

I enclose the list¹⁷ your Ladyship desired; you will see that the plurality of *Worlds* are Moore's,¹⁸ and of some I do not know the authors.^{18a} There is a late edition¹⁹ with these names to them.

My Duchess²⁰ was to set out this morning.²¹ I saw her for the last time the day before yesterday at Lady Kildare's; never was a journey less a party of pleasure.²² She was so melancholy that all Miss Pelham's oddness and my spirits could scarce make her smile—I don't think *the Uncle*²³ is what she is most sorry to leave. Towards the end of the night, and that was three in the morning, I did divert her a little. I slipped Pam into her lap, and then taxed her with having it there. She was quite confounded, but taking it up, saw he had a telescope in his hand, which I had drawn, and that the card which was split, and just waxed together, contained these lines:

Ye simple astronomers, lay by your glasses;
The transit of Venus²⁴ has proved you all asses:
Your telescopes signify nothing to scan it;
'Tis not meant in the clouds, 'tis not meant of a planet:
The Seer, who foretold it, mistook it, or deceives us,
For Venus's transit is when Grafton leaves us.²⁵

I don't send your Ladyship these verses as good, but to show you that all gallantry does not centre at The Hague.

I wish I could tell you that Stanley²⁶ and Bussy,²⁷ by crossing over

17. Missing.

18. Edward Moore (1712–57), dramatist; editor of the *World*, of which he wrote sixty-one of the 209 numbers. HW is echoing the title of Fontenelle's *Entretiens sur la pluralité des mondes*.

18a. In his copy of the collected edition of the *World*, 1755–7, in 6 vols 12mo (now in the Morgan Library) HW has identified the authors and made other notes; see Hazen, *Cat. of HW's Lib.*, No. 2501.

19. A third collected edition of the *World* was published in 1761.

20. Of Grafton.

21. She did so (*Daily Adv.* 15 June).

22. The Graftons were ostensibly going abroad for her health, but the real reason lay in their growing incompatibility; see MANN v. 506; MONTAGU i. 363.

23. Unexplained. Mary Berry omits this sentence.

24. Which had taken place 6 June.

25. HW transcribed one version of this epigram in his MS 'Book of Materials,' 1759, p. 106 (printed OSSORY i. 1). Another version appears in a collection of 'Fugitive Pieces, or, a Collection of Oddities' (Osborn Collection, Yale University Library MS C. 378), apparently collected by John Baynes, dated 1786:

'Philosophers, throw aside your tubes, and your glasses,

The transit of Venus will prove we're all asses.

The sage who foretold it, mistook, or deceives us,

The transit of Venus is when Grafton leaves us.'

26. Hans Stanley, the British plenipotentiary in the peace negotiations with France; see Namier and Brooke iii. 468–9.

27. François de Bussy (1699 – ?1780), French plenipotentiary in the peace negotiations (*Dictionnaire de biographie française*, 1933–, vii. 722–3).