

to us both as to sound him on his thoughts of marriage, and whether rank, beauty, or fortune, is his object. I have a person¹ in my eye who has both the former, and who has had the best education, and has the most charming character, with uncommon sense and prudence. Fortune he will not want when the General² dies: but his consent must be fully granted—and therefore before I attempt any overture, I wish to know my nephew's mind, and then I would sound the General. You will see the extreme delicacy of all this, and I leave it totally to your discretion.

With regard to your own affair, I like your idea about the want of knighthood in the person who has applied to be your proxy; but for that very reason, I would be silent on it, till the time is fixed, that he may not acquire it in the interim; and therefore I will not deliver your message to the Earl³ till then. For Sir W. B. I should not think he would accept it; but he would be very proper. I would advise you to write to Mr Crofts to know what answer your nephew has given, or whether any.

I have received Mr Patch's pictures⁴ and like them very well, but I think they are a little hard. I speak plainly, that he may correct. Thank you much for them; I should like to pay for them, if I thought you would allow me. The engravings⁵ from Fra Bartolomeo disappoint me: I see none of the great ideas I thought I remembered in him; at least he is far below the amazing Masaccio. They are well engraved, except wanting a little more strength. The iris roots are still performing quarantine, but there is no haste.

News we have none, except from Ireland, where the Opposition gain frequent victories by the absurdity of Lord Townshend.⁶

1. Not identified. Gen. Cholmondeley disapproved of the match, and HW did not pursue the project (*post* 13 May 1772).

2. General James Cholmondeley, great-uncle of Lord Cholmondeley (HW). When he died in 1775, he left to Lord Cholmondeley 'between two and three thousand pounds a year in Cheshire, thirty thousand pounds in money, and his house in town' (Lady Mary Coke's 'MS Journals' 17 Oct. 1775). His widow was apparently not mentioned in the will; his mistress was (*ibid.*; Hist. MSS Comm. 15th Report, App. pt vi, *Carlisle MSS*, 1897, p. 295).

3. Lord Rochford had recommended a person [Allen] to Sir H. Mann for his proxy (HW).

4. The two paintings of Florence.

5. From San Marco. See *ante* 20 Jan. 1771, 22 Feb. 1771 *bis*.

6. The Lord Lieutenant (HW). 'Lord Townshend's conduct was . . . insolent and preposterous. He set the whole nation at defiance; shut himself up with a low woman and her friends, and at his own table publicly ridiculed all parties, declaring, he knew he could, and declaring he would buy a majority. . . . A list of pensions to the amount of £25,000 a year was sent by him to London. . . . The Opposition . . . were men of parts superior to those employed by the Lord Lieutenant' (*Mem. Geo. III* iv. 231).