

TO CONWAY, Thursday 9 September 1762

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Strawberry Hill, Sept. 9, 1762.

*Nondum laurus erat, longoque decentia crine
Tempora cingebat de qualibet arbore Phœbus.*¹

THIS is a hint to you, that as Phœbus, who was certainly your superior, could take up with a chestnut garland, or any crown he found, you must have the humility to be content without laurels, when none are to be had: you have hunted far and near for them, and taken true pains to the last in that old nursery-garden Germany, and by the way have made me shudder with your last journal:² but you must be easy with *qualibet*³ other *arbore*; you must come home to your own plantations. The Duke of Bedford is gone in a fury to make peace,⁴ for he cannot be even pacific with temper; and by this time I suppose the Duke de Nivernois⁵ is unpacking his portion of olive *dans la rue de Suffolk Street*.⁶ I say, I suppose—for I do not, like my friends at Arthur's, whip into my post-chaise to see every novelty. My two sovereigns, the Duchess of Grafton and Lady Mary Coke, are arrived,⁷ and yet I have seen neither Polly nor Lucy.⁸ The

1. 'Not yet was the laurel, and his temples, comely with long locks, Phœbus was apt to wreath with a garland from any tree' (Ovid, *Metamorphoses*, i. 450-1).

2. Missing.

3. 'Any.'

4. As minister plenipotentiary and ambassador extraordinary to Paris, where he arrived 12 Sept.; see MANN vi. 69, n. 2. 'On Tuesday [7 Sept.] sailed from Dover . . . the Duke of Bedford, for Calais' (*London Chronicle* 7-9 Sept., xii. 246).

5. Louis-Jules-Barbon Mancini-Mazarini (1716-98), Duc de Nivernois; French ambassador to Rome 1749-52, to England 1762-3, minister without portfolio 1787-9; friend and correspondent of HW (MANN iv. 286, n. 11).

6. Nivernais reached London 12 Sept. (*London Chronicle* 11-14 Sept., xii. 262; see also MANN vi. 70, n. 3). HW, in a MS note to his copy of Pennant's *Of London*, 1790 (Hazen, *Cat. of HW's Lib.*, No. 3928), says that Suffolk Street 'used to be known for the residence of foreigners,

who were but ill lodged here: of late years hotels have been introduced where they are better accommodated and in better streets' (quoted in H. B. Wheatley and Peter Cunningham, *London Past and Present*, 1891, iii. 331). Actually, Nivernais settled in Albemarle Street (*Court and City Register*, 1763, p. 113; Edward Gibbon's *Journal*, ed. D. M. Low, 1929, p. 200).

7. 'On Wednesday night [1 Sept.] the Duke and Duchess of Grafton arrived at their house in New Bond Street from Harwich' (*Daily Adv.* 3 Sept.); 'On Sunday night [5 Sept.] Lady Mary Coke . . . arrived at her house in Berkeley Square from France' (ibid. 7 Sept.). The Duke and Duchess had been abroad since June, 1761 (see *ante* 13 June 1761; *Daily Adv.* 15 June 1761), Lady Mary since June of the present year (see *London Chronicle* 15-17 June, xi. 569).

8. Polly Peachum and Lucy Lockit, the two innamoratas of Macheath in Gay's *The Beggar's Opera*.