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# **The Works Of Horatio Walpole, Earl Of Orford**

In Five Volumes

**Walpole, Horace**

**London, 1798**

Letters from the Hon. Horace Walpole to the Right Hon. Mary Lepel Lady  
Hervey, from the Year 1758 to the Year 1766

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[urn:nbn:de:hbz:466:1-59895](https://nbn-resolving.org/urn:nbn:de:hbz:466:1-59895)

L E T T E R S

FROM

THE HON. HORACE WALPOLE

TO

THE RIGHT HON. MARY LEPEL LADY HERVEY,

From the Year 1758 to the Year 1766.

VOL. V.

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THE HON. HORACE WALPOLE

TO

THE RIGHT HON. MARY LEVELL, LADY BRITNEY

From the Year 1738 to the Year 1760.

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Vol. V.



# LETTERS

FROM

THE HON. HORACE WALPOLE

TO

THE RIGHT HON. MARY LEPEL LADY HERVEY<sup>1</sup>;

From the Year 1758 to the Year 1766.

## LETTER I.

TO THE RIGHT HON. MARY LEPEL LADY HERVEY.

Strawberry-hill, September 13, 1757.

MADAM,

AFTER all the trouble your ladyship has been so good as to take voluntarily, you will think it a little hard that I should presume to give you more; but it is a cause, madam, in which I know you feel, and I can suggest new motives to your ladyship's zeal. In short, madam, I am on the crisis of losing mademoiselle de l'Enclos's picture, or of getting both that and her letters to lady Sandwich<sup>2</sup>. I inclose lord Sandwich's letter to me, which

<sup>1</sup> Lady Hervey was only daughter of brigadier-general Nicholas Lepel. She was maid of honour to queen Caroline, and was married in 1720 to John lord Hervey, eldest son of John earl of Bristol, by whom she had four sons and four daughters.—Lord Hervey was vice-chamberlain and privy-seal to George II. and

well known by his eloquence, writings, duel with Mr. Pulteney, and the satires of Pope. He died in 1744. Lady Hervey died of the gout in 1767.

<sup>2</sup> Daughter to the famous Wilmot earl of Rochester.—She had been long settled at Paris, and died there in the year 1755. E.



will explain the whole. Madame Greffini, I suppose, is madame Graphigny; whom some of your ladyship's friends, if not yourself, must know; and she might be of use, if she could be trusted not to detain so tempting a treasure as the letters. From the effects being sealed up, I have still hopes; greater, from the goodness your ladyship had in writing before. Don't wonder, madam, at my eagerness: besides a good quantity of natural impatience, I am now interested as an editor and printer. Think what pride it would give me to print original letters of Ninon at Strawberry-hill! If your ladyship knows any farther means of serving me, *of serving yourself, good Mr. Welldone*, as the widow Lackit says in Oroonoko, I need not doubt your employing them. Your ladyship and I are of a religion, with regard to certain saints, that inspires more zeal than such trifling temptations as persecution and faggots infuse into bigots of other sects. I think a cause like ours might communicate ardour even to my lady Stafford<sup>1</sup>. If she will assist in recovering *Notre Dame des Amours*, I will add St. Raoul<sup>2</sup> to my calendar.

I am hers and your ladyship's

Most obedient and faithful humble servant,

HOR. WALPOLE.

L E T T E R II.

Arlington-street, October 17, 1758.

YOUR ladyship, I hope, will not think that such a strange thing as my own picture seems of consequence enough to me to write a letter about it: but obeying your commands does seem so; and lest you should return and think I had neglected it, I must say that I have come to town three several times on purpose, but Mr. Ramsay (I will forgive him) has been constantly out of town.—So much for that.

<sup>1</sup> Her maiden name was Cantillon. At the death of her husband, the title went to lord Stafford's uncle, who dying without children, the earldom became extinct, but the barony fell into abeyance among the three sisters of the nephew, lady Anastasia and lady Anne Stafford, and lady Mary Chabot: the two first were nuns.—Lady

Mary married the father of the present duc de Chabot.

One of the nuns is still living. At her death the barony devolves to sir William Jerningham, of Coffey in Norfolk, through his mother, who was niece to the late earl of Stafford.

<sup>2</sup> A favourite cat of lady Stafford's. E.

I would



I would have sent you word that the king of Portugal coming along the road at midnight, which was in his own room at noon, his foot slipped, and three balls went through his body; which, however, had no other consequence than giving him a stroke of a palsy, of which he is quite recovered except being dead<sup>1</sup>. Some indeed are so malicious as to say, that the Jesuits, who are the most conscientious men in the world, murdered him, because he had an intrigue with another man's wife: but all these histories I supposed your ladyship knew better than me, as, till I came to town yesterday, I imagined you was returned. For my own part, about whom you are sometimes so good as to interest yourself, I am as well as can be expected after the murder of a king, and the death of a person of the next consequence to a king, the master of the ceremonies, poor Sir Clement<sup>2</sup>, who is supposed to have been suffocated by my lady M——'s<sup>3</sup> kissing hands.

This will be a melancholy letter, for I have nothing to tell your ladyship but tragical stories. Poor Dr. Shawe<sup>4</sup> being sent for in great haste to Claremont—(it seems the duchess had caught a violent cold by a hair of her own whisker getting up her nose and making her sneeze)—the poor doctor, I say, having eaten a few mushrooms before he set out, was taken so ill, that he was forced to stop at Kingston; and, being carried to the first apothecary's, prescribed a medicine for himself which immediately cured him. This catastrophe so alarmed the duke of Newcastle, that he immediately ordered all the mushroom-beds to be destroyed, and even the toadstools in the park did not escape scalping in this general massacre. What I tell you is literally true. Mr. Stanley, who dined there last Sunday, and is not partial against that court, heard the edict repeated, and confirmed it to me last night. And a voice of lamentation was heard at Ramah in Claremont, *Chloe*<sup>5</sup> weeping for *her* mushrooms, and they are not!

After all these important histories, I would try to make you smile, if I was not afraid you would resent a little freedom taken with a great name.—May I venture?

<sup>1</sup> Alluding to the incoherent stories told at the time of the assassination of the king of Portugal.

<sup>2</sup> She had been a common woman.

<sup>3</sup> Physician to the duke and duchess of Newcastle.

<sup>4</sup> Sir Clement Cotterel.

<sup>5</sup> The duke of Newcastle's cook.

Why



Why Taylor the quack calls himself *chevalier*,  
'Tis not easy a reason to render ;  
Unless blinding eyes, that he thinks to make clear,  
Demonstrates he's but a *pretender*.

A book has been left at your ladyship's house ; it is lord Whitworth's account of Ruffia. Monsieur Kniphaufen has promised me some curious anecdotes of the czarina Catherine—so my shop is likely to flourish.

I am your ladyship's most obedient servant,

HOR. WALPOLE.

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LETTER III.

Feb. 20, 1759.

I MET with this little book ' t'other day by chance, and it pleased me so much, that I cannot help lending it to your ladyship, as I know it will amuse you from the same causes. It contains many of those important truths which history is too proud to tell, and too dull from not telling.

Here Grignon's soul the living canvas warms ;  
Here fair Fontange assumes unfading charms :  
Here Mignard's pencil bows to female wit ;  
Louis rewards, but ratifies Fayette :  
The philosophic duke, and painter too,  
Thought from her thoughts—from her ideas drew.

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LETTER IV.

POOR ROBIN'S ALMANACK.

Saturday, Nov. 3d.  
1759.

Thick fogs, and some wet.  
Go not out of town. Gouts and rheumatifms are abroad. Warm clothes, good fires, and a room full of pictures, glasses, and scarlet damask, are the best phyfic.

\* " Divers portraits de quelques personages de la cour" [de Louis XIV.] by madame de la Fayette. E.

In



In short, for fear your ladyship should think of Strawberry on Saturday, I can't help telling you that I am to breakfast at Peterham that day with Mr. Fox and lady Caroline, lord and lady Waldegrave. How did you like the farce? George Selwyn says he wants to see High life below stairs, as he is weary of Low life above stairs.

LETTER V.

Jan. 12, 1760.

I AM very sorry your ladyship could doubt a moment on the cause of my concern yesterday. I saw you much displeas'd at what I had said; and I felt so innocent of the least intention of offending you, that I could not help being struck at my own ill-fortune, and with the sensation rais'd by finding you mix great goodness with great severity.

I am naturally very impatient under praise; I have reflected enough on myself to know I don't deserve it; and with this consciousness you ought to forgive me, madam, if I dreaded that the person whose esteem I valued the most in the world, should think that I was fond of what I know is not my due. I meant to express this apprehension as respectfully as I could, but my words fail'd me—a misfortune not too common to me, who am apt to say too much, not too little! Perhaps it is that very quality which your ladyship calls wit, and I call tinsel, for which I dread being rais'd. I wish to recommend myself to you by more essential merits—and if I can only make you laugh, it will be very apt to make me as much concern'd as I was yesterday. For people to whose approbation I am indifferent, I don't care whether they commend or condemn me for my wit; in the former case they will not make me admire myself for it, in the latter they can't make me think but what I have thought already. But for the few whose friendship I wish, I would fain have them see, that under all the idleness of my spirits there are some very serious qualities, such as warmth, gratitude and sincerity, which ill returns may render useless or may make me lock up in my breast, but which will remain there while I have a being.

Having drawn you this picture of myself, madam, a subject I have to say so much upon, will not your good nature apply it as it deserves, to what pass'd yesterday? Won't you believe that my concern flow'd from being  
disappointed



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

## LETTER VI.

Strawberry-hill, October 1, 1762.

MADAM,

I HOPE you are as free from any complaint, as I am sure you are full of joy. Nobody partakes more of your satisfaction for Mr. Hervey's<sup>1</sup> safe return<sup>2</sup>; and now he is safe, I trust you enjoy his glory: for this is a wicked age; you are one of those un-Lacedæmonian mothers, that are not content unless your children come off with all their limbs. A Spartan countess would not have had the confidence of my lady Albemarle to appear in the drawing-room without at least one of her sons being knocked on the head<sup>3</sup>. However, pray, madam, make my compliments to her; one must conform to the times, and congratulate people for being happy, if they like it. I know one matron, however, with whom I may condole; who, I dare swear, is miserable that she has not one of her acquaintance in affliction, and to whose door she might drive with all her sympathising greyhounds to inquire after her, and then to Hawkins's, and then to Graham's, and then cry over a ball of rags that she is picking, and be so sorry for poor Mrs. Such an one, who has lost an only son!

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

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

<sup>2</sup> From the Havannah.

<sup>3</sup> Lady Anne Lenox, countess of Albemarle, of war; and the third was colonel of a regi- had three sons present at the taking of the ment. E.

Mr.



TO THE RT. HON. MARY LEPEL LADY HERVEY. 521

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

Your ladyship's most faithful humble servant,

HOR. WALPOLE.

LETTER VII.

Strawberry-hill, October 31, 1762.

MADAM,

IT is too late, I fear, to attempt acknowledging the honour madame de Chabot<sup>1</sup> does me; and yet, if she is not gone, I would fain not appear ungrateful. I do not know where she lives, or I would not take the liberty again of making your ladyship my penny-post. If she is gone, you will throw my note into the fire.

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

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

HOR. WALPOLE.

P. S. You must tell me all the news, when I arrive, for I know nothing of what is passing. I have only seen in the papers, that the cock and hen doves<sup>2</sup> that went to Paris not having been able to make peace, there is a third dove<sup>3</sup> just flown thither to help them.

<sup>1</sup> Lady Mary Chabot, daughter to the earl of Stafford.

<sup>2</sup> The duke and duchess of Bedford.

<sup>3</sup> Mr. Hans Stanley.



## LETTER VIII.

November 10, 1764.

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

Thine in the spirit,

PILCHARD WHITFIELD.

## LETTER IX.

Strawberry-hill, June 11, 1765.

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

<sup>3</sup> Lady Hervey, it is supposed, had sent Mr. Walpole some potted pilchards. E.



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

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

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

Your most faithful and devoted humble servant,

HOR. WALPOLE.



## LETTER X.

Arlington-street, September 3, 1765.

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

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

\* The duchesse d'Aiguillon.

able



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

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

I am, madam, your ladyship's

Most obliged and most obedient humble servant,

HOR. WALPOLE.

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LETTER XI.

Paris, September 14, 1765.

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



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

Madame Geoffrin came to town but last night, and is not visible on Sundays; but I hope to deliver your ladyship's letter and packet to-morrow. Mesdames d'Aiguillon, d'Egmont, and Chabot, and the duc de Nivernois are all in the country. Madame de Boufflers is at L'Isle Adam, whither my lady Hertford is gone to-night to sup, for the first time, being no longer chained down to the incivility of an embassadess. She returns after supper; an irregularity that frightens me, who have not yet got rid of all my barbarisms. There is one, alas! I never shall get over—the dirt of this country; it is melancholy after the purity of Strawberry! The narrowness of the streets, trees clipped to resemble brooms, and planted on pedestals of chalk, and a few other points, do not edify me. The French opera, which I have heard to-night, disgusted me as much as ever; and the more for being followed by the Devin de Village, which shows that they can sing without cracking the drum of one's ear. The scenes and dances are delightful: the Italian comedy charming. Then I am in love with treillage and fountains, and will prove it at Strawberry. Chantilly is so exactly what it was when I saw it above twenty years ago, that I recollected the very position of monsieur le Duc's chair and the gallery. The latter gave me the first idea of mine; but, presumption apart, mine is a thousand times prettier. I gave my lord Herbert's compliments to the statue of his friend the constable<sup>1</sup>; and, waiting some time for the concierge, I called out, *Où est Vatel*?<sup>2</sup>

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

<sup>1</sup> The constable de Montmorency.—See Life of lord Herbert of Cherbury, page 67.

which Louis XIV. made to the grand Condé at Chantilly, put an end to his existence because he feared the sea-fish would not arrive in time for one day's repast! E.

<sup>2</sup> The maître d'hotel, who during the visit

don't



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

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

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

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

I am, madam, your ladyship's

Most faithful and devoted humble servant,

HOR. WALPOLE.

LETTER



## LETTER XII.

Paris, October 3, 1765.

STILL I have seen neither madame d'Egmont nor the duchesse d'Aiguillon, who are in the country; but the latter comes to Paris to-morrow. Madame Chabot I called on last night. She was not at home, but the hotel de Carnavalet<sup>1</sup> was; and I stopped on purpose to say an ave Maria before it. It is a very singular building, not at all in the French style, and looks like an ex voto raised to her honour by some of her foreign votaries. I don't think her honoured half enough in her own country. I shall burn a little incense before your cardinal's heart<sup>2</sup>, madam, *à votre intention*.

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

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

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

<sup>1</sup> Madame de Sevigné's residence in Paris.

<sup>2</sup> The cardinal de Richlieu's heart at the Sorbonne.

being



being sacrificed one week at Leicester-house, another in Grosvenor-street, a third in Cavendish-square, &c. &c. &c. *La Reine is le plus grand roi du monde*<sup>1</sup>, and talked much to me, and would have said more if I would have let her; but I was awkward, and shrunk back into the crowd. None of the rest spoke to me. The king is still much handsomer than his pictures, and has great sweetness in his countenance, instead of that farouche look which they give him. The mesdames are not beauties, and yet have something Bourbon in their faces. The dauphiness I approve the least of all: with nothing good-humoured in her countenance, she has a look and accent that made me dread lest I should be invited to a private party at loo with her<sup>2</sup>. The poor dauphin is ghastly, and perishing before one's eyes.

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

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

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

HOR. WALPOLE.

<sup>1</sup> Madame de Sevigné thus expresses herself of Louis XIV. after his having taken much notice of her at Versailles. See her Letters. E. <sup>2</sup> He means, that she had a resemblance to the late princess Amelia. E.



## LETTER XIII.

Paris, October 13, 1765.

HOW are the mighty fallen! Yes, yes, madam, I am as like the duc de Richelieu as two peas; but then they are two old withered grey peas. Do you remember the fable of Cupid and Death, and what a piece of work they made with hustling their arrows together? This is just my case: love might shoot at me, but it was with a gouty arrow. I have had a relapse in both feet, and kept my bed six days: but the fit seems to be going off; my heart can already go alone, and my feet promise themselves the mighty luxury of a cloth shoe in two or three days. Mr. and Mrs. Ramsay<sup>1</sup>, who are here, and are, alas! to carry this, have been of great comfort to me, and have brought their delightful little daughter, who is as quick as Ariel. Mr. Ramsay could want no assistance from me: what do we both exist upon here, madam, but your bounty and charity? When did you ever leave one of your friends in want of another? Madame Geoffrin came and sat two hours last night by my bed-side: I could have sworn it had been my lady Hervey, she was so good to me. It was with so much sense, information, instruction, and correction! The manner of the latter charms me. I never saw any body in my days that catches one's faults and vanities and impositions so quick, that explains them to one so clearly, and convinces one so easily. I never liked to be set right before! You cannot imagine how I taste it! I make her both my confessor and director, and begin to think I shall be a reasonable creature at last, which I had never intended to be. The next time I see her, I believe I shall say, "Oh! Common Sense, sit down: I have been thinking so and so; is not it absurd?"—for t'other sense and wisdom, I never liked them; I shall now hate them for her sake. If it was worth her while, I assure your ladyship she might govern me like a child.

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

<sup>1</sup> Allan Ramsay, the painter.

days



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

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

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

Your ladyship's faithful humble servant,

HOR. WALPOLE.

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LETTER XIV.

Paris, Nov. 21, 1765.

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

Y y 2

tions



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

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

The dauphin continues languishing to his exit, and keeps every body at Fontainebleau. There is a little bustle now about the parliament of Bretagne; but you may believe, madam, that when I was tired of the squabbles at London, I did not propose to interest myself in quarrels at Hull or Liverpool. Indeed if the *duc de Chaulnes*<sup>1</sup> commanded at Rennes, or *Pomenars*<sup>2</sup> was sent to prison, I might have a little curiosity. You wrong me in thinking I quoted a text from my Saint<sup>3</sup> ludicrously. On the contrary, I am so true a bigot, that, if she could have talked nonsense, I should, like any other bigot, believe she was inspired.

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

<sup>1</sup> Governor of Brittany in the time of madame de Sevigné.

<sup>2</sup> See madame de Sevigné's Letters.

<sup>3</sup> Madame de Sevigné.



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

Quoique je forme un corps, je ne suis qu'une idée ;  
Plus ma beauté vieillit, plus elle est décidée :  
Il faut, pour me trouver, ignorer d'où je viens :  
Je tiens tout de lui, qui réduit tout à rien <sup>2</sup>.

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

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

I am your ladyship's most faithful humble servant,

HOR. WALPOLE.

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LETTER XV.

Paris, November 28, 1765.

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

<sup>2</sup> The word is *Noblesse*.

quality



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

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

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

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

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



TO THE RT. HON. MARY LEPEL LADY HERVEY. 535

with great coolness and firmness. Somebody gave him t'other day *The preparation for death*<sup>1</sup>: he said, "C'est la nouvelle du jour."

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

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

HOR. WALPOLE.

November 28, three o'clock.

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

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L E T T E R X V I.

Paris, January 2, 1766.

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

<sup>1</sup> The title of a French book of devotion.

up



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

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

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

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

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



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

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

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

HOR. WALPOLE.

LETTER XVII.

Paris, Saturday night, Jan. 11, 1766.

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

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



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

## ON MADAME DE FORCALQUIER SPEAKING ENGLISH.

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

You



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

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

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

Your most faithful humble servant,

HOR. WALPOLE.

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LETTER XVIII.

Paris, February 3, 1766.

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

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



this year, as she goes to Poland in May. The king has invited her, promised her an apartment exactly in her own way, and that she shall see nobody but whom she chooses to see. This will not surprise you, madam; but what I shall add, will; though I must beg your ladyship not to mention it even to her, as it is an absolute secret here, as she does not know that I know it, and as it was trusted to me by a friend of yours. In short, there are thoughts of sending her with a public character, or at least with a commission from hence—a very extraordinary honour, and I think never bestowed but on the *marechale de Guebriant*<sup>1</sup>. As the *Duffons* have been talked of, and as *madame Geoffrin* has enemies, its being known might prevent it; and it might make her uneasy that it was known. I should have told it to no mortal but your ladyship; but I could not resist giving you such a pleasure. In your answer, madam, I need not warn you not to specify what I have told you.

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

Your ladyship's most obliged and faithful humble servant,

HOR. WALPOLE.

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



LETTER XIX.

Paris, March 10, 1766.

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

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

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

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

Your bane and antidote are both before you.

The



The first is by the archbishop of Touloufe<sup>1</sup>, who is thought the first man of the clergy. It has some sense, no pathetic, no eloquence, and, I think, clearly no belief in his own doctrine. The latter is by the abbé Coyer, written lively, upon a single idea; and though I agree upon the inutility of the remedy he rejects, I have no better opinion of that he would substitute. Preaching has not failed, from the beginning of the world till to-day, because inadequate to the disease, but because the disease is incurable. If one preached to lions and tigers, would it cure them of thirsting for blood, and sucking it when they have an opportunity? No; but when they are whelped in the Tower, and both caressed and beaten, do they turn out a jot more tame when they are grown up? So far from it, all the kindness in the world, all the attention, cannot make even a monkey (that is no beast of prey) remember a pair of scissars or an ensigny.

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

Your most obedient humble servant,

HOR. WALPOLE?

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L E T T E R XX.

Strawberry-hill, June 28, 1766.

IT is consonant to your ladyship's long-experienced goodness, to remove my error as soon as you could. In fact, the same post that brought madame d'Aiguillon's letter to you, brought me a confession from madame du Deffand of her guilt<sup>2</sup>. I am not the less obliged to your ladyship for *informing* against the true criminal. It is well for me however that I hesitated, and did not, as monsieur de Guerchy pressed me to do, constitute myself prisoner. What a ridiculous vain-glorious figure I should have

<sup>1</sup> Brionne de Lomenie.

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

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

made



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

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

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

“ Des Champs Elisées,

Point de succession de tems, point de date.

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

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

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

RABUTIN DE SEVIGNE.”

As



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

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

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

What



TO THE RT. HON. MARY LEPEL LADY HERVEY. 545

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

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

Yours most faithfully,

HOR. WALPOLE.



What has the poet been doing?  
 Ourselves has he been speaking true?  
 Come, tell me all — for the truth  
 and that decision's replied:  
 "Thee, O queen, those words I found,  
 Thee lie not on a chaste ground,  
 So what, lover, thou hast  
 The very name of man they hate;  
 Thee — but alas! I came too late,  
 For Honour had been there before  
 In triumph of its flag and  
 These fibres, whom our souls would  
 The true supports of virtue, were  
 To find — Mary, and the power  
 What can my brother's name mean  
 How true! he dies, or may be true;  
 What can he want that's — I am true."

You will say I am an infidel, but every body cannot write as they  
 do — I am a true man. A true man.

Yours most faithful,  
 MARY LEE HERVEY.