

HORACE WALPOLE'S CORRESPONDENCE

From MANN, Saturday 12 March 1768

Parts of the second paragraph were printed in Doran ii. 189, 195, and 196. A copy by Mann of Stuart-Mackenzie's letter to him of 9 Feb. is enclosed in this letter.

Florence, March 12, 1768.

My dear Sir,

BY the contents of the enclosed letter¹ from Mr Mackenzie, which I received several days ago, you will not wonder at my impatience to hear from you, my dear Sir, on the same subject, for though I cannot doubt of the happy conclusion of this affair, yet one wishes to be informed of every minute circumstance, both to confirm it and to fix the time of its execution, etc., etc. The friendly manner in which he speaks of you in that letter made me take a double pleasure in communicating it to you, though I presume that you will not mention to him that I sent you a copy of it, an awkwardness which I might have avoided if I had known how to convey to you his exact sentiments in any other manner, both with regard to you and myself.

Many festivals are preparing here for [the] Emperor's birthday² and name's day,³ on which the Great Duchess is to be *relevée de ses couches*.⁴ The young Prince⁵ is to be invested that day⁶ with the *toison d'or*, with which the secretary⁷ of that order is on his way hither from Vienna, and by this mark of distinction they acknowledge him to be the heir of the House of Austria, to whom it is given at their births. The other archdukes have it only at 12 years old, but

1. See below.

2. 'A gala at Court on the 13th, being the Emperor's birthday' (Mann to Shelburne 15 March, S.P. 98/73 f. 51).

3. 19 March, the feast of St Joseph.

4. 'The ceremony of churching the Great Duchess' (*ibid.* f. 50) was postponed to 21 March when 'Her Royal Highness, with the young Prince on her lap, was carried in a rich sedan chair [to the chapel of the Court], and was attended by the *grande maitresse* and the ladies of honour' (Mann to Shelburne 26 March, *ibid.* f. 54).

5. Francis (12 Feb. 1768 - 1835), German Emperor 1792-1806, as Francis II; Em-

peror of Austria 1804-35, as Francis I (Isenburg, *Stammtafeln* i. taf. 19; *Funzioni di Corte* 167, *sub* 12 Feb.).

6. 21 March (*Funzioni di Corte* 173).

7. Cornelius, Freiherr von Nenny; councillor and cabinet secretary, 1763 (*Genealog. hist. Nachrichten* 1763-4 3d ser. ii. 794; 1766-7 3d ser. v. 41; 1768-9 3d ser. viii. 557-8; *Funzioni di Corte* 172, *sub* 21 March). 'A few days ago [6 March] arrived here Baron Neny, secretary of the Order of the Toison d'Or' (Mann to Shelburne 15 March, S.P. 98/73 f. 50; *Gazette de Leyde* 1 April, *sub* Florence, 12 March).