

short, the Czar is dethroned; some give the honour to his wife,² others, who add the little circumstance of his being murdered too, ascribe the revolution to the Archbishop of Novogorod,³ who like other priests, thinks assassination⁴ a less affront to heaven than three Lutheran churches.⁵ I hope the latter is the truth, because in the honeymoonhood of Lady Cecilia's⁶ tenderness, I don't know but she might miscarry at the thought of a wife preferring a crown, and scandal⁷ says a regiment of grenadiers,⁸ to her husband.

2. Catherine II (1729-96) the Great, m. (1745) the future Peter III of Russia; Empress of Russia 1762-96. See *ante* 29 July 1762, n. 5.

3. Daniil Andreievich Sechenov (1709-67), known in religion as Dmitrii; Abp of Novgorod 1757; Metropolitan of Novgorod and Velikie Luki, 8 Oct. 1762. He officiated at Catherine II's coronation (MANN vi. 64, n. 8).

4. According to Mercy-Argenteau (the Austrian ambassador at St Petersburg), the Archbishop, when told by the Czar that saints' pictures and images, except those of Christ and the Virgin, should be banned by the Greek Church, had warned that, if these reforms were enforced, Peter ran the danger that one night he might be murdered by the populace (to Kaunitz, 28 May OS, *Sbornik imperatorskago russkago istoricheskago obshchestva*, 1876, xviii. 372; *Daily Adv.* 12 July, *sub* 'Petersbourg . . . 8th . . . June'). Perhaps this warning, interpreted as a veiled threat, is the ultimate source of the rumour that the Archbishop had had the Czar assassinated (at the time of the present letter, the fate of the Czar was still unknown in England).

5. 'Petersbourg, June 18. The Archbishop of Novgorod . . . strongly opposed the construction of a Lutheran church, which the Emperor had resolved to build in his palace, for the convenience of his subjects of Holstein' (*London Chronicle* 20-22 July, xii. 77); the Archbishop 'was banished, but recalled eight days after' (*ibid.*). In her manifesto of 28 June OS, Catherine proclaimed that the first motive for the revolution was that 'the foundations of our orthodox Greek religion have been shaken, and its traditions exposed to total ruin; so that there was absolutely ground to fear that the Faith . . . would

be entirely changed, and a foreign religion introduced' (printed *London Chronicle* 31 July-3 Aug., xii. 120, *sub* 3 Aug.). For further accounts of Peter's establishment of a Lutheran chapel at Oranienbaum, and of the Archbishop's opposition to it, see the dispatches from Mercy-Argenteau to Kaunitz, 18 June OS, and from Béranger to Choiseul, 2 July OS, *Sbornik*, 1876, xviii. 391, 1912, cxl. 1.

6. Lady Henrietta Cecilia West, who had married Col. (later Gen.) James ('Irish') Johnston the 4th of May (GM 1817, lxxxvii pt i. 281).

7. Catherine was already notorious for her amours; see P. W. Sergeant, *The Courtships of Catherine the Great*, 1905, and A. Polovtsoff, *Les Favoris de Catherine la Grande*, 1939.

8. The Preobazhenskii Guards, later the Imperial Body Guard. HW wrote to Mann (31 July, in the postscript dated 4 Aug.) that he had heard 'from very good authority' that Catherine 'threw herself upon the gallantry of the Preobazinsky (or Praetorian) guards, who in Russia are the most polite and compassionate cavaliers in the world' (MANN vi. 57-8). HW had written earlier (to Mann 6 Aug. 1744 OS, *ibid.* ii. 495) that the Empress Elizabeth likewise had 'grappled with all her own grenadiers,' whom she had led personally the night of the *coup d'état* of 6 Dec. 1741 OS (*ibid.*, n. 8). In the present *coup*, according to Robert Keith, the British ambassador at St Petersburg, Catherine actually went first to 'the Ismaelowsky Guards, which she found under arms ready to receive her,' then 'to the Simonowsky Regiment,' and finally 'to that of Preobasinsky, and was by the whole conducted to the palace' (Keith's dispatch of 1 July OS to Grenville, *Sbornik*, 1873, xii. 4).