To Mann, Wednesday 10 January 1770

Arlington Street, Jan. 10, 1770.

THE great day[1] is over, and you will not be sorry to hear the event of it in both Houses. Without doors everything was quiet, except some cries in favour of Wilkes. Lord Chatham, who *Lord Temple* said was grown so violent that *he* could not *moderate* him, made his appearance and two long speeches,[2] but like an old beauty in an unfashionable dress which became her in her youth, he found that his charms are no longer killing. Lord Mansfield answered[3] his first speech, and Lord Sandwich defied any Lord in the House to make sense out of the second. The object of the day was to create a breach between the two Houses, by an amendment,[4] proposed by Lord Chatham, to the Address, in which the House should inquire into the grievance of the Middlesex election.[5] Their Lordships were so little disposed to quarrel with their good brethren the Commons, though the Chancellor[6] himself laboured the point *against* the Court, that at ten at night the motion was rejected by an

1. 9 Jan. (*Journals of the House of Commons* xxxii. 455–7; *Journals of the House of Lords* xxxii. 393–8).

2. Summarized in Cobbett, *Parl. Hist.* xvi. 647–53, 656–65.

3. Summarized, ibid. 653–6. 'Lord Mansfield . . . urged that though the House of Commons should have done wrong, a breach between the two Houses would be much more fatal. Lord Chatham replied to Lord Mansfield, but with so little precision or argument, as was usual to him when reduced to reason, that Lord Sandwich professed he did not comprehend what he meant, and defied any single Lord to give a rational account of what Lord Chatham had said. Words, Lord S[andwich] said, might do in a popular assembly, but their Lordships required reason and argument (HW's MS *Journal of the Most Remarkable Events of* . . . [*1770*], p. 31, *sub* 9 Jan.; *Mem. Geo. III* iv. 24).

4. 'This motion, which meant to raise a quarrel between the two Houses, was disagreeable even to many of the Opposition; but he had drawn it himself and persisted in it, telling the House he would not have come thither, but on so extraordinary an occasion' (HW's MS *Journal* . . . [*1770*], loc. cit.; *Mem. Geo. III* iv. 23).

5. 'We will, with all convenient speed, take into our most serious consideration, the causes of the discontents which prevail in so many parts of your Majesty's dominions, and particularly the late proceedings of the House of Commons touching the incapacity of John Wilkes, Esquire, expelled by that House, to be elected a member' (*Journals of the House of Lords* xxxii. 395). Initially, the 'King's speech had been drawn in a manner to commend the conduct of the House of Commons on the Middlesex election, and the Address of the Commons, to take notice of this approbation and to outrun it. Mr Conway prevailed to have both omitted. The speech . . . was silent on the petitions' (HW's MS *Journal* . . . [*1770*], loc. cit.).

6. Lord Camden (HW).