

Yesterday I dined at La Borde's,<sup>10</sup> the great banker of the Court. Lord! Madam, how little and poor all your houses in London will look after his! In the first place, you must have a garden half as long as the Mall, and then you must have fourteen windows, each as long as t'other half, looking into it; and each window must consist of only eight panes of looking-glass.<sup>11</sup> You must have a first and second antechamber, and they must have nothing in them, but dirty servants. Next must be the grand cabinet, hung with red damask in gold frames, and covered with eight large and very bad pictures,<sup>12</sup> that cost four thousand pounds—I can't afford them you a farthing cheaper. Under these, to give an air of lightness, must be hung bas-reliefs in marble—then there must be immense *armoires* of tortoise-shell and *or moulu*, inlaid with medals—and then you may go into the *petit cabinet*, and then into the great *salle*, and the gallery, and the billiard-room, and the eating-room; and all these must be hung with crystal lustres and looking-glass from top to bottom; and then you must stuff them fuller than they will hold, with granite tables, and porphyry urns, and bronzes, and statues, and vases, and the Lord, or the Devil knows what—but for fear you should ruin yourself, or the nation, the Duchesse de Grammont<sup>13</sup> must give you this, and Madame de Marsan<sup>14</sup> that; and if you have anybody that has any taste to advise you, your eating-room must be hung with huge hunting-pieces, in frames of all coloured golds, and at top of one of them, you may place a setting-dog, who having sprung a wooden partridge, it may be flying a yard off against the wainscot. To warm and light this palace, it must cost you eight and twenty thousand livres<sup>15</sup> a year in wood and candles—if you cannot afford that, you must stay till my Lord Clive returns with the rest of the Indies. The mistress<sup>16</sup> of this Arabian Night's entertainment is very pretty,

10. Jean-Joseph (1724–94), Marquis de la Borde; financier. HW gives a more flattering account of the house in 'Paris Journals' for 4 Dec. 1765 (DU DEFFAND v. 280).

11. I.e., plate glass (OED *sub* looking-glass 2).

12. By François Le Moine (1688–1737), according to 'Paris Journals,' where HW mentions only 'four large tawdry' pictures and identifies the 'second antechamber' with what he here calls the 'grand cabinet.'

13. Béatrix de Choiseul-Stainville (1730–94), m. (1759) Antoine-Antonin, Duc de Gramont.

14. Marie-Louise-Geneviève de Rohan-Soubise (1720–1803), m. (1736) Gaston-Jean-Baptiste-Charles de Lorraine, Comte de Marsan.

15. I.e., over £900 sterling.

16. Rosalie-Claire de Nettine, who married La Borde in 1760; daughter of a banker at Brussels representing the Austrian court (La Chenaye-Desbois xi. 225; 'Paris Journals,' DU DEFFAND v. 280).