

Early in the evening I had been, according to your Ladyship's leave, to wait on Lady Ravensworth.¹⁷ Her cough is very frequent, but it seems entirely from her throat, and not in the least from her breast.

After treating your Ladyship with some of the dramatis personas of modern story, I beg leave to enclose¹⁸ a Venus of the present hour in her *puris non naturalibus*. The drawing¹⁹ was made by a young lady at Bath²⁰ and was given to me by my sister. It diverted me so much that I gave it to Kirgate with leave to have it engraved for his own benefit, and I should think he would sell hundreds of them.²¹

Miss Hannah More, I see, has advertised her *Bas Bleus*,²² which I think you will like²³—I don't know what her *Florio* is. Mrs Frail Piozzi's first volume of *Johnsoniana*²⁴ is in the press and will be published in February²⁵—There is published another kind of *Ana*

by no means pretty. Mr Walpole remembered her walking to Mr Bethell's in Arlington Street, after Pope's death, with her petticoats tucked up like a sempstress' (James Prior, *Life of Edmond Malone*, 1860, p. 437).

17. At her house in St James's Square.

18. 'Not enclosed in the MSS' (Vernon Smith's note, ii. 255).

19. See illustration (from HW's Satiric Prints, now in the New York Public Library). The line drawing of 'A Modern Venus' clothed is by Lady Ossory; see *post* 10 Feb. 1786.

20. 'By Miss Hoare of Bath,' as HW has noted on his copy of the print (see illustration). She was daughter of William Hoare, R.A., of Bath (known as Hoare of Bath). She exhibited at the Society of Artists, 1761, and the Free Society 1761-4 (Algernon Graves, *The Society of Artists . . . The Free Society of Artists*, 1907, p. 118; Thieme-Becker, *sub* Hoare, William; Joseph Farington, *The Farington Diary*, ed. James Greig, 1923-[1928], v. 63).

21. Among HW's Satiric Prints in the New York Public Library is a copy of the print, with the same caption and quotation as appear on the drawing, except that 1785 is changed to 1786. HW's copy gives no name of designer, engraver, or printseller, but that in the British Museum has a notation 'in a contemporary hand,' 'Published as the Act Directs by E. Yardley,

New Inn Passage, Clare Market' (BM, *Satiric Prints* vi. 989-90, No. 8257, where the similarity of this print to No. 7100 in the same catalogue is pointed out).

22. *Florio: a Tale, for Fine Gentlemen and Fine Ladies: and, The Bas Bleu; or, Conversation: Two Poems*, advertised 'In a few days will be published' in the *Morning Herald* 25 Jan. and as published 'This day' *ibid.* 10 Feb. 1786. *Florio* was dedicated to HW, *The Bas Bleu* addressed to Mrs Vesey. HW had two copies, one now in the Harvard Library, with notes by him, and another sold London 1938 (Hazen, *Cat. of HW's Lib.* 3222:20). For Hannah More's dedicatory letter, 27 Jan., and HW's reply 9 Feb. 1786, see MORE 239-42. In *The Bas Bleu*, ll. 52-3:

'For polish'd WALPOLE shew'd the way,
How wits may be both learn'd and gay.'

23. As Hannah More pointed out in the Advertisement to *The Bas Bleu* (p. 66), the poem had circulated in manuscript: 'But copies having been multiplied . . . she has been advised to publish it, lest it should steal into the world in a state of still greater imperfection.' Fanny Burney heard it read 'again' in Nov. 1783 (Burney, *Diary* ii. 229).

24. *Anecdotes of the Late Samuel Johnson . . .*

25. It was not published until 25 March (HW to Mann 28 March 1786; James L. Clifford, *Hester Lynch Piozzi*, Oxford,