

my Lady Townshend, Lady Hertford, Lady Anne Connolly, my Lady Hervey, and Mrs Clive, to my deputy's<sup>30</sup> house at the gate of Westminster Hall.<sup>31</sup> My Lady Townshend said she should be very glad to see a coronation, as she never had seen one. 'Why,' said I, 'Madam, you walked at the last?'<sup>32</sup> 'Yes, child,' said she, 'but I saw nothing of it: I only looked to see who looked at me.' The Duchess of Queensberry walked: her affectation that day was to do nothing preposterous. The Queen has been at the opera,<sup>33</sup> and says she will go once a week. This is a fresh disaster to our box, where we have lived so harmoniously for three years. We can get no alternative but that over Miss Chudleigh's; and Lord Strafford and Lady Mary Coke will not subscribe, unless we can. The Duke of Devonshire and I are negotiating with all our art to keep our party together. The crowds at the opera and play when the King and Queen go, are a little greater than what I remember.<sup>34</sup> The late Royalties went to the Haymarket, when it was the fashion to frequent the other opera in Lincoln's Inn Fields.<sup>35</sup> Lord Chesterfield one night came into the latter, and was asked, If he had been at the other house? 'Yes,' said he, 'but there was nobody but the King and Queen; and as I thought they might be talking business, I came away.'

Thank you for your journals: the best route you can send me would be of your journey homewards. Adieu!

Yours most sincerely,

HOR. WALPOLE

featured in a 'tête-à-tête' portrait in the *Town and Country Magazine* a few years later (GEC).

30. Grosvenor Bedford (d. 1771), HW's deputy as usher of the Exchequer (GM 1771, xli. 523).

31. According to Bedford's note to HW's letter to him, 23 Sept., the party also included John Chute, Mr Raftor, a 'Master' Townshend, and 'Miss Hotham and her maid.'

32. The coronation of George II in 1727. Although her husband did not succeed his father until 1738, he had been summoned to the House of Lords in his father's barony in 1723, which would have entitled his wife to walk with the peeresses in the Coronation procession.

33. On 19 Sept., to see *Le speranze della*

*terra* and *Le promesse del ciels*, 'an entirely new serenata writ in order to celebrate, as far as lies in Sga Mattei's power, the late Royal Nuptials, and approaching Coronation' (*London Stage* Pt IV, ii. 889; GM 1761, xxxi. 428).

34. 'It is almost inconceivable the crowds of people that waited in the streets, quite from St James's to the playhouse, to see their Majesties [ca 14 Sept.]. . . . The house was full almost as soon as the doors were open, so that out of the vast multitude present, not a fiftieth part got in, to the infinite disappointment and fatigue of many thousands' (ibid. xxxi. 417-18).

35. In 1734, George II and Queen Caroline were strong supporters of Handel, at that time manager of the opera in