; and that there would certainly be a Spaniſh war. He added, that the oppoſition were then preſſing in the houſe of commons to have the parliament continue ſitting, and urging to know if we were not at the eve of a Spaniſh war; but the miniſters perſiſted in the prorogation for to-morrow or Friday, and would not anſwer on Spain.

I ſaid I would make you wonder——But no—Why ſhould the parliament continue to ſit? Are not the miniſters and the parliament the ſame thing? And how has either houſe ſhown that it has any talent for war?

The duke of R. does not gueſs whither the Breſt fleet is gone.—He thinks, if to Ireland, we ſhould have known it by this time. He has heard that the prince of Beauveau has ſaid he was going on an expedition that would be glorious in the eyes of poſterity.—I aſked, if that might not mean Gibraltar? The duke doubts, but hopes it, as he thinks it no wiſe meaſure on their ſide; yet he was very melancholy, as you will be, on this heavy acceſſion to our diſtreſſes.

Well! here we are, aris et focis and all at ſtake! What can we be meaning? Unable to conquer America before ſhe was aſſiſted—ſcarce able to keep France at bay—are we a match for both, and Spain too?—What can be our view? nay, what can be our expectation? I ſometimes think we reckon it will be more creditable to be forced by France and Spain to give up America, than to have the merit with the latter of doing it with grace. —But, as Cato ſays,

I am weary of conjectures—This muſt end them;

that is, the ſword:—and never, I believe, did a country plunge itſelf into ſuch difficulties ſtep by ſtep, and for ſix years together, without once recollecting that each foreign war rendered the object of the civil war more unattainable; and that in both the foreign wars we have not an object in proſpect. Unable to recruit our remnant of an army in America, are we to

make conquests on France and Spain? They may choose their attacks: we can scarce choose what we will defend.

Ireland, they say, is more temperate than was expected. That is some consolation—yet many fear the Irish will be tempted to unite with America, which would throw all that trade into their convenient harbours: and I own I have apprehensions that the parliament's rising without taking a step in their favour, may offend them. Surely at least we have courageous ministers. I thought my father a stout man:—he had not a tithe of their spirit.

The town has wound up the season perfectly in character by a fête at the Pantheon by subscription. Le Texier managed it; but it turned out sadly. The company was first shut into the galleries to look down on the supper, then let to descend to it. Afterwards they were led into the subterraneous apartment, which was laid with mould, and planted with trees, and crammed with nosegays: but the fresh earth, and the dead leaves, and the effluvia of breaths made such a stench and moisture, that they were suffocated; and when they remounted, the legs and wings of chickens and remnants of ham (for the supper was not removed) poisoned them more. A druid in an arbour distributed verses to the ladies; then the Baccelli and the dancers of the opera danced; and then danced the company; and then it being morning, and the candles burnt out, the windows were opened; and then the stewed danced assembly were such shocking figures, that they fled like ghosts as they looked.——I suppose there will be no more balls unless the French land, and then we shall show we do not mind it.

Thus I have told you all I know. You will ponder over these things in your little distant island, when we have forgotten them. There is another person, one doctor Franklin, who, I fancy, is not sorry that we divert ourselves so well.

LETTER CXVIII.

Strawberry-hill, Sept. 13, 1779.

I AM writing to you at random; not knowing whether or when this letter will go: but your brother told me last night that an officer, whose

name I have forgot, was arrived from Jerſey, and would return to you ſoon. I am ſenſible how very ſeldom I have written to you—but you have been few moments out of my thoughts. What *they* have been, you who know me ſo minutely may well gueſs, and why they do not paſs my lips. Senſe, experience, circumſtances, can teach one to command one's ſelf outwardly, but do not diveſt a moſt friendly heart of its feelings. I believe the ſtate of my mind has contributed to bring on a very weak and decaying body my preſent diſorders. I have not been well the whole ſummer; but for theſe three weeks much otherwiſe. It has at laſt ended in the gout, which, to all appearance, will be a ſhort fit.

On public affairs I cannot ſpeak. Every thing is ſo exaggerated on all ſides, that what grains of truth remain in the ſieve would appear cold and inſipid; and the great manœuvres you learn as ſoon as I. In the naval battle between Byron and d'Eſtaing, our captains were worthy of any age in our ſtory.

You may imagine how happy I am at Mrs. D——'s return, and at her not being at Naples, as ſhe was likely to have been, at the dreadful exploſion of Veſuvius. Surely it will have glutted ſir William's rage for volcanos! How poor lady Hamilton's nerves ſtood it I do not conceive.——Oh, mankind! mankind!—Are there not calamities enough in ſtore for us, but muſt deſtruction be our amuſement and purſuit?

I ſend this to Ditton[1], where it may wait ſome days; but I would not ſuffer a ſure opportunity to ſlip without a line. You are more obliged to me for all I do not ſay, than for whatever eloquence itſelf could pen.

P. S. I unſeal my letter to add, that undoubtedly you will come to the meeting of parliament, which will be in October. Nothing can or ever did make me adviſe you to take a ſtep unworthy of yourſelf.—But ſurely you have higher and more ſacred duties than the government of a mole-hill!

[1] Where lord Hertford had then a villa.

LETTER

LETTER CXIX.

January 3, 1781.

AFTER I had written my note to you laſt night, I called on ———, who gave me the diſmal account of Jamaica, that you will ſee in the gazette, and of the damage done to our ſhipping. Admiral Rowley is ſafe; but they are in apprehenſions for Walſingham. He told me too what is not in the gazette; that of the expedition againſt the Spaniſh ſettlements, not a ſingle man ſurvives! The papers to-day, I ſee, ſpeak of great danger to Gibraltar.

——— ——— repeated to me his great deſire that you ſhould publiſh your ſpeech [1], as he told you. I do not conceive why *he* is ſo eager for it; for he profeſſes total deſpair about America. It looks to me as if there was a wiſh of throwing blame ſomewhere—but I profeſs I am too ſimple to dive into the objects of ſhades of intrigues; nor do I care about them. We ſhall be reduced to a miſerable little iſland; and from a mighty empire ſink into as inſignificant a country as Denmark or Sardinia! When our trade and marine are gone, the latter of which we keep up by unnatural efforts, to which our debt will put a ſtop, we ſhall loſe the Eaſt Indies as Portugal did; and then France will dictate to us more imperiouſly than ever we did to Ireland, which is in a manner already gone too! Theſe are mortifying reflections, to which an Engliſh mind cannot eaſily accommodate itſelf——But, alas! we have been purſuing the very conduct that France would have preſcribed, and more than with all her preſumption ſhe could have dared to expect. Could ſhe flatter herſelf that we would take no advantage of the dilatorineſs and unwillingneſs of Spain to enter into the war? that we would reject the diſpoſition of Ruſſia to ſupport us? and that our ſtill more natural friend Holland would be driven into the league againſt us? All this has happened; and, like an infant, we are delighted with having ſet our own frock in a blaze!—I ſit and gaze with aſtoniſhment at our phrenſy ——Yet why? Are not nations as liable to intoxication as individuals? Are not predictions founded on calculation oftener rejected than the prophecies

[1] Introductory of a motion "for leave to "bring in a bill for quieting the troubles that "have for ſome time ſubſiſted between Great "Britain and America, and enabling his ma- "jeſty to ſend out commiſſioners with full "power to treat with America for that pur- "poſe."

of

of dreamers? Do we not act preciſely like C—— F——, who thought he had diſcovered a new truth in figures, when he preached that wiſe doctrine, that nobody could want money that would pay enough for it?—The conſequence was, that in two years he left himſelf without the poſſibility of borrowing a ſhilling. I am not ſurpriſed at the ſpirits of a boy of parts—I am not ſurpriſed at the people—I do wonder at government, that games away its conſequence. For what are we now really at war with America, France, Spain, and Holland?—Not with hopes of reconquering America, not with the ſmalleſt proſpect of conquering a foot of land from France, Spain, or Holland——No; we are at war on the defenſive, to protect what is left, or more truly to ſtave off, for a year perhaps, a peace that muſt proclaim our nakedneſs and impotence. I would not willingly recur to that womaniſh viſion of, Something may turn up in our favour! That ſomething muſt be a naval victory that will annihilate at once all the ſquadrons of Europe—muſt wipe off forty millions of new debt—reconcile the affections of America, that for ſix years we have laboured to alienate—and that muſt recall out of the grave the armies and ſailors that are periſhed—and that muſt make thirteen provinces willing to receive the law, without the neceſſity of keeping ten thouſand men amongſt them. The gigantic imagination of lord Chatham would not entertain ſuch a chimera. Lord ——— perhaps would ſay he did, rather than not undertake; or Mr. Burke could form a metaphoric viſion, that would ſatisfy no imagination but his own: but I, who am nullius addictus jurare in verba, have no hopes either in our reſources or in our geniuſes, and look on my country already as undone [1]!—It is grievous—but I ſhall not have much time to lament its fall!

LETTER CXX.

Strawberry-hill, Sunday evening, May 6, 1781.

I SUPPED with your counteſs on Friday at lord Frederic Campbell's, where I heard of the relief of Gibraltar by Darby. The Spaniſh fleet kept

[1] It may be ſome comfort, in a moment no leſs portentous and melancholy than the one here deſcribed, to recollect the almoſt unhoped-for recovery of national proſperity, which took place from the peace 1782 to the declaration of war againſt France in the year 1793. May our exertions procure the ſpeedy application of a ſimilar remedy to our preſent evils, and may that remedy be productive of equally good effects! E. March 1798.

cloſe

close in Cadiz:—however, he lifted up his leg, and just squirted contempt on them. As he is disembarrassed of his transports, I suppose their ships will scramble on shore rather than fight. Well, I shall be perfectly content with our fleet coming back in a whole skin. It will be enough to have outquixoted Don Quixote's own nation. As I knew your countess would write the next day, I waited till she was gone out of town and would not have much to tell you—not that I have either; and it is giving myself an air, to pretend to know more at Twickenham than she can at Henley. Though it is a bitter north-east, I came hither to-day to look at my lilacs, though à la glace, and to get from Pharaoh, for which there is a rage. I doted on it above thirty years ago; but it is not decent to sit up all night now with boys and girls. ———, the banker à la mode, has been demolished. He and his associate sir —— —— went early t'other night to Brookes's, before C. F. and F. who keep a bank there, were come. But they soon arrived, attacked their rivals, broke their bank, and won above 4000*l.* "There," said F. "so should all usurpers be served!"—He did still better; for he sent for his tradesmen, and paid as far as the money would go.—In the mornings he continues his war on lord North—but cannot break *that* bank. The court has carried a secret committee for India affairs and it is supposed that Rumbold is to be the sacrifice:—but as he is near as rich as lord Clive, I conclude he will escape by the same golden key.

I told you in my last, that Tonton[1] was arrived. I brought him this morning to take possession of his new villa; but his inauguration has not been at all pacific. As he has already found out that he may be as despotic as at saint Joseph's, he began with exiling my beautiful little cat;—upon which, however, we shall not quite agree. He then flew at one of my dogs, who returned it, by biting his foot till it bled; but was severely beaten for it. I immediately rung for Margaret[2] to dress his foot; but in the midst of my tribulation could not keep my countenance; for she cried, "Poor little thing, he does not understand my language!"——I hope she will not recollect too that he is a papist!

[1] Madame du Deffand's dog, which she left by will to Mr. Walpole.
[2] Mr. Walpole's housekeeper.

Berkeley

Berkeley-ſquare, Tueſday, May 8.

I CAME before dinner, and find your long letter of the 3d. You have miſtaken Tonton's ſex, who is a cavalier, and a little of the mouſquetaire ſtill; but if I do not correct his vivacities, at leaſt I ſhall not encourage them like my dear old friend.

You ſay nothing of your health: therefore, I truſt, it is quite re-eſtabliſhed. My own is moſt flouriſhing for me.

They ſay the parliament will riſe by the birth-day—not that it ſeems to be any grievance or confinement to any body. I hope you will ſoon come[1] and enjoy a quiet ſummer under the laurels of your own conſcience. They are at leaſt as ſpreading as any body's elſe; and the ſoil will preſerve their verdure for ever. Methinks we weſtern powers might as well make peace, ſince we make war ſo clumſily.—Yet I doubt the awkwardneſs of our enemies will not have brought down our ſtomach. Well, I wiſh for the ſake of mankind there was an end of their ſufferings! Even ſpectators are not amuſed—the whole war has paſſed like the riotous murmurs of the upper gallery before the play begins—they have pelted the candle-ſnuffers, the ſtage has been ſwept, the muſic has played, people have taken their places—but the deuce a bit of any performance!—And when folks go home, they will have ſeen nothing but a farce, that has coſt fifty times more than the beſt tragedy!

LETTER CXXI.

Berkeley-ſquare, May 28, 1781.

THIS letter, like an embarkation, will not ſet out till it has gotten its complement; but I begin it, as I have juſt received your ſecond letter. I wrote to you two days ago, and did not mean to complain; for you certainly cannot have variety of matter in your ſequeſtered iſle: and ſince you do not diſdain trifling news, this good town, that furniſhes nothing elſe, at leaſt produces weeds, which ſhoot up in ſpite of the *Scotch thiſtles*, that have choked all good fruits. I do not know what lady C. deſigns to do with her play; I hope, act it only in private; for her other was mur-

[1] From Jerſey.

dered, and the audience did not exert the leaſt gallantry to ſo pretty an authoreſs, though ſhe gave them ſo fair an opportunity. For my own play, I was going to publiſh it in my own defence, as a ſpurious edition was advertiſed here, beſides one in Ireland.—My advertiſement has overlaid the former for the preſent, and that tempts me to ſuppreſs mine, as I have a thorough averſion to its appearance. Still, I think I ſhall produce it in the dead of ſummer, that it may be forgotten by winter; for I could not bear having it the ſubject of converſation in a full town. It is printed; ſo I can let it ſteal out in the midſt of the firſt event that engroſſes the public; and as it is not quite a novelty, I have no fear but it will be ſtill-born, if it is twin with any babe that ſqualls and makes much noiſe.——At the ſame time with yours I received a letter from another couſin at Paris, who tells me Necker is on the verge; and in the poſtſcript ſays, he has actually reſigned. I heard ſo a few days ago; but this is a full confirmation. Do you remember a converſation at your houſe, at ſupper, in which a friend of yours ſpoke very unfavourably of Necker, and ſeemed to wiſh his fall? In my own opinion, they are much in the wrong. It is true, Necker laboured with all his ſhoulders to reſtore their finances; yet I am perſuaded that his attention to that great object made him clog all their military operations. They will pay dearer for money; but money they will have—nor is it ſo dear to them; for, when they have gotten it, they have only not to pay. A monſieur Joly de Fleury is comptroller-general. I know nothing of him—but as they change ſo often, ſome able man will prove miniſter at laſt—and there they will have the advantage again.

Lord Cornwallis's courier, Mr. Broderic, is not yet arrived; ſo you are a little precipitate in thinking America ſo much nearer to being ſubdued, which you have often ſwallowed up as if you were a miniſter; and yet, methinks, that æra has been ſo frequently put off, that I wonder you are not cured of being ſanguine—or rather, of believing the magnificent lies that every trifling advantage gives birth to. If a quarter of the Americans had joined the royaliſts, that have been ſaid to join, all the colonies would not hold them. But, at leaſt, they have been like the trick of kings and queens at cards; where one of two goes back every turn to fetch another. However, this is only for converſation for the moment. With ſuch averſion to diſputation, I have no zeal for making converts to my own opinion, not even on points that touch me nearer.

Thurſday, May 31.

IF you ſee the papers, you will find that there was a warm debate yeſterday on a freſh propoſal from Harley for pacification with America; in which the miniſters were roundly reproached with their boaſts of the returning zeal of the colonies; and which, though it ought by their own accounts to be ſo much nearer complete, they could not maintain to be at all effectual; though even yeſterday a report was revived of a ſecond victory of lord Cornwallis. This debate prevented another on the marriage-bill, which C. F. wants to get repealed, and which he told me he was going to labour. I mention this from the circumſtance of the moment when he told me ſo. I had been to ſee if lady A——— was come to town: as I came up St. James's-ſtreet, I ſaw a cart and porters at C——'s door; coppers and old cheſts of drawers loading.—In ſhort, his ſucceſs at Faro has awakened his hoſt of creditors—but unleſs his bank had ſwelled to the ſize of the bank of England, it could not have yielded a ſop apiece for each. Epſom too had been unpropitious—and one creditor has actually ſeized and carried off his goods, which did not ſeem worth removing. As I returned full of this ſcene, whom ſhould I find ſauntering by my own door but C.? He came up and talked to me at the coach-window, on the marriage bill, with as much ſangfroid as if he knew nothing of what had happened. —I have no admiration for inſenſibility to one's own faults, eſpecially when committed out of vanity. Perhaps the whole philoſophy conſiſted in the commiſſion. If *you* could have been as much to blame, the laſt thing you would bear well would be your own reflections. The more marvellous F——'s parts are, the more one is provoked at his follies, which comfort ſo many raſcals and blockheads; and make all that is admirable and amiable in him, only matter of regret to thoſe who like him as I do.

I did intend to ſettle at Strawberry on Sunday; but muſt return on Thurſday, for a party made at Marlborough-houſe for princeſs Amelia. I am continually tempted to retire entirely—and ſhould—if I did not ſee how very unfit Engliſh tempers are for living quite out of the world. We grow abominably peeviſh and ſevere on others, if we are not conſtantly rubbed againſt and poliſhed by them. I need not name friends and relations of yours and mine as inſtances. My prophecy on the ſhort reign of Faro is verified already. The bankers find that all the calculated advantages of the

game do not balance pinchbeck parolis and debts of honourable women.—The bankers, I think, might have had a previous and more generous reaſon, the very bad air of holding a bank:—but this country is as hardened againſt the petite morale, as againſt the greater.—What ſhould I think of the world if I quitted it entirely?

LETTER CXXII.

Strawberry-hill, June 3, 1781.

YOU know I have more philoſophy about *you* than courage; yet for once I have been very brave. There was an article in the papers laſt week that ſaid, a letter from Jerſey mentioned apprehenſions of being attacked by 4000 French.—Do you know that I treated the paragraph with ſcorn?—No, no: I am not afraid for your iſland, when you are at home in it, and have had time to fortify it, and have ſufficient force. No, no: it will not be ſurpriſed when you are there, and when our fleet is returned, and Digby before Breſt.—However, with all my valour, I could not help going to your brother to aſk a few queſtions—but he had heard of no ſuch letter. The French would be fooliſh indeed if they ran their heads a third time againſt your rocks, when watched by the moſt vigilant of all governors. Your nephew G—— is arrived with the fleet: my door opened t'other morning; I looked towards the common horizon of heads, but was a foot and a half below any face. The handſomeſt giant in the world made but one ſtep croſs my room; and, ſeizing my hand, gave it ſuch a robuſt gripe, that I ſqualled; for he cruſhed my poor chalk-ſtones to powder. When I had recovered from the pain of his friendly ſalute, I ſaid, "It muſt be G—— C——: and yet is it poſſible?—Why, it is not fifteen months ago ſince you was but ſix feet high."—In a word, he is within an inch of Robert and Edward, with larger limbs, almoſt as handſome as Hugh, with all the bloom of youth; and—in ſhort, another of thoſe comely ſons of Anak, the breed of which your brother and lady Hertford have piouſly reſtored for the comfort of the daughters of Sion. He is delighted with having tapped his warfare with the ſiege of Gibraltar, and burns to ſtride to America. The town, he ſays, is totally deſtroyed; and between two and three hundred perſons were killed.——Well! it is pity lady Hertford has done breeding: we ſhall want ſuch a race to re-people even the ruins we do not loſe! The

riſing generation does give one ſome hopes.—I confine myſelf to ſome of this year's birds. The young William Pitt has again diſplayed paternal oratory. The other day, on the commiſſion of accounts, he anſwered lord North, and tore him limb from limb. If C. F. could feel, one ſhould think ſuch a rival, with an unſpotted character, would rouſe him——What, if a Pitt and Fox ſhould again be rivals!——A ſtill newer orator has appeared in the India buſineſs, a Mr. Banks, and againſt lord North too—and with a merit, that the very laſt crop of orators left out of their rubric—modeſty. As young Pitt is modeſt too, one would hope ſome genuine Engliſh may revive!

Tueſday, June 5.

THIS is the ſeaſon of opening my cake-houſe. I have choſen a bad ſpot, if I meant to retire; and calculated ill, when I made it a puppet-ſhow.

Laſt week we had two or three maſtiff-days; for they were fiercer than our common dog-days. It is cooled again; but rain is as great a rarity as in Egypt; and father Thames is ſo far from being a Nile, that he is dying for thirſt himſelf.—But it would be prudent to reſerve paragraphs of weather till people are gone out of town; for then I can have little to ſend you elſe from hence.

Berkeley-ſquare, June 6.

As ſoon as I came to town to-day Le Texier called on me, and told me he has miſcarried of Pygmalion. The expence would have mounted to 150*l.* and he could get but 60 ſubſcribers at a guinea apiece. I am glad his experience and ſucceſs have taught him thrift—I did not expect it. Sheridan had a heavier miſcarriage laſt night. The two Veſtris had imagined a fête; and, concluding that whatever they deſigned would captivate the town and its purſes, were at the expence of 1200*l.* and, diſtributing tickets at two guineas apiece, diſpoſed of not two hundred. It ended in a bad opera, that began three hours later than uſual, and at quadruple the price. There were buſhels of dead flowers, lamps, country dances—and a cold ſupper——Yet they are not abuſed as poor Le Texier was laſt year.

June 8.

I CONCLUDE my letter, and I hope our preſent correſpondence, very agreeably; for your brother told me laſt night, that you have written to lord Hillſborough

Hillſborough for leave to return. If all our governors could leave their dominions in as good plight, it were lucky. Your brother owned, what the gazette with all its circumſtances cannot conceal, that lord Cornwallis's triumphs have but increaſed our loſſes, without leaving any hopes. I am told that his army, which when he parted from Clinton amounted to 17,000 men, does not now contain above as many hundred, except the detachments. The gazette, to my ſorrow and your greater ſorrow, ſpeaks of colonel [1] O'Hara having received two dangerous wounds.

Princeſs Amelia was at Marlborough-houſe laſt night, and played at Faro till twelve o'clock—There ends the winter campaign!—I go to Strawberry-hill to-morrow; and I hope, à l'Irlandoiſe, that the next letter I write to you—will be not to write to you any more.

LETTER CXXIII.

Strawberry-hill, September 16, 1781.

I AM not ſurpriſed that ſuch a mind as yours cannot help expreſſing gratitude: it would not be your mind, if it could command that ſenſation as triumphantly as it does your paſſions. Only remember that the expreſſion is unneceſſary. I do know that you feel the entire friendſhip I have for you; nor ſhould I love you ſo well if I was not perſuaded of it. There never was a grain of any thing romantic in my friendſhip for you. We loved one another from children, and as ſo near relations; but my friendſhip grew up with your virtues, which I admired though I did not imitate. We had ſcarce one in common but diſintereſtedneſs. Of the reverſe we have both, I may ſay, been ſo abſolutely clear, that there is nothing ſo natural and eaſy as the little moneyed tranſactions between us; and therefore knowing how perfectly indifferent I am upon that head, and remembering the papers I ſhowed you, and what I ſaid to you when I ſaw you laſt, I am ſure you will have the complaiſance never to mention thanks more.—— Now to anſwer your queſtions.

As to coming to you, as that feu gregeois lord George Gordon has

[1] Now general O'Hara, governor of Gibraltar.

given up the election to my great joy, I can come to you on Sunday next. It is true, I had rather you visited your regiment first, for this reason: I expect summons to Nuneham every day; and besides, having never loved two journeys instead of one, I grow more covetous of my time, as I have little left, and therefore had rather take Park-place, going and coming, on my way to lord Harcourt.

I don't know a word of news public or private. I am deep in my dear old friend's [1] papers. There are some very delectable; and though I believe, nay know, I have not quite all, there are many which I almost wonder, after the little delicacy they [2] have shown, ever arrived to my hands. I dare to say they will not be quite so just to the public; for though I consented that the correspondence with Voltaire should be given to the editors of his works, I am persuaded that there are many passages at least which they will suppress, as very contemptuous to his chief votaries—I mean of the votaries to his sentiments—for, like other hereſiarchs, he despised his tools. If I live to see the edition, it will divert me to collate it with what I have in my hands.

You are the person in the world the fittest to encounter the meeting you mention for the choice of a bridge [3]. You have temper and patience enough to bear with fools and false taste. I, so unlike you, have learnt some patience with both sorts too, but by a more summary method than by waiting to instill reason into them. Mine is only by leaving them to their own vagaries, and by despairing that sense and taste should ever extend themselves. Adieu!

P. S. In Voltaire's letters are some bitter traits on the king of Prussia, which, as he is defender of their no faith, I conclude will be rayés too.

[1] Madame du Deffand, who died in September 1781, and left all her papers to Mr. Walpole.

[2] He means the executors of madame du Deffand.

[3] The bridge over the Thames at Henley, to whose singular beauty the good taste of Mr. Conway materially contributed.

LETTER

LETTER CXXIV.

Berkeley-ſquare, Sunday morning, November 18, 1781.

I HAVE been here again for three days, tending and nurſing and waiting on Mr. Jephſon's play. I have brought it into the world, was well delivered of it, it can ſtand on its own legs—and I am going back to my own quiet hill, never likely to have any thing more to do with theatres. Indeed it has ſeemed ſtrange to me, who for theſe three or four years have not been ſo many times in a play-houſe, nor knew ſix of the actors by ſight, to be at two rehearſals, behind the ſcenes, in the green-room, and acquainted with half the company. The Count of Narbonne was played laſt night with great applauſe, and without a ſingle murmur of diſapprobation. Miſs Young has charmed me. She played with intelligence that was quite ſurpriſing. The applauſe to one of her ſpeeches laſted a minute, and recommenced twice before the play could go on. I am ſure you will be pleaſed with the conduct and the eaſy beautiful language of the play, and ſtruck with her acting.

LETTER CXXV.

Strawberry-hill, September 17, 1782.

I HAD not time yeſterday to ſay what I had to ſay about your coming hither. I ſhould certainly be happy to ſee you and lady Aileſbury at any time; but it would be unconſcionable to expect it when you have ſcarce a whole day in a month to paſs at your own houſe, and to look after your own works. Friends, I know, lay as great ſtreſs upon trifles as upon ſerious points; but as there never was a more ſincere attachment than mine, ſo it is the moſt reaſonable one too, for I always think for you more than myſelf. Do whatever you have to do, and be aſſured, That is what I like beſt that you ſhould do. The preſent hurry cannot laſt always. Your preſent object is to ſhow how much more fit you are for your poſt* than

* Mr. Conway was now commander in chief.

any

any other man, by which you will do infinite ſervice too; and will throw a great many private acts of good-nature and juſtice into the account. Do you think I would ſtand in the way of any of theſe things? and that I am not aware of them? Do not think about me. If it ſuits you at any moment, come. Except Sunday next, when I am engaged to dine abroad, I have nothing to do till the middle of October, when I ſhall go to Nuneham; and, going or coming, may poſſibly catch you at Park-place.

If I am not quite credulous about your turning ſmoke into gold [1], it is perhaps becauſe I am very ignorant. I like Mr. M——— extremely; and though I have lived ſo long that I have little confidence, I think you could not have choſen one more likely to be faithful. I am ſenſible that my kind of diſtruſt would prevent all great enterpriſes—and yet I cannot but fear, that unleſs one gives one's ſelf up entirely to the purſuit of a new object, the riſk muſt be doubled. But I will ſay no more; for I do not even wiſh to diſſuade you, as I am ſure I underſtand nothing of the matter, and therefore mean no more than to keep your diſcretion awake.

The tempeſt of Monday night alarmed me too for the fleet: and as I have nothing to do but to care, I feel for individuals as well as for the public; and think of all thoſe who may be loſt, and of all thoſe who may be made miſerable by ſuch loſs. Indeed I care moſt for individuals—for as to the public, it ſeems to be totally inſenſible to every thing!

I know nothing worth repeating; and having now anſwered all your letter, ſhall bid you good night.

LETTER CXXVI.

Strawberry-hill, Auguſt 15, 1783.

THE addreſs from the volunteers is curious indeed, and upon the firſt face a little Iriſh. What! would they throw off our parliament, and yet

[1] Alluding to the coke ovens, for which Mr. Conway afterwards obtained a patent.

amend

amend it? It is like correcting a queſtion in the houſe of commons, and then voting againſt it. But I ſuppoſe they rather mean to increaſe confuſion here, that we may not be at leiſure to impede their progreſs—at leaſt this may be the intention of the leaders. Large bodies are only led by being in earneſt themſelves, when their leaders are not ſo:—but my head is not clear enough to apply it to different matters—nor could I do any good if it were. Our whole ſyſtem is become a disjointed chaos—and time muſt digeſt it—or blow it up ſhortly.—I ſee no way into it—nor expect any thing favourable but from chance, that often ſtops confuſion on a ſudden. To reſtore us by any ſyſtem, it would require a ſingle head furniſhed with wiſdom, temper, addreſs, fortitude, full and undivided power, and ſincere patriotiſm diveſted of all perſonal views. Where is that prodigy to be found?—and how ſhould it have the power, if it had all the reſt? And if it had the power, how could it be diveſted of that power again? And if it were not, how long would it retain its virtues? Power and wiſdom would ſoon unite, like Antony and Auguſtus, to annihilate their colleague virtue, for being a poor creature like Lepidus. In ſhort, the maſs of matter is too big for me: I am going out of the world, and cannot trouble myſelf about it. I do think of your part in it, and wiſh to preſerve you where you are, for the benefits that you may contribute. I have a high opinion of Mr. F. and believe that by frankneſs you may become real friends; which would be greatly advantageous to the country. There is no competition in my mind where you are concerned: but F. is the miniſter with whom I moſt wiſh you united—indeed, to all the reſt I am indifferent or adverſe—but, beſides his ſuperior abilities, he has a liberality of acting that is to my taſte. It is like my father's plainneſs, and has none of the paltry little fineſſes of a ſtateſman.

Your parties do not tempt me, becauſe I am not well enough to join in them: nor yet will they ſtop me, though I had rather find only you and lady A. and Mrs. D. I am not ſeriouſly ill—nay, am better upon the whole than I was laſt year: but I perceive decays enough in myſelf to be ſenſible that the ſcale may eaſily be inclined to the worſt ſide. This obſervation makes me very indifferent to every thing that is not much at my heart. Conſequently what concerns you is, as it has always been for above forty years, a principal object. Adieu!

LETTER CXXVII.

Berkeley-ſquare, Wedneſday, May 5, 1784.

YOUR cherries, for aught I know, may, like Mr. Pitt, be half ripe before others are in bloſſom; but at Twickenham, I am ſure, I could find dates and pomegranates on the quickſet hedges, as ſoon as a cherry in ſwaddling-clothes on my walls. The very leaves on the horſe-cheſnuts are little ſnotty-noſed things, that cry and are afraid of the north-wind, and cling to the bough as if *old poker* was coming to take them away. For my part, I have ſeen nothing like ſpring but a chimney-ſweeper's garland; and yet I have been three days in the country—and the conſequence was, that I was glad to come back to town. I do not wonder that you feel differently. Any thing is warmth and verdure when compared to poring over memorials. In truth, I think you will be much happier for being out of parliament. You could do no good there; you have no views of ambition to ſatisfy:—and when neither duty nor ambition calls (I do not condeſcend to name avarice, which never is to be ſatisfied, nor deſerves to be reaſoned with, nor has any place in your breaſt) I cannot conceive what ſatisfaction an elderly man can have in liſtening to the paſſions or follies of others: nor is eloquence ſuch a banquet, when one knows that, whoever the cooks are, whatever the ſauces, one has eaten as good beef or mutton before—and, perhaps, as well dreſſed. It is ſurely time to live for one's ſelf, when one has not a vaſt while to live; and you, I am perſuaded, will live the longer for leading a country life. How much better to be planting, nay, making experiments on ſmoke (if not too dear), than reading applications from officers, a quarter of whom you could not ſerve, nor content three quarters! You had not time for neceſſary exerciſe; and, I believe, would have blinded yourſelf. In ſhort, if you will live in the air all day, be totally idle, and not read or write a line by candle-light, and retrench your ſuppers, I ſhall rejoice in your having nothing to do but that dreadful puniſhment, pleaſing yourſelf. Nobody has any claims on you; you have ſatisfied every point of honour; you have no cauſe for being particularly grateful to the oppoſition; and you want no excuſe for living for yourſelf. Your reſolutions on œconomy are not only prudent, but juſt—and, to ſay the truth, I believe that if you had continued at the head of the army you would have ruined yourſelf. You have too much gene-

rosity to have curbed yourself, and would have had too little time to attend to doing so. I know by myself how pleasant it is to have laid up a little for those I love, for those that depend on me, and for old servants. Moderate wishes may be satisfied—and, which is still better, are less liable to disappointment. I am not preaching, nor giving advice—but congratulating you:—and it is certainly not being selfish, when I rejoice at your being thrown by circumstances into a retired life, though it will occasion my seeing less of you. But I have always preferred what was most for your own honour and happiness; and as you taste satisfaction already, it will not diminish, for they are the first moments of passing from a busy life to a quiet one that are the most irksome. You have the felicity of being able to amuse yourself with what the grave world calls trifles—but as gravity does not happen to be wisdom, trifles are full as important as what is respected as serious; and more amiable, as generally more innocent. Most men are bad or ridiculous, sometimes both:—at least my experience tells me, what my reading had told me before, that they are so in a great capital of a sinking country. If immortal fame is his object, a Cato may die—but he will do no good. If only the preservation of his virtue had been his point, he might have lived comfortably at Athens, like Atticus—who, by the way, happens to be as immortal; though I will give him credit for having had no such view. Indeed, I look on this country as so irrecoverably on the verge of ruin, from its enormous debt, from the loss of America, from the almost as certain prospect of losing India, that my pride would dislike to be an actor when the crash may happen.

You seem to think that I might send you more news. So I might, if I would talk of elections: but those, you know, I hate; as, in general, I do all details. How Mr. Fox has recovered such a majority I do not guess; still less do I comprehend how there could be so many that had not voted, after the poll had lasted so long. Indeed, I should be sorry to understand such mysteries.—Of new peers, or new elevations, I hear every day, but am quite ignorant which are to be true. Rumour always creates as many as the king, when he makes several. In fact, I do know nothing.

Adieu!

P. S. The summer is come to town, but I hope is gone into the country too.

LETTER CXXVIII.

Strawberry-hill, May 21, 1784.

I AM perfectly ſatisfied with your epitaph [1], and would not have a ſyllable altered. It tells exactly what it means to ſay, and, that truth being an encomium, wants no addition or amplification. Nor do I love late language for modern facts, nor will European tongues periſh ſince printing has been diſcovered. I ſhould approve French leaſt of all. It would be a kind of inſult to the vanquiſhed: and beſides, the example of a hero ſhould be held out to his countrymen rather than to their enemies. You muſt take care to have the word *cauſed*, in the laſt line but one, ſpelt rightly, and not *caus'd*.

I know nothing of the parliament but what you ſaw in the papers. I came hither yeſterday, and am tranſported, like you, with the beauty of the country; aye, and with its perfumed air too. The *lilac-tide* ſcents even the inſides of the rooms.

I deſired lady A——— to carry you lord Melcombe's Diary. It is curious indeed, not ſo much from the ſecrets it blabs, which are rather characteriſtic than novel, but from the wonderful folly of the author, who was ſo fond of talking of himſelf, that he tells all he knew of himſelf, though ſcarce an event that does not betray his profligacy; and (which is ſtill more ſurpriſing that he ſhould diſcloſe) almoſt every one expoſes the contempt in which he was held, and his conſequential diſappointments and diſgraces!—Was ever any man the better for another's experience?—What a leſſon is here againſt verſatility!

I, who have lived through all the ſcenes unfolded, am entertained—but I ſhould think that to younger readers half the book muſt be unintelligible. He explains nothing but the circumſtances of his own ſituation; and though he touches on many important periods, he leaves them undeveloped, and often undetermined. It is diverting to hear him rail at lord Halifax and others, for the very kind of double-dealing which he relates coolly of himſelf in the next page. Had he gone backwards, he might

[1] An epitaph for the monument, erected by the States of Jerſey, to the memory of major Pearſon, killed in the attack of that iſland by the French, in January 1781.

have given half-a-dozen volumes of his own life with ſimilar anecdotes and variations.

I am moſt ſurpriſed, that when ſelf-love is the whole ground-work of the performance, there ſhould be little or no attempt at ſhining as an author, though he was one. As he had ſo much wit too, I am amazed that not a feature of it appears. The diſcuſſion in the Appendix, on the late prince's queſtion for increaſe of allowance, is the only part in which there is ſenſe or honeſty.

There is, in the imperfect account of Rochfort, a ſtrong circumſtance or two that pleaſed me much. There are many paſſages that will diſpleaſe ſeveral others throughout.

Mr. Coxe's Travels are very different: plain, clear, ſenſible, inſtructive, and entertaining. It is a noble work, and precious to me who delight in quartos: the two volumes contain twelve hundred pages—I have already devoured a quarter, though I have had them but three days.

[The reſt of this letter is loſt.]

LETTER CXXIX.

Strawberry-hill, June 25, 1784.

I CAN anſwer you very readily in your own tone, that is, about weather and country grievances, and without one word of news or politics; for I know neither, nor enquire of them. I am very well content to be a Strulbrug, and to *exiſt* after I have done *being*: and I am ſtill better pleaſed that you are in the ſame way of thinking, or of not thinking; for I am ſure both your health and your mind will find the benefits of living for yourſelf and family only. It were not fit that the young ſhould concentre themſelves in ſo narrow a circle—nor do the young ſeem to have any ſuch intention. Let them mend or mar the world as they pleaſe—the world takes its own way upon the whole; and though there may be an uncommon ſwarm of animalculæ for a ſeaſon, things return into their own channel from their own bias, before any effectual noſtrum of fumigation is diſcovered. In the mean time I am for giving all due weight to

to local grievances, though with no natural turn towards attending to them:—but they ſerve for converſation. We have no newly-invented grubs to eat our fruit—indeed I have no fruit to be eaten—but I ſhould not lament if the worms would eat my gardener, who, you know, is ſo bad an one, that I never have any thing in my garden. I am now waiting for dry weather to cut my hay—though nature certainly never intended hay ſhould be cut dry, as it always rains all June.—But here is a worſe calamity: one is never ſafe by day or night: Mrs. Walſingham, who has bought your brother's late houſe at Ditton, was robbed a few days ago in the high road, within a mile of home, at *ſeven* in the evening. The dii minorum gentium pilfer every thing. Laſt night they ſtole a couple of yards of lead off the pediment of the door of my cottage. A gentleman at Putney, who has three men ſervants, had his houſe broken open laſt week, and loſt ſome fine miniatures, which he valued ſo much, that he would not hang them up. You may imagine what a pain this gives me in my bawbles! I have been making the round of my fortifications this morning, and ordering new works.

I am concerned for the account you give me of —— ——. Life does not appear to be ſuch a jewel as to preſerve it carefully for its own ſake. I think the ſame of its *good things*: if they do not procure amuſement or comfort, I doubt they only produce the contrary.—Yet it is ſilly to refine; for, probably, whatever any man does by choice, he knows will pleaſe him beſt, or at leaſt will prevent greater uneaſineſs. I, therefore, rather retract my concern; for with a vaſt fortune ——— might certainly do what he would—and if, at his age, he can wiſh for more than that fortune will obtain, I may pity his taſte or temper: but I ſhall think that you and I are much happier who can find enjoyments in an humbler ſphere, nor envy thoſe who have no time for trifling. I, who have never done any thing elſe, am not at all weary of my occupation. Even three days of continued rain have not put me out of humour or ſpirits. C'eſt beaucoup dire for an Anglois. Adieu!

LETTER

LETTER CXXX.

Strawberry-hill, June 30, 1784.

INSTEAD of coming to you, I am thinking of packing up and going to town for winter, ſo deſperate is the weather! I found a great fire at Mrs. Clive's this evening, and Mr. Raſtor hanging over it like a ſmoked ham. They tell me my hay will be all ſpoiled for want of cutting; but I had rather it ſhould be deſtroyed by ſtanding than by being mowed, as the former will coſt me nothing but the crop, and 'tis very dear to make nothing but a water ſouchy of it.

You know I have loſt a niece, and found another nephew: he makes the fifty-fourth, reckoning both ſexes. We are certainly an affectionate family, for of late we do nothing but marry one another.

Have not you felt a little twinge in a remote corner of your heart on lady ———'s death? She dreaded death ſo extremely, that I am glad ſhe had not a moment to be ſenſible of it. I have a great affection for ſudden deaths—They ſave one's ſelf and every body elſe a deal of ceremony.

The duke and ducheſs of M——— breakfaſted here on Monday, and ſeemed much pleaſed, though it rained the whole time with an Egyptian darkneſs. I ſhould have thought there had been deluges enough to deſtroy all Egypt's other plagues; but the newſpapers talk of locuſts—I ſuppoſe, relations of your beetles, though probably not ſo fond of green fruit; for the ſcene of their campaign is Queen-ſquare, Weſtminſter, where there certainly has not been an orchard ſince the reign of Canute.

I have, at laſt, ſeen an air balloon—juſt as I once did ſee a tiny review, by paſſing one accidentally on Hounſlow-heath. I was going laſt night to lady Onſlow at Richmond, and over Mr. Cambridge's field I ſaw a bundle in the air not bigger than the moon, and ſhe herſelf could not have deſcended with more compoſure if ſhe had expected to find Endymion faſt aſleep. It ſeemed to 'light on Richmond-hill; but Mrs. H—— was going by, and her coiffeure prevented my ſeeing it alight. The papers ſay, that a balloon has been made at Paris, repreſenting the caſtle of Stockholm, in compliment to the king of Sweden, but that they were afraid to

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let it off—So, I ſuppoſe, it will be ſerved up to him in a deſſert. No great progreſs ſurely is made in theſe airy navigations, if they are ſtill afraid of riſking the necks of two or three ſubjects for the entertainment of a viſiting ſovereign. There is ſeldom a feu de joie for the birth of a dauphin that does not coſt more lives. I thought royalty and ſcience never haggled about the value of blood when experiments are in queſtion.

I ſhall wait for ſummer before I make you a viſit. Though I dare to ſay that you have converted your ſmoke-kilns into a manufacture of balloons, pray do not erect a Strawberry caſtle in the air for my reception, if it will coſt a piſmire a hair of its head. Good-night!—I have ordered my bed to be heated as hot as an oven, and Tonton and I muſt go into it.

LETTER CXXXI.

Strawberry-hill, Auguſt 14, 1784.

AS lady C. offers to be poſtman, I cannot reſiſt writing a line, though I have not a word to ſay. In good ſooth, I know nothing, hear of nothing but robberies and houſe-breaking; conſequently never think of miniſters, India directors, and ſuch honeſt men. Mrs. Clive has been broken open, and Mr. Raftor miſcarried and died of the fright. Lady ——— has loſt all her liveries and her temper, and lady ——— has cried her eyes out on loſing a lurch and almoſt her wig.—In ſhort, as I do not love exaggeration, I do not believe there have been above threeſcore highway robberies within this week, fifty-ſeven houſes that have been broken open, and two hundred and thirty that are to be ſtripped on the firſt opportunity. We are in great hopes, however, that the king of Spain, now he has demoliſhed Algiers, the metropolitan ſee of thieves, will come and bombard Richmond, Twickenham, Hampton-court, and all the ſuffragan cities that ſwarm with pirates and banditti, as he has a better knack at deſtroying vagabonds than at recovering his own.

Ireland is in a bleſſed way; and as if the climate infected every body that ſets foot there, the viceroy's aides de camp have *blundered* into a riot, that will ſet all the humours afloat.

I wiſh

I wiſh you joy of the ſummer being come now it is gone, which is better than not coming at all. I hope lady C. will return with an account of your all being perfectly well. Adieu!

LETTER CXXXII.

Strawberry-hill, October 15, 1784.

AS I have heard nothing from you, I flatter myſelf lady A. mends, or I think you would have brought her again to the phyſicians: you will, I conclude, next week, as towards the end of it the ten days they named will be expired. I muſt be in town myſelf about Thurſday on ſome little buſineſs of my own.

As I was writing this, my ſervants called me away to ſee a balloon—I ſuppoſe Blanchard's, that was to be let off from Chelſea this morning. I ſaw it from the common field before the window of my round tower. It appeared about a third of the ſize of the moon, or leſs, when ſetting, ſomething above the tops of the trees on the level horizon. It was then deſcending; and after riſing and declining a little, it ſunk ſlowly behind the trees, I ſhould think about or beyond Sunbury, at five minutes after one. But you know I am a very inexact gueſſer at meaſures and diſtances, and may be miſtaken in many miles; and you know how little I have attended to thoſe *airgonauts*: only t'other night I diverted myſelf with a ſort of meditation on future *airgonation*, ſuppoſing that it will not only be perfected, but will depoſe navigation. I did not finiſh it, becauſe I am not ſkilled, like the gentleman that uſed to write political ſhip-news, in that ſtyle, which I wanted to perfect my eſſay: but in the prelude I obſerved how ignorant the ancients were in ſuppoſing Icarus melted the wax of his wings by too near acceſs to the ſun, whereas he would have been frozen to death before he made the firſt poſt on that road. Next, I diſcovered an alliance between biſhop Wilkins's art of flying and his plan of an univerſal language, the latter of which he no doubt calculated to prevent the want of an interpreter when he ſhould arrive at the moon.

But I chiefly amuſed myſelf with ideas of the change that would be made in the world by the ſubſtitution of balloons to ſhips. I ſuppoſed our ſea-

ports to become *deſerted villages*, and Saliſbury-plain, Newmarket-heath, (another canvas for alteration of ideas), and all downs (but *the* Downs) ariſing into dock-yards for aërial veſſels. Such a field would be ample in furniſhing new ſpeculations——But to come to my ſhip-news.

The good balloon Dædalus, capt. Wing-ate, will fly in a few days for China; he will ſtop at the top of the Monument to take in paſſengers.

Arrived on Brand-ſands, the Vulture, capt. Nabob; the Tortoiſe ſnow, from Lapland; the Pet-en-l'air, from Verſailles; the Dreadnought, from mount Etna, ſir W. Hamilton commander; the Tympany, Mongolfier; and the Mine-A-in-a-bandbox, from the cape of Good Hope. Foundered in a hurricane, the Bird of Paradiſe, from mount Ararat. The Bubble, Sheldon, took fire, and was burnt to her gallery; and the Phœnix is to be cut down to a ſecond rate.—In thoſe days Old Sarum will again be a town and have houſes in it. There will be fights in the air with wind-guns and bows and arrows; and there will be prodigious increaſe of land for tillage, eſpecially in France, by breaking up all public roads as uſeleſs.——But enough of my fooleries, for which I am ſorry you muſt pay double poſtage.

LETTER CXXXIII.

Sunday night, Nov. 28, 1784.

I HAVE received the parcel of papers you ſent me[1], which I conclude come from lord Strafford, and will apply them as well as I poſſibly can, you may be ſure—but with little of doing any good: humanity is no match for cruelty. There are now and then ſuch angelic beings as Mr. Hanway and Mr. Howard; but our race in general is peſtilently bad and malevolent. I have been theſe two years wiſhing to promote my excellent Mr. Porter's plan for alleviating the woes of chimney-ſweepers, but never could make impreſſion on three people; on the contrary, have generally cauſed a ſmile.

G—— C——'s intelligence of hoſtilities commenced between the Dutch

[1] Againſt cruelty to dogs.

and Imperialiſts makes me ſuppoſe that France will ſupport the former—or could they reſiſt? Yet I had heard that France would not. Some have thought, as I have done, that a combination of partition would happen between Auſtria, France, and Pruſſia, the modern law of nations for avoiding wars. I know nothing: ſo my conjectures may all be erroneous; eſpecially as one argues from reaſon; a very inadequate judge, as it leaves paſſions, caprices, and accidents, out of its calculation. It does not ſeem the intereſt of France, that the emperor's power ſhould increaſe in their neighbourhood and extend to the ſea. Conſequently it is France's intereſt to protect Holland in concert with Pruſſia. This laſt is a tranſient power, and may determine on the death of the preſent king; but the Imperial is a permanent force, and muſt be the enemy of France, however preſent connections may incline the ſcale.

In any caſe, I hope we ſhall no way be hooked into the quarrel; not only from the impotence of our circumſtances, but as I think it would decide the loſs of Ireland, which ſeems tranquillizing: but ſhould we have any bickering with France, ſhe would renew the manœuvres ſhe practiſed ſo fatally in America. Theſe are my politics; I do not know with whoſe they coincide or diſagree, nor does it ſignify a ſtraw. Nothing will depend on my opinion; nor have I any opinion about them, but when I have nothing at all to do that amuſes me more, or nothing elſe to fill a letter.

I can give you a ſample of my idleneſs, which may divert lady A——— and your academy of arts and ſciences for a minute in the evening. It came into my head yeſterday to ſend a card to lady Lyttelton, to aſk when ſhe would be in town—here it is in an heroic epiſtle:

From a caſtle as vaſt—as the caſtles on ſigns;
From a hill that all Africa's—mole-hills outſhines,
This epiſtle is ſent to a cottage ſo ſmall,
That the door cannot ope, if you ſtand in the hall,
To a lady, who would be fifteen, if her knight
And old ſwain were as young as Methuſalem quite:
It comes to inquire—not whether her eyes
Are as radiant as ever—but how many ſighs
He muſt vent to the rocks and the echos around,
(Though nor echo nor rock in the pariſh is found)

Before ſhe obdurate his paſſion will meet—
His paſſion to ſee her in Portugal-ſtreet.

As the ſixth line goes rather too near the core, do not give a copy of it: however, I ſhould be ſorry if it diſpleaſed; though I do not believe it will, but be taken with good-humour as it was meant [1].

LETTER CXXXIV.

Strawberry-hill, October 6, 1785.

I WONDERED I did not hear from you, as I concluded you returned. You have made me good amends by the entertaining ſtory of your travels. If I were not too diſjointed for long journeys, I ſhould like to ſee much of what you have ſeen; but if I had the agility of Veſtris, I would not purchaſe all that pleaſure for my eyes at the expence of my unſociability, which could not have borne the hoſpitality you experienced. It was always death to me, when I did travel England, to have lords and ladies receive me and ſhew me their caſtles, inſtead of turning me over to their houſekeeper: it hindered my ſeeing any thing, and I was the whole time meditating my eſcape: but lady A. and you are not ſuch ſenſitive plants, nor ſhrink and cloſe up if a ſtranger holds out a hand.

I don't wonder you was diſappointed with Jarvis's windows at New College: I had foretold their miſcarriage: the old and the new are as miſmatched as an orange and a lemon, and deſtroy each other; nor is there room enough to retire back and ſee half of the new; and ſir Joſhua's waſhy Virtues make the Nativity a dark ſpot from the darkneſs of the Shepherds, which happened, as I knew it would, from moſt of Jarvis's colours not being tranſparent.

[1] It was taken in perfect good humour; and ſhe returned the following anſwer, which Mr. Walpole owned was better than his addreſs: E.

Remember'd (tho' old) by a wit and a beau!
I ſhall fancy, ere long, I'm a Ninon l'Enclos.
I muſt feel impatient ſuch kindneſs to meet,
And ſhall haſten my flight into Portugal-ſtreet.

Ripley cottage, 28th Nov.

I have not ſeen the improvements at Blenheim. I uſed to think it one of the ugliеſt places in England; a giant's caſtle who had laid waſte all the country round him. Every body now allows the merit of Brown's achievements there.

Of all your ſurvey I wiſh moſt to ſee Beau Deſert. Warwick-caſtle, and Stowe, I know by heart:—the firſt I had rather poſſeſs than any ſeat upon earth—not that I think it the moſt beautiful of all, though charming, becauſe I am ſo intimate with all its proprietors for the laſt thouſand years.

I have often and often ſtudied the new plan of Stowe: it is pompous; but though the wings are altered, they are not lengthened. Though three parts of the edifices in the garden are bad, they enrich that inſipid country, and the vaſtneſs pleaſes me more than I can defend.

I rejoice that your jaunt has been ſerviceable to lady A. The *charming-man*[1] is actually with me; but neither he nor I can keep our promiſe incontinently. He expects two ſons of his brother ſir William, whom he is to pack up and ſend to the Peres de l'Oratoire at Paris. I expect lord and lady W. to-morrow, who are to paſs a few days with me: but both the *charming-man* and I will be with you ſoon. I have no objection to a wintry viſit: as I can neither ride nor walk, it is more comfortable when moſt of my time is paſſed within doors. If I continue perfectly well, as I am, I ſhall not ſettle in town till after Chriſtmas: there will not be half a dozen perſons there for whom I care a ſtraw.

I know nothing at all. The peace between the Auſtrian harpy and the frogs is made. They were ſtout, and preferred being gobbled to parting with their money. At laſt, France offered to pay the money for them. The harpy bluſhed—for the firſt time—and would not take it, but ſigned the peace—and will plunder ſomebody elſe.

Have you got Boſwell's moſt abſurd enormous book?—The beſt thing in it is a bon mot of lord Pembroke. The more one learns of Johnſon, the more prepoſterous aſſemblage he appears of ſtrong ſenſe, of the loweſt

[1] Edward Jerningham, eſq.

bigotry,

bigotry and prejudices, of pride, brutality, fretfulneſs, and vanity—and Boſwell is the ape of moſt of his faults, without a grain of his ſenſe. It is the ſtory of a mountebank and his zany.

I forgot to ſay, that I wonder how, with your turn and knowledge and enterpriſe in ſcientific exploits, you came not to viſit the duke of Bridgwater's operations—or did you omit them, becauſe I ſhould not have underſtood a word you told me? Adieu!

LETTER CXXXV.

Sunday night, June 18, 1786.

I SUPPOSE you have been ſwearing at the eaſt wind for parching your verdure, and are now weeping for the rain that drowns your hay. I have theſe calamities in common, and my conſtant and particular one, people that come to ſee my houſe, which unfortunately is more in requeſt than ever. Already I have had twenty-eight ſets, have five more tickets given out, and yeſterday before I had dined three German barons came. My houſe is a torment, not a comfort!

I was ſent for again to dine at Gunnerſbury on Friday, and was forced to ſend to town for a dreſs-coat and a ſword. There were the prince of Wales, the prince of Mecklenburg, the duke of Portland, lord Clanbraſſil, lord and lady Clermont, lord and lady Southampton, lord Pelham, and Mrs. Howe. The prince of Mecklenburg went back to Windſor after coffee; and the prince and lord and lady Clermont to town after tea to hear ſome new French players at lady William Gordon's. The princeſs, lady Barrymore, and the reſt of us, played three pools at commerce till ten. I am afraid I was tired and gaped. While we were at the dairy, the princeſs inſiſted on my making ſome verſes on Gunnerſbury. I pleaded being ſuperannuated. She would not excuſe me. I promiſed ſhe ſhould have an ode on her next birth-day; which diverted the prince—but all would not do—So, as I came home, I made the following ſtanzas, and ſent them to her breakfaſt next morning:

I. In

I.

In deathleſs odes for ever green
Auguſtus' laurels blow;
Nor e'er was grateful duty ſeen
In warmer ſtrains to flow.

II.

Oh! why is Flaccus not alive
Your fav'rite ſcene to ſing?
To Gunnerſbury's charms could give
His lyre immortal ſpring.

III.

As warm as his my zeal for you,
Great princeſs, could I ſhow it:
But though you have a Horace too—
Ah, madam, he's no poet.

If they are but poor verſes, conſider I am ſixty-nine, was half aſleep, and made them almoſt extempore—and by command! However, they ſucceeded, and I received this gracious anſwer:

"I wiſh I had a name that could anſwer your pretty verſes. Your yawning yeſterday opened your vein for pleaſing me; and I return you my thanks, my good Mr. Walpole, and remain ſincerely your friend,

AMELIA."

I think this is very genteel at ſeventy-five.

Do you know that I have bought the Jupiter Serapis as well as the Julio Clovio[1]! Mr. ——— aſſures me he has ſeen ſix of the hand, and not one of them ſo fine or ſo well preſerved. I am glad ſir Joſhua Reynolds ſaw no more excellence in the Jupiter than in the Clovio; or the duke of Portland, I ſuppoſe, would have purchaſed it, as he has the vaſe for a thouſand pounds. I would not change. I told ſir W. Hamilton and the late ducheſs, when I never thought it would be mine, that I had rather have the head than the vaſe. I ſhall long for Mrs. D—— to make a buſt to it,

[1] At the ſale of the ducheſs dowager of Portland.

and

and then it will be ſtill more valuable. I have depoſited both the Illumination and the Jupiter in lady Di's cabinet [1], which is worthy of them——And here my collection winds up—I will not purchaſe trumpery after ſuch jewels. Beſides, every thing is much dearer in old age, as one has leſs time to enjoy. Good-night!

LETTER CXXXVI.

Strawberry-hill, October 29, 1786.

I WAS ſorry not to be appriſed of your intention of going to town, where I would have met you; but I knew it too late, both as I was engaged, and as you was to return ſo ſoon. I mean to come to Park-place in a week or fortnight: but I ſhould like to know what company you expect, or do not expect; for I had rather fill up your vacancies, than be a ſupernumerary.

Lady O—— has ſent me two charades made by col. F———: the firſt ſhe ſays is very eaſy, the ſecond very difficult. I have not come within ſight of the eaſy one; and though I have a gueſs at the other, I do not believe I am right; and ſo I ſend them to you, who are maſter-general of the Œdipuſes.

The firſt, that is ſo eaſy:

In concert, ſong, or ſerenade,
My firſt requires my ſecond's aid.
To thoſe reſiding near the pole
I would not recommend my whole.

The two laſt lines, I conclude, neither connect with the two firſt, nor will help one to decyphering them.

The difficult one:

Charades of all things are the worſt,
But yet my beſt have been my firſt.
Who with my ſecond are concern'd
Will to deſpiſe my whole have learn'd.

[1] A cabinet at Strawberry-hill, ornamented with drawings by lady Diana Beauclerc.

This

This ſounds like a good one, and therefore I will not tell you my ſolution; for, if it is wrong, it might lead you aſtray; and if it is right, it would prove the charade is not a good one.

Had I any thing better, I would not ſend you charades, unleſs for the name of the author.

I have had a letter from your brother, who tells me that he has his grandſon S——— with him, who is a prodigy.——I ſay to myſelf,

——Prodigies are grown ſo frequent,
That they have loſt their name———

I have ſeen prodigies in plenty of late—aye, and formerly too—but, divine as they have all been, each has had a mortal heel, and has trodden back a vaſt deal of their celeſtial path! I beg to be excuſed from any more credulity.

I am ſorry you have loſt your fac-totum ———. I ſuppoſe he had diſcovered that he was too neceſſary to you. Every day cures one of reliance on others; and we acquire a prodigious ſtock of experience by the time that we ſhall ceaſe to have occaſion for any. Well! I am not clear, but making or ſolving charades is as wiſe as any thing we can do. I ſhould pardon profeſſed philoſophers, if they would allow that their wiſdom is only trifling, inſtead of calling their trifling, wiſdom. Adieu!

LETTER CXXXVII.

Strawberry-hill, June 17, 1787.

I HAVE very little to tell you ſince we met but diſappointments, and thoſe of no great conſequence.

On Friday night lady P——— wrote to me that princeſs Lubomirſki was to dine with her the next day, and deſired to come in the morning to ſee Strawberry.—Well, my caſtle put on its robes, breakfaſt was prepared, and I ſhoved another company out of the houſe, who had a ticket for ſeeing it. The ſun ſhone, my hay was cocked, we looked divinely—and at half an hour after two nobody came but a ſervant from lady P———, to ſay her Poliſh

Poliſh altitude had ſent her word ſhe had another engagement in town that would keep her too late:—ſo lady P———'s dinner was addled; and we had nothing to do, but, like good chriſtians, if we choſe it, to compel every body on the road, whether they choſe it or not, to come in and eat our ſoup and biſcuits. Methinks this *liberum veto* was rather impertinent, and I begin to think that the partition of Poland was very right.

Your brother has ſent me a card for a ball on Monday, but I have excuſed myſelf. I have not yet compaſſed the whole circuit of my own garden, and I have had an inflammation in one of my eyes, and don't think I look as well as my houſe and my verdure; and had rather ſee my hay-cocks, than the ducheſs of Polignac and madame Lubomirſki. *The way to keep him*[1] had the way to get me, and I could crawl to it, becauſe I had an inclination; but I have a great command of myſelf when I have no mind to do any thing. Lady Conſtant was worth an hundred *acs* and *irſkis*.

Let me hear of you when you have nothing elſe to do; though I ſuppoſe you have as little to tell as you ſee I had.

LETTER CXXXVIII.

Berkeley-ſquare, Nov. 11, 1787.

FROM violent contrary winds[2], and by your letter going to Strawberry-hill, whence I was come, I have but juſt received it, and perhaps ſhall only be able to anſwer it by ſnatches, being up to the chin in nephews and nieces. * * * *

I find you knew nothing of the pacification when you wrote. When I ſaw your letter, I hoped it would tell me you was coming back, as your iſland is as ſafe as if it was ſituated in the Pacific Ocean, or at leaſt as iſlands there uſed to be, till ſir Joſeph Banks choſe *to put them up*. I ſent you the good news on the very day before you wrote, though I imagined you would learn it by earlier intelligence. Well, I enjoy both your ſafety and your great ſucceſs, which is enhanced by its being owing to your character and

[1] The firſt comedy repreſented at the theatre in Richmond-houſe.
[2] Mr. Conway was now in Jerſey.

abilities. I hope the latter will be allowed to operate by thoſe who have not quite ſo much of either.

I ſhall be wonderful glad to ſee little maſter Stonehenge [1] at Park-place: it will look in character there; but your own bridge is ſo ſtupendous in compariſon, that hereafter the latter will be thought to have been a work of the Romans. Dr. Stukeley will burſt his cerements to offer miſletoe in your temple—and Maſon, on the contrary, will die of vexation and ſpite that he cannot have Caractacus acted on the ſpot——Peace to all ſuch!—

——— but were there one whoſe fires
True Genius kindles, and fair Fame inſpires,

he would immortalize you, for all you have been carrying on in Jerſey, and for all you ſhall carry off. Inigo Jones, or Charlton, or ſomebody, I forget who, called Stonehenge chorea gigantum—this will be the chorea of the pigmies—and as I forget too what is Latin for Lilliputians, I will make a bad pun, and ſay,

——— portantur avari
Pigmalionis opes———

Pygmalion is as well-ſounding a name for ſuch a monarch as Oberon.—Pray do not diſappoint me, but tranſport the cathedral [2] of your iſland to your domain on our *continent*. I figure unborn antiquaries making pilgrimages to viſit your bridge, your daughter's bridge [3], and the druidic temple; and if I were not too old to have any imagination left, I would add a ſequel to Mi Li [4]. Adieu!

[1] Mr. Walpole thus calls the ſmall druidic temple diſcovered in Jerſey, which the ſtates of that iſland had preſented to their governor general Conway to be tranſported to and erected at Park-place, with the following inſcription: E

Pour des ſiecles caché aux regards des mortels,
Cet ancien monument, ces pierres, ces autels,
Où le ſang des humains offert en ſacrifice
Ruiſſela pour des dieux qu'enfanta le caprice;
Ce monument ſans prix par ſon antiquité
Temoignera pour nous à la poſterité,
Que dans tous les dangers Ceſarée eût un pere
Attentif et vaillant, genereux et proſpere,
Et redira CONWAY, aux ſiecles à venir,
Qu'en vertu du reſpect dû à ce ſouvenir,
Elle te fit ce don acquis à ta vaillance
Comme un juſte tribut de ſa reconnoiſſance.

[2] The druidic temple.

[3] The key ſtones of the centre arch of the bridge at Henley are ornamented with heads of the Thames and Iſis, deſigned by the hon. Mrs. Damer, and executed by her in Portland ſtone. E.

[4] One of the Hieroglyphic Tales, containing a deſcription of Park-place.

LETTER CXXXIX.

Strawberry-hill, Wednesday night.

I WRITE a few lines only to confirm the truth of much of what you will read in the papers from Paris. Worse may already be come, or is expected every hour.

Mr. ——— and lady ——— called on me before dinner, after the post was gone out; and he showed me a letter from D———, who said two couriers arrived yesterday from the duke of Dorset and the duchess of Devonshire, the latter of whom was leaving Paris directly. Necker had been dismissed, and was thought to be set out for Geneva. Breteuil, who was at his country-house, had been sent for to succeed him. Paris was in an uproar; and, after the couriers had left it, firing of cannon was heard for four hours together. That must have been from the Bastile, as probably the tiers état were not so provided. It is shocking to imagine what may have happened in such a thronged city!

One of the couriers was stopped twice or thrice, as supposed to pass from the king; but redeemed himself by pretending to be dispatched by the tiers état. Madame de Calonne told D——— that the newly encamped troops desert by hundreds.

Here seems the egg to be hatched, and imagination runs away with the idea. I may fancy I shall hear of the king and queen leaving Versailles, like Charles I.—and then skips imagination six-and-forty years lower, and figures their fugitive majesties taking refuge in this country.

I have besides another idea. If the Bastile conquers, still is it impossible, considering the general spirit in the country, and the numerous fortified places in France, but some may be seized by the *dissidents*, and whole provinces be torn from the crown?—On the other hand, if the king prevails, what heavy despotism will the états, by their want of temper and moderation, have drawn on their country! They might have obtained many capital points, and removed great oppression——No French monarch will ever summon états again, if this moment has been thrown away.

Though I have ſtocked myſelf with ſuch a ſet of viſions for the event either way, I do not pretend to foreſee what will happen. Penetration argues from reaſonable probabilities; but chance and folly are apt to contradict calculation, and hitherto they ſeem to have full ſcope for action. One hears of no genius on either ſide, nor do ſymptoms of any appear. There will perhaps: ſuch times and tempeſts bring forth, at leaſt bring out, great men. I do not take the duke of Orleans or Mirabeau to be built du bois dont on les fait—no; nor monſieur Necker. He may be a great traitor, if he made the confuſion deſignedly:—but it is a woful evaſion, if the promiſed financier ſlips into a black politician. I adore liberty, but I would beſtow it as honeſtly as I could; and a civil war, beſides being a game of chance, is paying a very dear price for it.

For us, we are in moſt danger of a deluge; though I wonder we ſo frequently complain of long rains. The ſaying about St. Swithin is a proof of how often they recur; for proverbial ſentences are the children of experience, not of prophecy. Good-night!—In a few days I ſhall ſend you a beautiful little poem[1] from the Strawberry preſs.

LETTER CXL.

Strawberry-hill, September 5, 1789.

YOU ſpeak ſo unperemptorily of your motions, that I muſt direct to you at random: the moſt probable place where to hit you, I think, will be Goodwood; and I do addreſs this thither, becauſe I am impatient to thank you for your tale, which is very pretty and eaſy and genteel. It has made me make a reflection, and that reflection made ſix lines; which I ſend you, not as good, but as expreſſing my thoughts on your writing ſo well in various ways which you never practiſed when you was much younger.—Here they are:

The muſe moſt wont to fire a youthful heart,
To gild *your* ſetting ſun reſerv'd her art;

[1] This was Bonner's Ghoſt.

To

To crown a life in virtuous labours paſt,
Beſtow'd her numbers, and her wit at laſt;
And when your ſtrength and eloquence retire,
Your voice in notes harmonious ſhall expire.

The *ſwan* was too common a thought to be directly ſpecified—and, perhaps, even to be alluded to——No matter—ſuch a trifle is below criticiſm.

I am ſtill here, in no uncertainty, God knows, about poor lady Dyſart, of whom there are not the ſmalleſt hopes. She grows weaker every day, and does actually ſtill go out for the air, and may languiſh many days, though moſt probably will go off in a moment, as the water riſes. She retains her ſenſes perfectly, and as perfectly her unalterable calmneſs and patience, though fully ſenſible of her ſituation. At your return from Goodwood, I ſhall like to come to you, if you are unengaged, and ready to receive me. For the beauties of Park-place, I am too well acquainted with them, not, like all old perſons about their cotemporaries, to think it preſerves them long after they are faded; and I am ſo *unwalking*, that proſpects are more agreeable to me when framed and glazed, and I look at them through a window. It is yourſelves I want to viſit, not your verdure. Indeed, except a parentheſis of ſcarce all Auguſt, there has been no temptation to walk abroad; and the tempter himſelf would not have perſuaded me, if I could, to have climbed that long-loſt mountain whence he could ſhow one even the antipodes. It rained inceſſantly all June and all July; and now again we have torrents every day.

J———'s brother, the chevalier, is arrived from Paris, and does not diminiſh the horrors one hears every day. They are now in the capital dreading the ſixteen thouſand deſerters who hover about them. I conclude, that when in the character of banditti the whole diſbanded army have plundered and deſtroyed what they can, they will congregate into ſeparate armies under different leaders, who will hang out different principles, and the kingdom will be a theatre of civil wars; and, inſtead of liberty, the nation will get petty tyrants—perhaps petty kingdoms:—and when millions have ſuffered, or been ſacrificed, the government will be no better than it was—all owing to the intemperance of the états, who might have obtained a good conſtitution, or at leaſt one much meliorated, if they had ſet out with diſcretion

cretion and moderation. They have left too a ſad leſſon to deſpotic princes, who will quote this precedent of frantic états againſt aſſembling any more, and againſt all the examples of ſenates and parliaments that have preſerved rational freedom.

Let me know when it will be convenient to you to receive me. Adieu!

LETTER CXLI.

Strawberry-hill, Wedneſday night, July 1790.

IT is certainly not from having any thing to tell you, that I reply ſo ſoon, but as the moſt agreeable thing I can do in my confinement. The gout came into my heel the night before laſt, perhaps from the deluge and damp. I increaſed it yeſterday by limping about the houſe with a party I had to breakfaſt. To-day I am lying on the ſettee, unable to walk alone, or even to put on a ſlipper. However, as I am much eaſier this evening, I truſt it will go off.

I do not love diſputes, and ſhall not argue with you about Bruce; but if you like him, you ſhall not chooſe an author for me. It is the moſt abſurd, obſcure, and tireſome book I know. I ſhall admire if you have a clear conception about moſt of the perſons and matters in his work—but, in fact, I do not believe you have. Pray, can you diſtinguiſh between his *cock* and *hen* Heghes, and between all Yaſouſes and Ozoros?—and do you firmly believe that an old man and his ſon were ſent for and put to death, becauſe the king had run into a thorn-buſh, and was forced to leave his clothes behind him? Is it your faith, that one of their Abyſſinian majeſties pleaded not being able to contribute towards ſending for a new Abuna, becauſe he had ſpent all his money at Venice in looking-glaſſes? And do you really think that Peter Paez was a Jack-of-all-trades, and built palaces and convents without aſſiſtance, and furniſhed them with his own hands? You, who are a little apt to conteſt moſt aſſertions, muſt have ſtrangely let out your credulity! I could put forty queſtions to you as wonderful, and, for my part, could as ſoon credit

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I am tired of railing at French barbarity and folly. They are more puerile now

now ſerious, than when in the long paroxyſm of gay levity. Legiſlators, a ſenate, to neglect laws, in order to annihilate coats of arms and liveries! to pull down a king, and ſet up an emperor! They are haſtening to eſtabliſh the tribunal of the prætorian guards; for the ſovereignty, it ſeems, is not to be hereditary. One view of their fête of the 14th I ſuppoſe is to draw money to Paris—and the conſequence will be, that the deputies will return to the provinces drunk with independence and ſelf-importance, and will commit fifty times more exceſſes, maſſacres, and devaſtations, than laſt year. George Selwyn ſays, that *monſieur*, the king's brother, is the only man of rank from whom they cannot take a title.

How franticly have the French acted, and how rationally the Americans!—But Franklin and Waſhington were great men. None have appeared yet in France; and Necker has only returned to make a wretched figure! He is become as inſignificant as his king; his name is never mentioned, but now and then as diſapproving ſomething that is done. Why then does he ſtay? Does he wait to ſtrike ſome great ſtroke, when every thing is demoliſhed? His glory, which conſiſted in being miniſter though a proteſtant, is vaniſhed by the deſtruction of popery; the honour of which, I ſuppoſe, he will ſcarce aſſume to himſelf.

I have vented my budget, and now good night! I feel almoſt as if I could walk up to bed.

LETTER CXLII.

Strawberry-hill, Auguſt 9, at night.

MR. N—— has offered to be poſtman to you; *whereof*, though I have nothing, or as little as nothing, to ſay, I thought *as how* it would look kinder to ſend nothing in writing than by word of mouth.

Nothing the firſt. So the peace is made, and the ſtocks drank its health in a bumper; but when they waked the next morning, they found they had reckoned without their hoſt, and that their majeſties the king of big Britain and the king of little Spain have agreed to make peace ſome time or other, if they can agree upon it; and ſo the ſtocks drew in their horns: but having great

great truſt in ſome time or other, they only fell two pegs lower. I, who never believed there would be war, keep my prophetic ſtocks up to par, and my conſol—ation ſtill higher; for when Spaniſh pride truckles, and Engliſh pride has had the honour of bullying, I dare to ſay we ſhall be content with the oſtenſible triumph, as Spain will be with ſome ſecret article that will leave her much where ſhe was before.—Vide Falkland's iſland.

Nothing the ſecond. Miſs ——'s match with lord ——. You aſſerted it ſo peremptorily, that, though I doubted it, I quoted you. Lo! it took its riſe ſolely in poor old ——'s dotage, that ſtill harps on conjunctions copulative—but now diſavows it, as they ſay, on a remonſtrance from her daughter.

Nothing the third. Nothing will come of nothing, ſays king Lear, and

Your humble ſervant

HOR. WALPOLE.

LETTER CXLIII.

Strawberry-hill, September 27, 1791.

YOUR letter was moſt welcome, as yours always are, and I anſwer it immediately, though our poſt comes in ſo late that this will not go away till to-morrow.—Nay, I write, though I ſhall ſee you on Sunday, and have not a tittle to tell you. I lead ſo inſipid a life, that, though I am content with it, it can furniſh me with nothing but repetitions. I ſcarce ever ſtir from home in a morning, and moſt evenings go and play at loto with the French at Richmond, where I am heartily tired of hearing of nothing but their abſurd countrymen, abſurd both democrates and ariſtocrates. Calonne ſends them groſs lies, that raiſe their hopes to the ſkies: and in two days they hear of nothing but new horrors and diſappointments; and then, poor ſouls! they are in deſpair. I can ſay nothing to comfort them, but what I firmly believe, which is, that total anarchy muſt come on rapidly.—Nobody pays the taxes that are laid, and which, intended to produce eighty millions a month, do not bring in ſix. The new

aſſembly will fall on the old, probably plunder the richeſt, and certainly diſapprove of much they have done; for can eight hundred new ignorants approve of what has been done by twelve hundred almoſt as ignorant, and who were far from half agreeing?—And then their immortal conſtitution (which, beſides, is to be mightily mended nine years hence) will die before it has cut any of its teeth but its grinders. The exiles are enraged at their poor king for ſaving his own life by a forced acceptance; and yet I know no obligation he has to his nobleſſe, who all ran away to ſave their own lives; not a gentleman, but the two poor gendarmes at Verſailles, having loſt their lives in his defence. I ſuppoſe La Fayette, Barnave, the Lameths, &c. will run away too, when the new tinkers and coblers, of whom the preſent elect are and will be compoſed, proceed on the levelling ſyſtem taught them by their predeceſſors, who, like other levellers, have taken good care of themſelves. Good Dr. Prieſtley's friend, good monſieur Condorcet, has got a place in the treaſury of 1000*l.* a year:—ex uno diſce omnes!—And thus a ſet of raſcals, who might, with temper and diſcretion, have obtained a very wholeſome conſtitution, witneſs Poland! have committed infinite miſchief, infinite cruelty, infinite injuſtice, and left a ſhocking precedent againſt liberty, unleſs the Poles are as much admired and imitated as the French ought to be deteſted.

I do not believe the emperor will ſtir—yet. He, or his miniſters, muſt ſee that it is the intereſt of Germany to let France deſtroy itſelf. His interference yet might unite and conſolidate—at leaſt check farther confuſion:—and though I rather think that twenty thouſand men might march from one end of France to the other, as, though the officers often rallied, French ſoldiers never were ſtout; yet having no officers, no diſcipline, no ſubordination, little reſiſtance might be expected. Yet the enthuſiaſm that has been ſpread might turn into courage. Still it were better for Cæſar to wait. Quarrels amongſt themſelves will diſſipate enthuſiaſm; and if they have no foreign enemy, they will ſoon have ſpirit enough to turn their ſwords againſt one another, and what enthuſiaſm remains will ſoon be converted into the inveteracy of faction. This is ſpeculation, not prophecy:—I do not pretend to gueſs what will happen:—I do think I know what will not: I mean, the ſyſtem of experiments that they call a conſtitution, cannot laſt. Marvellous indeed would it be, if a ſet of military noble lads, pedantic academicians, curates of villages, and country advocates, could in two years, amidſt the utmoſt confuſion and altercation amongſt

amongſt themſelves, dictated to or thwarted by obſtinate clubs of various factions, have achieved what the wiſdom of all ages and all nations has never been able to compoſe—a ſyſtem of government that would ſet four-and-twenty millions of people free, and contain them within any bounds! This too without one great man amongſt them.—If they had had, as Mirabeau ſeemed to promiſe to be—but as we know that he was too—a conſummate villain, there would ſoon have been an end of their viſion of liberty. And ſo there will be ſtill, unleſs, after a civil war, they ſplit into ſmall kingdoms or commonwealths.—A little nation may be free; for it can be upon its guard. Millions cannot be ſo; becauſe, the greater the number of men that are one people, the more vices, the more abuſes there are, that will either require or furniſh pretexts for reſtraints; and if vices are the mother of laws, the execution of laws is the father of power:—and of ſuch parents one knows the progeny.

I did not think of writing ſuch a rhapſody when I began—it ſhows how idle I am—I hope you will be ſo when you receive it. Adieu! I have tired my hand.

Yours ever,

HOR. WALPOLE.

P. S. The king of the French has written to the king of France and Great Britain, to notify his acceſſion to the throne of Fontainebleau, where he is determined to reign as long as he is permitted, and obey all the laws that have been made to dethrone him.

N. B. The cardinal de Lomenie, whom they call the cardinal de *l'Ignominie* with much reaſon, is the only gentleman elected for the new chaos, and he has declined.

LETTER CXLIV.

Strawberry-hill, Auguſt 31, 1792.

YOUR long letter and my ſhort one croſſed one another upon the road. I knew I was in your debt: but I had nothing to ſay but what

you know better than I; for you read all the French papers, and I read none, as they have long put me out of all patience: and beſides, I hear ſo much of their horrific proceedings, that they quite diſturb me, and have given me what I call *the French diſeaſe*; that is, a barbarity that I abhor, for I cannot help wiſhing deſtruction to thouſands of human creatures whom I never ſaw.—But when men have worked themſelves up into tigers and hyænas, and labour to communicate their appetite for blood, what ſignifies whether they walk on two legs or four, or whether they dwell in cities, or in foreſts and dens?—Nay, the latter are the more harmleſs wild beaſts; for they only cranch a poor traveller now and then, and when they are famiſhed with hunger:—the others, though they have dined, cut the throats of ſome hundreds of poor Swiſs for an afternoon's luncheon. Oh! the execrable nation!

I cannot tell you any new particulars, for meſdames de Cambis and d'Hennin, my chief informers, are gone to Goodwood to the poor ducheſſe de Biron, of whoſe recovery I am impatient to hear—and ſo I am of the cauſe of her very precipitate flight and panic. She muſt, I think, have had ſtrong motives; for two years ago I feared ſhe was much too courageous, and diſplayed her intrepidity too publicly. If I did not always condemn the calling *b*ad people *m*ad people, I ſhould ſay all Paris is gone diſtracted: they furniſh provocation to every ſpecies of retaliation, by publiſhing rewards for aſſaſſination of kings and generals, and cannot reſt without incenſing all Europe againſt them.

The ducheſs of York gave a great entertainment at Oatlands on her duke's birth-day, ſent to his tradeſmen in town to come to it, and allowed two guineas apiece to each for their carriage—gave them a dance, and opened the ball herſelf with the prince of Wales. A company of ſtrollers came to Weybridge to act in a barn: ſhe was ſolicited to go to it, and did out of charity, and carried all her ſervants. Next day a methodiſt teacher came to preach a charity ſermon in the ſame theatre, and ſhe conſented to hear it on the ſame motive—but her ſervants deſired to be excuſed, on not underſtanding Engliſh.—"Oh!" ſaid the ducheſs, "but you went to the comedy, which you underſtood leſs, and you ſhall go to the ſermon;" to which ſhe gave handſomely, and for them. I like this.

Tack

Tack this to my other fragment, and then, I truſt, I ſhall not be a defaulter in correſpondence. I own I am become an indolent poor creature:—but is that ſtrange? With ſeventy-five years over my head, or on the point of being ſo; with a chalk-ſtone in every finger; with feet ſo limping, that I have been but twice this whole ſummer round my own ſmall garden, and ſo much weaker than I was, can I be very comfortable, but when ſitting quiet and doing nothing? All my ſtrength conſiſts in my ſleep, which is as vigorous as at twenty:—but with regard to letter-writing, I have ſo many to write on buſineſs which I do not underſtand, ſince the unfortunate death of my nephew, that, though I make them as brief as poſſible, half-a-dozen ſhort ones tire me as much as a long one to an old friend; and as the buſy ones muſt be executed, I treſpaſs on the others, and remit them to another day. Norfolk has come very mal-à-propos into the end of my life, and certainly never entered into my views and plans; and I, who could never learn the multiplication table, was not intended to tranſact leaſes, direct repairs of farm-houſes, ſettle fines for church lands, negotiate for lowering intereſt on mortgages, &c. In ſhort, as I was told formerly, though I know ſeveral things, I never underſtood any thing uſeful. A-propos, the letter of which lady C——— told you is not at all worth your ſeeing. It was an angry one to a parſon who oppreſſes my tenants, and will go to law with them about tythes. She came in as I was writing it; and as I took up the character of parſon myſelf, and preached to him as paſtor of a flock, which it did not become him to lead into the paths of law, inſtead of thoſe of peace, I thought it would divert, and ſhowed it to her.

Adieu! I have been writing to you till midnight, and my poor fingers ache.

Yours ever,

ORFORD.

LETTER CXLV.

Strawberry-hill, June 13, 1793.

I THANK you much for all your information—ſome parts made me ſmile:—yet, if what you heard of ——— proves true, I rather think it deplorable!

deplorable! How can love of money, or the ſtill vainer of all vanities, ambition of wearing a high but moſt inſignificant office, which even poor lord ——— could execute, tempt a very old man, who loves his eaſe and his own way, to ſtoop to wait like a footman behind a chair, for hours, and in a court whence he had been caſt ignominiouſly? I believe I have more pride than moſt men alive: I could be flattered by honours acquired by merit, or by ſome ſingular action of eclat—but for titles, ribbands, offices of no buſineſs, which any body can fill, and muſt be given to many, I ſhould juſt as ſoon be proud of being the top 'ſquire in a country village. It is only worſe to have waded to diſtinction through dirt, like lord ———.

All this ſhifting of ſcenes may, as you ſay, be food to the Fronde——Sed defendit numerus. It is perfectly ridiculous to uſe any diſtinction of parties but the *ins* and the *outs*. Many years ago I thought that the wiſeſt appellations for contending factions ever aſſumed, were thoſe in the Roman empire, who called themſelves *the greens and the blues:* it was ſo eaſy, when they changed ſides, to ſlide from one colour to the other—and then a blue might plead that he had never been *true blue*, but always a *greeniſh blue*; and vice verſâ.

I allow that the ſteadieſt party man may be ſtaggered by novel and unforeſeen circumſtances. The outrageous proceedings of the French republicans have wounded the cauſe of liberty, and will, I fear, have ſhaken it for centuries; for Condorcet and ſuch fiends are worſe than the imperial and royal dividers of Poland.—But I do not ſee why deteſtation of anarchy and aſſaſſination muſt immediately make one fall in love with garters and ſeals.

I am ſitting by the fire, as I have done ever ſince I came hither; and ſince I do not expect warm weather in June, I am wiſhing for rain, or I ſhall not have a mouthful of hay, nor a noſeful of roſes.—Indeed, as I have ſeen ſeveral fields of hay cut, I wonder it has not brought rain, as uſual. My creed is, that rain is good for hay, as I conclude every climate and its productions are ſuited to each other. Providence did not trouble itſelf about its being more expenſive to us to make our hay over and over; it only took care it ſhould not want water enough. Adieu!

LETTER

LETTER CXLVI.

Strawberry-hill, Wedneſday night, late, July 17, 1793.

I AM juſt come from dining with the biſhop of London at Fulham, where I found lord and lady F. C. who told me of the alarm you had from hearing ſome ſcreams that you thought lady A.'s, and the diſorder brought upon you by flying to aſſiſt her. I do not at all wonder at your panic, and rejoice it was not founded, and that you recovered ſo ſoon. I am not going to preach againſt your acting ſo naturally:—but as you have ſome complaint on your breaſt, I muſt hope you will remember this accident, and be upon your guard againſt both ſudden and rapid exertions, when you have not a tantamount call. I conclude the exceſſive heat we have had for twelve complete days contributed to overpower you.

It is much cooler to-day, yet ſtill delicious; for be it known to you that I have enjoyed weather worthy of Africa, and yet without ſwallowing mouthfuls of muſketos, nor expecting to hear hyænas howl in the village, nor to find ſcorpions in my bed. Indeed, all the way I came home, I could but gaze at the felicity of my countrymen. The road was one ſtring of ſtage-coaches loaded within and without with noiſy jolly folks, and chaiſes and gigs that had been pleaſuring in clouds of duſt; every door and every window of every houſe was open, lights in every ſhop, every door with women ſitting in the ſtreet, every inn crowded with jaded horſes, and every ale-houſe full of drunken topers; for you know the Engliſh always announce their ſenſe of heat or cold by drinking.——Well! it was impoſſible not to enjoy ſuch a ſcene of happineſs and affluence in every village, and amongſt the loweſt of the people—and who are told by villainous ſcribblers that they are oppreſſed and miſerable.—New ſtreets, new towns are riſing every day and every where; the earth is covered with gardens and crops of grain.

How bitter to turn from this Elyſium to the Temple at Paris! The fiends there have now torn her ſon from the queen! Can one believe that they are human beings, who 'midſt all their confuſions ſit coolly meditating new

tortures, new anguiſh for that poor, helpleſs, miſerable woman, after four years of unexampled ſufferings? Oh! if ſuch crimes are not made a dreadful leſſon, this world might become a theatre of canibals!

I hope the checks in Bretagne are legends coined by miſcreants at Paris. What can one believe? Well, I will go to bed, and try to dream of peace and plenty; and though my lawn is burnt, and my peas and beans, and roſes and ſtrawberries parched, I will bear it with patience till the harveſt is got in. Saint Swithin can never hold his water for forty days, though he can do the contrary. Good-night!

Yours ever,

O.

LETTER CXLVII.

Berkeley-ſquare, January 10, 1794.

I CERTAINLY ſympathize with you on the reverſed and gloomy proſpect of affairs, too extenſive to detail in a letter; nor indeed do I know any thing more than I collect from newſpapers and public reports; and thoſe are ſo overcharged with falſehoods on all ſides, that, if one waits for truth to emerge, one finds new ſubjects to draw one's attention before firm belief can ſettle its truſt on any. That the maſs and reſult are bad, is certain; and though I have great alacrity in ſearching for comforts and grounds of new hopes, I am puzzled as much in ſeeking reſources, as in giving preſent credit. Reaſoning is out of the queſtion: all calculation is baffled: nothing happens that ſenſe or experience ſaid was probable. I wait to ſee what will happen, without a gueſs at what is to be expected. A ſtorm, when the parliament meets, will no doubt be attempted. How the miniſters are prepared to combat it, I don't know—but I hope ſufficiently—if it ſpreads no farther:—at leaſt I think they have no cauſe to fear the new leader who is to make the attack. * * * *

I have neither ſeen Mr. Wilſon's book nor his anſwerers. So far from reading political pamphlets, I hunt for any books, except modern novels, that will not bring France to my mind, or that at leaſt will put it out for a

 time.

time. But every freſh perſon one ſees, revives the converſation: and excepting a long ſucceſſion of fogs, nobody talks of any thing elſe; nor of private news do I know a tittle. Adieu!

Yours ever,

O.

LETTER CXLVIII.

Strawb. July 2, 1795.

I *WILL* write a word to you, though ſcarce time to write one, to thank you for your great kindneſs about the ſoldier, who ſhall get a ſubſtitute if he can.

As you are, or have been in town, your daughter will have told you in what a buſtle I am, preparing—not to reſiſt, but to receive an invaſion of royalties to-morrow—and cannot even eſcape them like admiral Cornwallis, though ſeeming to make a ſemblance; for I am to wear a ſword, and have appointed two aides de camp, my nephews, George and Horace C———. If I *fall*, as ten to one but I do, to be ſure it will be a ſuperb tumble, at the feet of a queen and eight daughters of kings; for, beſides the ſix princeſſes, I am to have the ducheſs of York and the princeſs of Orange! Woe is me, at 78, and with ſcarce a hand and foot to my back! Adieu!

Yours, &c.

A POOR OLD REMNANT.

LETTER CXLIX.

Strawberry-hill, July 7, 1795.

I AM not dead of fatigue with my royal viſitors, as I expected to be, though I was on my poor lame feet three whole hours. Your daughter, who kindly aſſiſted me in doing the honours, will tell you the particulars, and how proſperouſly I ſucceeded. The queen was uncommonly condeſcending and gracious, and deigned to drink my health when I preſented her with the laſt glaſs, and to thank me for all my attentions.—Indeed my

memory de vieille cour was but once in default. As I had been aſſured that her majeſty would be attended by her chamberlain, yet was not, I had no glove ready when I received her at the ſtep of her coach: yet ſhe honoured me with her hand to lead her up ſtairs; nor did I recollect my omiſſion when I led her down again. Still, though gloveleſs, I did not ſqueeze the royal hand, as vice-chamberlain Smith did to queen Mary[1].

You will have ſtared, as I did, at the elector of Hanover deſerting his ally the king of Great Britain, and making peace with the monſters. But Mr. F——, whom I ſaw at my ſiſter's on Sunday, laughs at the article in the newſpapers, and ſays it is not an unknown practice for ſtock-jobbers to hire an emiſſary at the rate of five hundred pounds, and diſpatch to Franckfort, whence he brings forged atteſtations of ſome marvellous political event, and ſpreads it on 'Change; which produces ſuch a fluctuation in the ſtocks, as amply overpays the expence of his miſſion.

This was all I learnt in the ſingle night I was in town. I have not redde the new French conſtitution, which ſeems longer than probably its reign will be. The five ſovereigns will, I ſuppoſe, be the firſt guillotined. Adieu!

Yours ever,

O.

[1] It is ſaid that queen Mary aſked ſome of her attendant ladies, what a ſqueeze of the hand was ſuppoſed to intimate?—They ſaid, "Love."—"Then," ſaid the queen, "my vice-chamberlain muſt be violently in love with me, for he always ſqueezes my hand."

[Marſhal Conway died three days after the date of this letter.]