

means they arrived like a funeral, nothing being discernible but the plumes of the Knights of the Bath, which seemed the hearse.²⁰ Lady Kildare, the Duchess of Richmond, and Lady Pembroke, were the capital beauties.²¹ Lady Harrington, the finest figure at a distance;²² old Westmorland, the most majestic.²³ Lady Hertford could not walk, and indeed I think is in a way to give us great anxiety.²⁴ She is going to Ragley to ride. Lord Beauchamp was one of the King's train-bearers. Of all the incidents of the day, the most diverting was, what happened to the Queen. She had a retiring-chamber, with *all* conveniencies, prepared behind the altar. She went thither—in the *most convenient*, what found she but—the Duke of Newcastle!²⁵ Lady Hardwicke died three days before the ceremony,²⁶ which kept away the whole House of Yorke. Some of the peeresses were dressed overnight, slept in armchairs, and were waked if they tumbled their heads. Your sister Harris's maid, Lady Peterborough,²⁷ was a comely figure. My Lady Cowper refused, but was forced to walk with Lady Macclesfield.²⁸ Lady Falmouth was not there; on which George Selwyn said, that those peeresses who were most used to *walk*, did not.²⁹ I carried

tered [the Hall], fire was given to all the lustres at once by trains of prepared flax, that reached from one to the other. To me it seemed an interval of not half a minute, before the whole was in a blaze of splendour' (ibid. ii. 756). GM mentions that on the Queen's entry '3000 wax lights were all lighted in less than five minutes' (1761, xxxi. 428).

20. The Knights of the Bath walked early in the procession, before all the peers (ibid. xxxi. 418).

21. HW also praises them to Lady Ailesbury (*post* 27 Sept.) and to Montagu (MONTAGU i. 387); Gray includes them, together with Ladies Spencer, Harrington, and Strafford, as 'the noblest and most graceful figures among the Ladies' (Gray, op. cit. ii. 754).

22. As HW also told Lady Ailesbury and Montagu, loc. cit.

23. She had impressed HW at the Royal Wedding (*ante* 9 Sept.) as well; he also praised her appearance at the Coronation to Lady Ailesbury, Montagu and Mann (MANN v. 535).

24. See *ante* 15 Aug. 1761.

25. 'When the Queen retired while she was in the Abbey, to a sort of closet fur-

nished with necessary conveniences, one of the ladies opening the door to see all was right, found the Duke of Newcastle perked up and in the very act upon the anointed velvet close-stool. Do not think I joke, it is literally true' (Gray to Brown 24 Sept., Gray, op. cit. ii. 757). HW also repeats the anecdote to Mann 28 Sept. (MANN loc. cit.).

26. On 19 Sept.; see *Hardwicke Corr.* ii. 581.

27. Robiniana Browne (d. 1794), m. (1755) Charles Mordaunt, 4th E. of Peterborough. In calling her Mrs Harris's 'maid,' HW perhaps means 'bridesmaid.'

28. Dorothy Nesbitt (d. 1779), m. (1757, as his second wife) George Parker, 2d E. of Macclesfield. HW repeats this anecdote to Lady Ailesbury *post* 27 Sept. According to HW, Lady Macclesfield had been her husband's 'mistress, or at least other people's' and 'a common woman' (MANN vi. 211 and n. 13; MORE 10, n. 7). Lady Cowper was born a Carteret and apparently combined excessive family pride with prudery; see MONTAGU i. 301 and n. 6.

29. Lady Falmouth, whose origins are obscure, was notorious enough to be