

TO HERTFORD, Monday 10 March 1766

Sent 13 March 'by Mr Jennings'; received 2 April (DU DEFFAND v. 380; *post* 2 April 1766). Printed from the MS, now wsl. First printed in Toynbee, *Supp.* i. 126–9. The MS was sold Sotheby 2 Dec. 1910 (Autograph Letters and Historical Documents Sale), Lot 101 (with ten other HW letters), to B. F. Stevens. It belonged ca 1918 to Messrs Dodd and Livingston, N.Y.C. (Toynbee *Supp.* i. 126, n.), and was bought ca 1922 by Alfred C. Meyer of Chicago. It was sold AAAA 13 Jan. 1938 to Retz and Storm, N.Y.C.; resold April 1940 to Mrs Frank F. Dodge, Stonington, Conn., who bequeathed it to wsl 1964.

Paris, March 10th 1766.

IF ever there was a beast, and a brute and an ungrateful monster, I am one; I am all these, and deserve as many names as a sentimental woman calls a lover that quits her. What can you think of me, when I literally *forgot* to thank you for your kindness to Mr Fitzgerald? I don't haggle about it, nor pretend to excuse myself. It rushed into my head last night, and I have blushed ever since. I might pretend that the marriages of your daughters, and the Parliament of England,² and my dissipation here, put it out of my head—perhaps they did; but would that be an excuse? No, there is none for ingratitude; and I think, to punish me you should make *me* an ensign, instead of Mr Fitzgerald; I should not forget it again in haste. If *he* forgets your goodness, I shall not wonder: he receives benefit by it—but I that only received an obligation! There is no precedent for *such* ingratitude. Well, as most people thank and forget, I hope that I who have not thanked, shall remember.

The weather is at last fine, and just now I am confined again. It is called an inflammation in my eyes,³ but I say of the gout; as Lady Dorchester⁴ said to Ratcliffe,⁵ 'Doctor, whatever illness I have, always

1. Apparently in his missing letter *ante* ca 24 Feb. 1766 answering Hertford's letter *ante* 4 Feb. 1766. HW mentions his distress at this omission also to Lady Hervey (Fitzgerald's grandmother) 10 March 1766; see MORE 113.

2. Parliament was debating the repeal of the Stamp Act and related matters; the repeal bill had passed the Commons 4 March, was passed by the Lords 17 March, and enacted 18 March as 6 Geo. III c. 11 (*Journals of the House of Commons* xxx.

627, 667; *Journals of the House of Lords* xxxi. 313–14; Owen Ruffhead, *Statutes at Large*, 1763–1800, x. 152).

3. Which he had contracted 7 March; he was visiting again the 11th ('Paris Journals,' DU DEFFAND v. 306–7).

4. Catherine Sedley (1657–1717), mistress of James II, who made her Cts of Dorchester in 1686; m. (1696) Sir David Colyear, 2d Bt, cr. (1699) Bn Portmore and (1703) E. of Portmore.

5. John Radcliffe (1650–1714), physician.