

## HORACE WALPOLE'S CORRESPONDENCE

From MANN, Sunday 5 August 1742 NS

The first, third, and sixth paragraphs and parts of the second, fourth, and seventh were printed in Doran i. 93-6.

Florence, August 5th 1742.

My dear child,

I WOULD have given anything that you had been here last Monday at the *cocchiata*. The Chutes and I said so twenty times; Madame Grifoni said she was sure you would have been vastly pleased. 'Yes Madame,' said I, 'I am so well convinced of it that I am persuaded he would have it repeated once a week during the fine weather.' The evening was charming, very dark without the least wind. The lights up and down the garden had the prettiest effect imaginable; those in the middle for the music were quite hid by the crowds that pressed about the table. This I would have remedied, but 'twas impossible, for though there were benches, chairs and stools for 300, these were not near enough. I can neither tell you the names or number of the *dame*. I gave strict orders to the porter to write them down. He soon found that he could not write fast enough, so would have contented himself with counting them only, but this too he was forced to give up, for when he got to 75, such shoals came in together that he lost his number. Madame Swarez says there were 160 *dame*, which I don't believe, *cavallieri* innumerable, which I do believe by the number of *rinfreschi*: 1240 jars! Everybody was extremely well pleased and it still serves for conversation, but would you believe it, because it was on a Monday night, our former day, many took it into their heads that it was to be continued. The opera is begun again; Egizziello is quite recovered and sung most charmingly, though not to fatigue himself he sung only half airs; tonight perhaps he may add their second parts.<sup>1</sup>

I received yours of July 7th whilst I was at the Petraja. We have got off the party the Prince proposed by going there last Friday early. He carried us to Castello and some little places about, and we got away at 24 hours.<sup>2</sup> The Princess was quite abominable with her *lassitudes et épuisements*, and will not be in a good humour till Prague is taken

1. That is, he would sing the whole *da capo* aria, including a repetition of the first section. The *da capo* section of 18th-century arias was usually the singer's op-

portunity to display virtuosity through bravura passages, ornaments, etc. improvised on the original air.

2. About 7:30 P.M.