and Princess were at it last night. The Duchess of Queensberry gives a masquerade tonight, in hopes of drawing the King to it; but he will not go. I do; but must own it is wondrous foolish to dress one's self out in a becoming dress, *in cold blood.* There has been a new comedy, called *The Foundling,*[17] far from good, but it took.[18] Lord Hobart and some more young men made a party to damn it, merely for the love of damnation: the Templars espoused the play, and went armed with syringes charged with stinking oil and with sticking plasters for *Bubby's*[19] fair hair: but it did not come to action; Garrick was impertinent,[20] and the pretty men gave over their plot the moment they grew to be in the right.

I must now notify to you the approaching espousals of the most illustrious Prince Pigwiggin[21] with Lady Rachel Cavendish,[22] third daughter of the Duke of Devonshire: the victim does not dislike it! My uncle makes great settlements, and the Duke is to get a peerage for Pigwiggin, upon the foot that the father[23] cannot be spared out of the House of Commons—can you bear this old buffoon making himself of consequence and imitating my father?[24]

The Princess of Orange has got a son,[25] and we have taken a convoy[26] that was going to Bergopzoom; two trifling occurrencies that are

17. See *ante* 16 Feb. 1748 OS.

18. *The Foundling* 'has been already exhibited ten nights, and the boxes taken for many more' (GM 1748, xviii. 51–4, which gives a long account of the 'new comedy'; see also ibid. xviii. 114–17, 207–9 for a criticism and defence of the play).

19. Lord Hobart.

20. His biographers give no explanation of this. Garrick 'gave more consequence to [the role of] Young Belmont than can well be imagined' (John Genest, *Some Account of the English Stage,* Bath, 1832, iv. 238). Garrick had not enforced the rule of excluding young men of fashion from the stage, and 'at present the beaux pop in and out with as little opposition as modesty; and have made so absolute a *burrow* of the stage, that unless they are *ferreted* out . . . we may bid farewell to theatrical entertainments' (*Dr-ry L-ne P-yh-se Broke Open in a Letter to Mr G* —, 1748, p. 18).

21. Horatio Walpole, eldest son of Horatio Walpole, brother of Sir Robert (HW).

22. (1727–1805), m. (12 May 1748) Horatio Walpole, 2d Bn Walpole of Wolterton, 1757; cr. (1806) E. of Orford, n.c.

23. Horace Walpole senior.

24. Who remained in the House of Commons while his eldest son received a peerage.

25. William V (8 March 1748 NS–1806), P. of Orange, 1751 (Isenburg, *Stammtafeln* ii. taf. 1). The news reached London 10 March by Baron Wasner's courier (*Daily Adv.* 11 March OS).

26. 'An express arrived . . . [with] an account that the grand convoy, which waited at Antwerp for some time in order to take an opportunity of procuring a safe passage to Bergen-op-Zoom, at last set out, but the vigilance of the Austrian hussars disappointed their expectations, for before they arrived at the destined place, between two and three thousand attacked the convoy . . . with such resolution that, it is said, 1,000 of the enemy fell in the dispute and that 900 remain prisoners in the hands of the Austrians. . . . There is some reason to doubt the truth of the above article, as no mention is made of it in any of the foreign gazettes of the latest date' (ibid.).