

My Lady Townshend was arrested two days ago in the street<sup>34</sup> at the suit of a house-painter,<sup>35</sup> who, having brought her a bill double of the estimate he had given in, she would not pay it. As this is a breach of privilege, I should think the man would hear of it.<sup>36</sup>

There is no day yet fixed for our intended motion on the dismissal of officers;<sup>37</sup> but, I believe, Lord John Cavendish and Fitzroy<sup>38</sup> will be the movers and seconders. Charles Townshend, we conclude, will be very ill that day; if one could pity the poor toad, one should: there is jealousy of your brother,—fear of your brother,—fear of Mr Pitt,—influence of his own brother,—connections entered into both with Lord Bute and Mr Grenville, and a trimming plan concerted with Lord George Sackville and Charles Yorke, all tearing him or impelling him a thousand ways, with the addition of his own vanity and irresolution, and the contempt of everybody else. I dined with him yesterday at Mr Mackinsy's,<sup>39</sup> where his whole discourse was in ridicule of George Grenville.

The enclosed novel<sup>40</sup> is much in vogue; the author is not known,<sup>41</sup> but if you should not happen to like it, I could give you a reason why you need not say so. There is nothing else new, but a play called *The Platonic Wife*,<sup>42</sup> written by an Irish Mrs Griffiths,<sup>43</sup> which in charity to her was suffered to run three nights.

34. In 'Vigoe Lane, opposite the Duke of Queensberry's house' (testimony of John Osborne, Lady Townshend's coachman, *Journals of the House of Lords* xxxi. 25).

35. See next note.

36. On 5 Feb., in the House of Lords, complaint was made by Lord Winchelsea on behalf of Lady Townshend, 'That the Lady . . . Townshend was, on Friday the 25th day of January last, arrested upon a common writ of *capias*, taken out against her . . . by Edmund Coombe [or Combe] an attorney, at the suit of Henry Horth and Robert Winter painters, upon the oath of the said Henry Horth, directed to Peter King bailiff . . . in breach of the privilege of peerage' (ibid. xxxi. 25; J. H. Jesse, *George Selwyn and his Contemporaries*, 1882, i. 357-8, 373). As a result of this complaint, it was ordered that Horth, Coombe, and King be taken into custody (*Journals of the House of Lords* xxxi. 26). After pleading that they had acted through ignorance, on 11 Feb.

the three were reprimanded and discharged, Horth and Coombe being ordered to pay their respective fees and also the fees of King (ibid. xxxi. 30, 34-5).

37. See *post* 12 Feb., 18 April 1765.

38. Charles Fitzroy, later Bn Southampton.

39. The Hon. James Stuart Mackenzie, Lord Bute's brother (*ante* 14 Aug. 1759).

40. *The Castle of Otranto*, published 24 Dec. (500 copies). HW had started writing it the beginning of June and finished it 6 Aug. ('Short Notes,' GRAY i. 41; COLE i. 88).

41. HW did not acknowledge his authorship until the book had succeeded. See *post* 26 March 1765.

42. Opened 24 Jan. at Drury Lane; closed 31 Jan. after six performances (*London Stage* Pt IV, ii. 1095-6).

43. Elizabeth Griffith (ca 1720-93), m. (1751) Richard Griffith (*MASON* i. 447, n. 21).