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The Works Of Horatio Walpole, Earl Of Orford

In Five Volumes

Walpole, Horace

London, 1798

Letters from Thomas Gray to the Hon. Horace Walpole

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L E T T E R S

FROM

THOMAS GRAY

TO

THE HON. HORACE WALPOLE.

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LETTERS

FROM

THOMAS GRAY

TO

THE HON. HORACE WALPOLE.

LETTER I.

Cambridge, February 3, 1746.

DEAR SIR,

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

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

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

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

I am sincerely yours,

T. GRAY.

LETTER II.

January, 1747.

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

* Agrippina, in Racine's tragedy of Britannicus.

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

I am very sorry to hear you treat philosophy and her followers like a parcel of monks and hermits, and think myself obliged to vindicate a profession I honour, *bien que je n'en tiennne pas boutique* (as mad. Sevigné says). The first man that ever bore the name, if you remember, used to say, that life was like the Olympic games (the greatest public assembly of his age and country), where some came to show their strength and agility of body, as the champions; others, as the musicians, orators, poets and historians, to show their excellence in those arts; the traders, to get money; and the better sort, to enjoy the spectacle, and judge of all these. They did not then run away from society for fear of its temptations: they passed their days in the midst of it: conversation was their business: they cultivated the arts of persuasion, on purpose to show men it was their interest, as well as their duty, not to be foolish, and false, and unjust; and that too in many instances with success: which is not very strange; for they showed by their life that their lessons were not impracticable; and that pleasures were no temptations, but to such as wanted a clear perception of the pains annexed to them¹. But I have done preaching à la Grecque. Mr. Ratcliffe² made a shift to behave very rationally without their instructions, at a season which they took a great deal of pains to fortify themselves and others against: one would not desire to lose one's head with a better grace. I am particularly satisfied with the humanity of that last embrace to all the people about him. Sure it must be somewhat embarrassing to die before so much good company!

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

¹ Never perhaps was a more admirable picture drawn of true philosophy and its real and important services; services not confined to the speculative opinions of the studios, but adapted to the common purposes of life, and promoting the general happiness of mankind; not upon the chimerical basis of a system, but on the immutable foundations of truth and virtue. E.

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

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

T. GRAY.

L E T T E R. III.

Stoke, June 12, 1750.

DEAR SIR,

AS I live in a place, where even the ordinary tattle of the town arrives not till it is stale, and which produces no events of its own, you will not desire any excuse from me for writing so seldom, especially as of all people living I know you are the least a friend to letters spun out of one's own brains, with all the toil and constraint that accompanies sentimental productions. I have been here at Stoke a few days (where I shall continue good part of the summer); and having put an end to a thing, whose beginning you have seen long ago, I immediately send it you¹. You will, I hope, look upon it in the light of a *thing with an end to it*; a merit that most of my writings have wanted, and are like to want, but which this epistle I am determined shall not want, when it tells you that I am ever

Yours,

T. GRAY.

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

Ever yours.

¹ This was the Elegy in the church-yard.

LETTER IV.

Asth-Wednesday, Cambridge, 1751.

MY DEAR SIR,

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

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

I am ever yours,

T. GRAY.

LETTER V.

Cambridge, March 3, 1751.

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

^s This was the Elfrida of Mr. Mason.

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

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

I am ever yours,

T. GRAY.

LETTER VI.

Nov. Tuesday, Cambridge.

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

* Of the Elegy in the church-yard.

† The verse to which he alludes is this:

“Ev’n from the tomb the voice of nature cries;

“Ev’n in our ashes live their wonted fires.”

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

“Awake and faithful to her wonted fires.” E.

planation;

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

I am not totally of your mind as to Mr. Lyttelton's Elegy, though I love kids and fawns as little as you do. If it were all like the fourth stanza, I should be excessively pleased. Nature and sorrow, and tenderness, are the true genius of such things; and something of these I find in several parts of it (not in the orange-tree): poetical ornaments are foreign to the purpose, for they only show a man is not sorry;—and devotion worse; for it teaches him, that he ought not to be sorry, which is all the pleasure of the thing. I beg leave to turn your weathercock the contrary way. Your Epistle¹ I have not seen a great while, and doctor M. is not in the way to give me a sight of it: but I remember enough to be sure all the world will be pleased with it, even with all its *faults upon its head*, if you don't care to mend them. I would try to do it myself (however hazardous), rather than it should remain unpublished. As to my Eton Ode, Mr. Doddsley is *padrone*². The second³ you had, I suppose you do not think worth giving him: otherwise, to me it seems not worse than the former. He might have Selima⁴ too, unless she be of too little importance for his patriot-collection; or perhaps the *connections* you had with her may interfere. *Che so io?* Adieu!

I am yours ever,

T. G.

LETTER VII.

Cambridge, Dec. Monday.

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

¹ From Florence to Thomas Asheton.

³ The Ode to Spring.

² To publish in his collection of poems.

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

in

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

When you have done impeaching my lord Lovat, I hope to hear *de vos nouvelles*, and moreover, whether you have got colonel Conway yet? Whether sir C. Williams is to go to Berlin? What sort of a prince Mitridate may be?—and whatever other tidings you choose to refresh an anchorite with. *Frattanto* I send you a scene in a tragedy²: if it don't make you cry, it will make you laugh; and so it moves some passion, that I take to be enough. Adieu, dear sir! I am

Sincerely yours,

T. GRAY.

LETTER VIII.

Cambridge, October 8, 1751.

I SEND you this³ (as you desire) merely to make up half-a-dozen; though it will hardly answer your end in furnishing out either a head or

¹ *Memoires* of his own time, which Mr. Walpole was then writing.

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

² The first scene in Mr. Gray's unfinished

³ The Hymn to Adversity.

tail-

tail-piece. But your own fable¹ may much better supply the place. You have altered it to its advantage; but there is still something a little embarrassed here and there in the expression. I rejoice to find you apply (pardon the use of so odious a word) to the history of your own times. Speak, and spare not. Be as impartial as you can; and after all, the world will not believe you are so, though you should make as many protestations as bishop Burnet. They will feel in their own breast, and find it very possible to hate fourscore persons, yea, ninety and nine: so you must rest satisfied with the testimony of your own conscience. Somebody has laughed at Mr. Doddsley, or at me, when they talked of the *bat*: I have nothing more, either nocturnal or diurnal, to deck his miscellany with. We have a man here that writes a good hand; but he has little failings that hinder my recommending him to you². He is lousy, and he is mad: he sets out this week for Bedlam; but if you insist upon it, I don't doubt he will pay his respects to you. I have seen two of Dr. Middleton's unpublished works. One is about 44 pages in 4to against Dr. Waterland, who wrote a very orthodox book on the Importance of the Doctrine of the Trinity, and insisted, that christians ought to have no communion with such as differ from them in fundamentals. Middleton enters no farther into the doctrine itself than to show that a mere speculative point can never be called a fundamental; and that the earlier fathers, on whose concurrent tradition Waterland would build, are so far, when they speak of the three persons, from agreeing with the present notion of our church, that they declare for the inferiority of the son, and seem to have no clear and distinct idea of the holy ghost at all. The rest is employed in exposing the folly and cruelty of stiffness and zealotism in religion, and in showing that the primitive ages of the church, in which tradition had its rise, were (even by confession of the best scholars and most orthodox writers) the *era of nonsense and absurdity*. It is finished, and very well wrote; but has been mostly incorporated into his other works, particularly the Enquiry: and for this reason I suppose he has writ upon it, *This wholly laid aside*. The second is in Latin, on Miracles; to show, that of the two methods of defending christianity, one from its intrinsic evidence, the holiness and purity of its doctrines, the other from its external, the miracles said to be wrought to confirm it; the first has been little attended to by reason of its difficulty; the second much insisted upon, because it appeared an easier task; but that it can in reality prove nothing at all. "Nobilis illa

¹ The Entail.

² As an amanuensis.

quidem

quidem defensio (the first) quam si obtinere potuissent, rem simul omnem expediisse, causamque penitus vicisse viderentur. At causæ hujus defendendæ labor cum tantâ argumentandi cavillandique molestiâ conjunctus ad alteram, quam dixi, defensionis viam, ut commodiorem longè et faciliorem, ple-rosque adegit—ego verò istiusmodi defensione religionem nostram non modo non confirmari, sed dubiam potiùs suspectamque reddi existimo.” He then proceeds to consider miracles in general, and afterwards those of the Pagans, compared with those of Christ. I only tell you the plan, for I have not read it out (though it is short); but you will not doubt to what conclusion it tends. There is another thing, I know not what, I am to see. As to the Treatise on Prayer; they say it is burnt indeed. Adieu!

I am ever yours,

T. GRAY.

LETTER IX.

YOUR pen was too rapid to mind the common form of a direction, and so, by omitting the words *near Windsor*, your letter has been diverting itself at another Stoke near Ailesbury, and came not to my hands till to-day. The true original chairs were all fold, when the Huntingdons broke; there are nothing now but Halfey-chairs, not adapted to the squareness of a Gothic dowager's rump. And by the way I do not see how the uneasiness and uncomfortableness of a coronation-chair can be any objection with you: every chair that is easy is modern, and unknown to our ancestors. As I remember, there were certain low chairs, that looked like ebony, at Esher, and were old and pretty. Why should not Mr. Bentley improve upon them?—I do not wonder at Doddsley. You have talked to him of six *odes*, for so you are pleased to call every thing I write, though it be but a receipt to make apple-dumplings. He has reason to gulp when he finds one of them only a long story. I don't know but I may send him very soon (by your hands) an ode to his own tooth, a high Pindarick upon stilts, which one must be a better scholar than he is to understand a line of, and the very best scholars will understand but a little matter here and there. It wants but seventeen lines of having an end, I don't say of being finished. As it is so unfortunate to come too late for Mr. Bentley, it may appear in the fourth volume of the Miscellanies, provided you don't think it execrable, and sup-

press

press it. Pray, when the fine book is to be printed¹, let me revise the press, for you know you can't; and there are a few trifles I could wish altered.

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

I am yours ever,

T. GRAY.

I desire you would not show that epigram I repeated to you², as mine. I have heard of it twice already as coming from you.

LETTER X.

I AM obliged to you for Mr. Doddsley's book³, and, having pretty well looked it over, will (as you desire) tell you my opinion of it. He might, methinks, have spared the Graces in his frontispiece, if he chose to be oeconomical, and dressed his authors in a little more decent raiment—not in whited-brown paper and distorted characters, like an old ballad. I am ashamed to see myself; but the company keeps me in countenance: so to begin with Mr. Tickell. This is not only a state-poem (my ancient aversion), but a state-poem on the peace of Utrecht. If Mr. Pope had wrote a panegyric on it, one could hardly have read him with patience: but this is only a poor short-winded imitator of Addison, who had himself not above three or four notes in poetry, sweet enough indeed, like those of a German flute, but such as soon tire and fatigue the ear with their frequent return. Tickell has added to this a great poverty of sense, and a string of transitions that hardly become a school-boy. However, I forgive him for the sake of his ballad⁴, which I always thought the prettiest in the world. All there is of M. Green here has been printed before: there is a profusion of wit every where; reading would have formed his judgment, and harmonized

¹ The edition of his Odes printed at Strawberry-hill.

² The Editor much wishes he could repeat it to the public, but has not been able to discover

the epigram alluded to. E.

³ His collection of Poems.

⁴ Colin and Lucy; beginning

"Of Leinster fam'd for maidens fair."

his verse, for even his wood-notes often break out into strains of real poetry and music. The School-mistress is excellent in its kind, and masterly; and (I am sorry to differ from you, but) London is to me one of those few imitations, that have all the ease and all the spirit of an original. The same man's¹ verses at the opening of Garrick's theatre are far from bad. Mr. Dyer (here you will despise me highly) has more of poetry in his imagination, than almost any of our number; but rough and injudicious. I should range Mr. Bramston only a step or two above Dr. King, who is as low in my estimation as in yours. Dr. Evans is a furious madman; and Pre-existence is nonsense in all her altitudes. Mr. Lyttelton is a gentle elegiac person: Mr. Nugent's² fire did not write his own ode³. I like Mr. Whitehead's little poems, I mean the Ode on a tent, the Verses to Garrick, and particularly those to Charles Townshend, better than any thing I had seen before of him. I gladly pass over H. Brown, and the rest, to come at you. You know I was of the publishing side, and thought your reasons against it none; for though, as Mr. Chute said extremely well, the *still small voice* of Poetry was not made to be heard in a crowd; yet Satire will be heard, for all the audience are by nature her friends; especially when she appears in the spirit of Dryden, with his strength, and often with his versification; such as you have caught in those lines on the royal unktion, on the papal dominion, and convents of both sexes, on Henry VIII. and Charles II. for these are to me the shining parts of your Epistle⁴. There are many lines I could wish corrected, and some blotted out, but beauties enough to atone for a thousand worse faults than these. The opinion of such as can at all judge, who saw it before in Dr. Middleton's hands, concurs nearly with mine. As to what any one says, since it came out; our people (you must know) are slow of judgement: they wait till some bold body saves them the trouble, and then follow his opinion; or stay till they hear what is said in town, that is, at some bishop's table, or some coffee-house about the Temple. When they are determined, I will tell you faithfully their verdict. As for the Beauties⁵, I am their most humble servant. What shall I say to Mr. Lowth, Mr. Ridley, Mr. Rolle, the reverend Mr. Brown, Seward, &c.? If I say, Messieurs! this is not the thing; write prose, write sermons, write nothing at all; they will disdain me, and my advice. What then would

¹ Doctor Samuel Johnson.

² Afterwards earl Nugent.

³ That addressed to Mr. Pulteney.

⁴ Epistle from Florence to Thomas Asheton, tutor to the earl of Plymouth.

⁵ The epistle to Mr. Eckardt the painter.

the

the sickly peer¹ have done, that spends so much time in admiring every thing that has four legs, and fretting at his own misfortune in having but two; and cursing his own politic head and feeble constitution, that won't let him be such a beast as he would wish? Mr. S. Jenyns now and then can write a good line or two—such as these—

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

I like Mr. Aston Hervey's fable; and an ode (the last of all) by Mr. Mason, a new acquaintance of mine, whose Musæus too seems to carry with it the promise at least of something good to come. I was glad to see you distinguished who poor West was, before his charming ode²; and called it any thing rather than a Pindaric. The town is an owl, if it don't like lady Mary³, and I am surpris'd at it; we here are owls enough to think her eclogues very bad; but that I did not wonder at. Our present taste is fir T. Fitz-Osborne's Letters. I send you a bit of a thing for two reasons: first, because it is of one of your favourites, Mr. M. Green; and next, because I would do justice. The thought on which my second ode⁴ turns is manifestly stole from hence:—not that I knew it at the time, but, having seen this many years before, to be sure it imprinted itself on my memory, and, forgetting the author, I took it for my own. The subject was the Queen's Hermitage.

* * * * *

Though yet no palace grace the shore
To lodge the pair you⁵ should adore;
Nor abbeys great in ruins rise,
Royal equivalents for vice:
Behold a grot in Delphic grove
The Graces and the Muses love,
A temple from vain-glory free;
Whose goddess is Philosophy;
Whose sides such licens'd idols⁶ crown,
As Superstition would pull down:

¹ Lord Hervey.

² Monody on the death of queen Caroline.

³ Lady Mary W. Montagu's Poems.

⁴ The Ode to Spring.

⁵ Speaking to the Thames.

⁶ The four busts.

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

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

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

And

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

* * * *

Adieu! I am yours ever,

T. GRAY.

LETTER XI.

Stoke, July 11, 1757.

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

I do not love notes, though you see I had resolved to put two or three¹. They are signs of weakness and obscurity. If a thing cannot be understood without them, it had better be not understood at all. If you will be vulgar, and pronounce it *Lunnun*, instead of London², I can't help it. Caradoc I have private reasons against; and besides it is in reality Caradoc, and will not stand in the verse.

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

¹ To the Bard.

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

happinefs,

LETTER

happinefs, and feem to underftand it. The receipt is obvious: it is only, Have fomething to do; but how few can apply it!—Adieu!

I am ever yours,

T. GRAY.

LETTER XII.

I AM fo charmed with the two fpecimens of Erfe poetry, that I cannot help giving you the trouble to enquire a little farther about them, and fhould wifh to fee a few lines of the original, that I may form fome flight idea of the language, the meafures, and the rhythm.

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

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

I have been often told that the poem called Hardicnute (which I always admired, and ftill admire) was the work of fomebody that lived a few years ago. This I do not at all believe, though it has evidently been retouched in places by fome modern hand: but, however, I am authorifed by this report to ask, whether the two poems in queftion are certainly antique and genuine. I make this enquiry in quality of an antiquary, and am not otherwife concerned about it: for, if I were fure that any one now living in Scotland had written them to divert himfelf and laugh at the credulity of the world, I would undertake a journey into the Highlands only for the pleafure of feeing him.

It has been fupposed the work of a lady of the name of Wardlaw, who died in Scotland not many years ago, but upon no better evidence, that I could ever learn, than that a copy of the poem with fome erafures was found among her papers after her death.—No proof furely of its original compofition, as few but perfons of bufinefs, which women feldom are, take the precaution of docketing, or writing “Copy” upon every thing they may tranfcribe. E.

LETTER

LETTER XIII.

I HAVE been very ill this week with a great cold and a fever, and though now in a way to be well, am like to be confined some days longer: whatever you will send me that is new, or old, and *long*, will be received as a charity. Rousseau's people do not interest me; there is but one character and one style in them all, I do not know their faces afunder. I have no esteem for their persons or conduct, am not touched with their passions; and as to their story, I do not believe a word of it—not because it is improbable, but because it is absurd. If I had any little propensity, it was to Julie; but now she has gone and (so hand over head) married that monsieur de Wolmar, I take her for a *vraie Suisse*, and do not doubt but she had taken a cup too much, like her lover¹. All this does not imply that I will not read it out, when you can spare the rest of it.

LETTER XIV.

Sunday, February 28, 1762.

I RETURN you my best thanks for the copy of your book², which you sent me, and have not at all lessened my opinion of it since I read it in print, though the press has in general a bad effect on the completion of one's works. The engravings look, as you say, better than I had expected, yet not altogether so well as I could wish. I rejoice in the good dispositions of our court, and in the propriety of their application to you: the work is a thing so much to be wished; has so near a connection with the turn of your studies and of your curiosity; and might find such ample materials among your hoards and in your head; that it will be a sin if you let it drop

¹ Were not the public already in possession of Mr. Gray's opinion of the *Nouvelle Heloise*, in his letters published by Mr. Mason—how would such a criticism, from such a critic, astonish all those more happily constituted readers, who, capable of appreciating varied excellence, have perhaps read with equal delight the exquisite odes of the one author, and the extraordinary and (with all its faults) inimitable romance of the other! E.

² The *Anecdotes of Painting*.

and

and come to nothing, or worse than nothing, for want of your assistance'. The historical part should be in the manner of Henault, a mere abridgement¹; a series of facts selected with judgment, that may serve as a clue to lead

¹ See a note from lord Bute in the Letters to and from Ministers, inviting Mr. Walpole to turn his thoughts to a work of this kind; and Mr. Walpole's answer, offering to point out and collect materials, and take any trouble in aiding, supervising and directing the whole plan. E.

² This method Mr. Walpole had already adopted before he received his friend's letter; for a large memorandum-book of his is extant, with this title-page:

COLLECTIONS

FOR

A HISTORY

OF

THE MANNERS, CUSTOMS, HABITS, FASHIONS, CEREMONIES &c. &c. &c.

OF

ENGLAND,

BEGUN

FEBRUARY 21, 1762,

BY

Mr. HORACE WALPOLE.

Col'tempo, Tutto.

The heads of the subjects he meant to treat are there arranged alphabetically, and several pages of blank paper left between each, intended to have been filled up with matter relative to the objects in question, as it occurred to him. We have only to regret, that though a number of curious scattered notes remain among lord Orford's papers, evidently intended for this work, its farther arrangement was never pursued; as in the hands of an antiquary, diligent, accurate and lively, as Mr. Walpole, it must have proved a most entertaining as well as a curious work.

The notes, or heads of chapters, in his memorandum-book, are as follows:

Coats of Arms.

When first used.

Arms and Armour.

Battle Axes. Coats of Mail. Habergeons. Hauberks. Shields, their forms.

Armies.

How raised and paid, and fleets. Admiral of western coast. My seal of R. Clitherol.

Books.

lead the mind along in the midst of those ruins and scattered monuments of art, that time has spared. This would be sufficient, and better than Mont-faucon's

- Books.* What books were in libraries before printing. Pay of copyists. Vide catalogue of books at Canterbury at end of Dart.
- Buildings.* Brick only for chimneys. No glass. Sudley castle glazed with beryl. Old London of chefnut. Licenses for embattling.
- Burials.* Soul-shot. Paid at interments. Vide Spelman's Posthuma.
- Coaches.* When first used. Saddles. Anne of Bohemia. First side-saddles. Chairs. Litter. Chariot. Vide Life of De Critz.
- Coins.* Easterlings. Copper tokens.
- Crusades.*
- Customs.* What, Saxons, Normans, Poitevins, &c. introduced. Curfeu.
- Deer.* When brought into England.
- Domain.* To enquire what the domain of the crown at different periods.
- Embassadors.* What their pay and privileges.
- Exchequer.* Vide Madox.
- Fashions.* See account of Harrison prefixed to Hollingshed's Chronicle. Wimples. Crisping pins. Love-locks. Colours of their mistresses. Piked horns.
- Fools.* Vide Anecdotes of Painting, in Holbein. Henry VIIIth's fool, a print of him.
- Forests.* Statutes of. New Forest. Inquiry how many in the crown. Manner of hunting. Picture at Wroxton of prince Henry and lord Harrington in hunting-habits. Chevy Chase, how founded.
- Games.* May games. At Cards. Tables. Dice. Numbers of small dice found under floor of Inner-Temple-hall.
- Haivering in the Bower.* When built. Jointure-house of what queens. When destroyed.
- Habits.* See Peck's account of them. Figures in Speed's maps. When first wigs. Tom Derry. Lord Holland. Account of fashions in Harrison's treatise before Hollingshed's Chronicle. Hollar's habits. Coats and waistcoats. Vide MS. of lord Sandwich.
- Heralds.*
- Holidays.* Keeping Christmas. Grands jours.
- Hops.* When first planted. See Fuller.
- Hours.* See my Green Book.
- Kings.* Often crowned.
- Knights.* How made. Ceremonies at creation of knights of Bath. See the plate in Dugdale's Warwickshire. Knights service. Knights fees.
- The Marches.* Account of them in lord Monmouth's Memoires.
- Masks and Masking.* When brought in.
- Mumming.*
- Mathematics.* Roger Bacon.
- Marriage.* What the ceremonies attending it.
- Meals.* See bills of fare of Henry IV. in bishop Lyttelton's book and in Dugdale.
- New Year's Gifts.*
- Night Caps.* Embroidered with black. My head of Henry duke of Richmond. Oliver Cromwell's in Mrs. Kennon's sale.

faucou's more diffuse narrative. Such a work (I have heard) Mr. Burke is now employed about, which though not intended for this purpose might be

<i>Ordeal.</i>	Trials.
<i>Pleby.</i>	When built. Thomas duke of Gloucester apprehended there. When demolished.
<i>Parks.</i>	
<i>Poets Laureate.</i>	
<i>Provisions.</i>	King's proveditors. Forefalling of markets.
<i>Portraits.</i>	Busts of Henry I. and queen, at the west end of the cathedral of Rochester. Catherine of Valois queen of Henry V. in the long gallery at Lambeth, and archbishop Chichele. Among Harleian MSS. No. 1498-2. Henry VII. receiving a book from Illip. Item, No. 1499-3. 1766-3. Lydgate. 1892-26. 2278-3. Henry VI. when a child. Ib. 4; 5, 6. No. 2358-14-15. No. 4826. Lydgate. No. 1319. No. 1349-3. Edward III. and all his children. Mr. Onslow, Black Prince, and another of sons of Edward III. My miniature of Henry duke of Richmond, son of Henry VIII. Portrait of Richard de Gainsborough, mason, in second volume of Lethcuillier's Hist. Henry VI. and house of parliament engraven by Pyne. Edward IV. &c. before Catalogue of Royal and Noble Authors. Jane Shore, at Eton.
<i>Ruffs.</i>	When first used. Succeeded by falling band.
<i>Seals.</i>	Often cut on reverses of cameos and intaglios. Often good at the same period that our coins bad.
<i>Stage.</i>	Mysteries. Farces. Pantomimes. Morrice-dancers. Interludes. Pageants.
<i>Tenures.</i>	Vide Blount's Jocular Tenures. Peerages annexed to castles and lands. Arundel and Berkeley castles.
<i>Tombs.</i>	Their fashions in different ages. When statues on them first. When brasses. Roman columns about time of queen Elizabeth. Knights Templars cross-legged.
<i>Tournaments.</i>	
<i>Tapstries.</i>	At Bayeux. In a room near the house of commons, with crusade of Richard I.
<i>Vineyards.</i>	Several houses anciently called the Vineyard and the Vine. Mr. Chute's in Hampshire. Mr. Talbot's, near Dorking. The Vineyard in St. James's park; qu. how old? Vide Barnaby's Journal.
<i>Wards.</i>	Court of wards and liveries.
<i>Wills.</i>	Legacies. How many witnesses. When they could not write, made the sign of the cross. Bequeathing their clothes, beds, &c. &c. Cups and covers, their plate.

Then follows the subsequent list of authors to be consulted:

Madox's History of the Exchequer.	Fuller's Worthies.	Statutes at large.
Dugdale.	Hollingshed.	Fynes Moryson.
Spelman.	Hall.	Blount's Jocular Tenures.
Hearne.	Cambden.	Speed and Stowe.
Skinner.	Froissart.	Search rolls for patents of manufactories and monopolies.
Peck's Desiderata Curiosa.	Fleetwood's Chronicum Prefatiofum.	

applied

applied perhaps to this use. Then at the end of each reign should come a dissertation explanatory of the plates, and pointing out the turn of thought, the customs, ceremonials, arms, dresses, luxury, and private life, with the improvement or decline of the arts during that period. This you must do yourself, beside taking upon you the superintendance, direction, and choice of materials. As to the expence, that must be the king's own entirely, and he must give the book to foreign ministers and people of note; for it is obvious no private man can undertake such a thing without a subscription, and no gentleman will care for such an expedient; and a gentleman it should be, because he must have easy access to archives, cabinets, and collections of all sorts. I protest I do not think it impossible but they may give into such a scheme: they approve the design, they wish to encourage the arts and to be magnificent, and they have no Versailles or Herculaneum.

I hope to see you toward the end of March. If you bestow a line on me, pray tell me whether the baronne de la Peyriere is gone to her castle of Viry; and whether Fingal be discovered or shrewdly suspected to be a forgery. Adieu!

I am yours ever,
T. GRAY.

LETTER XV.

Sunday, December 30, 1764.

I HAVE received the Castle of Otranto, and return you my thanks for it. It engages our attention here¹, makes some of us cry a little, and all in general afraid to go to bed o'nights. We take it for a translation, and should believe it to be a true story, if it were not for St. Nicholas.

When your pen was in your hand you might have been a little more communicative: for, though disposed enough to believe the opposition rather consumptive, I am entirely ignorant of all the symptoms. Your canonical book I have been reading with great satisfaction. He speaketh as one having authority. If Englishmen have any feeling left, methinks

¹ At Cambridge.

they must feel now; and if the ministry have any feeling (whom nobody will suspect of insensibility) they must cut off the author's ears, for it is in all the forms a most wicked libel. Is the old man and the lawyer put on, or is it real? or has some real lawyer furnished a good part of the materials, and another person employed them? This I guess; for there is an uncouthness of diction in the beginning, which is not supported throughout—though it now and then occurs again, as if the writer was weary of supporting the character he had assumed, when the subject had warmed him beyond dissimulation¹.

Roussseau's Letters² I am reading heavily, heavily! He justifies himself, till he convinces me that he deserved to be burnt, at least that his book did. I am not got through him, and you never will. Voltaire I detest, and have not seen his book: I shall in good time. You surprize me, when you talk of going³ in February. Pray, does all the minority go too? I hope you have a reason. *Desperare de republica* is a deadly sin in politics.

Adieu! I will not take my leave of you; for (you perceive) this letter means to beg another, when you can spare a little.

¹ Mr. Gray may probably allude to a pamphlet called "A Letter concerning libels, warrants, seizure of papers, and security for the peace or behaviour, with a view to some late proceedings, and the defence of them by the majority."—Supposed to have been written by William Greaves, esq. a master in Chancery, under the inspection of the late lord Camden. E.

² The Lettres de la Montague.

³ To Paris.