

Post, Lady Greenwich, two hours ago, and she did not know a paragraph.

I forgot to mention to you M. de Maurepas. He was by far the ablest and most agreeable man I knew at Paris:³³ and if you stay, I think I could take the liberty of giving you a letter to him; though, as he is now so great a man,³⁴ and I remain so little an one, I don't know whether it would be quite so proper—though he was exceedingly good to me, and pressed me often to make him a visit in the country.—But Lord Stormont can certainly carry you to him—a better passport.³⁵

There was one of my letters³⁶ on which I wish to hear from you. There are always English coming from Paris, who would bring such a parcel; at least you might send me one volume at a time, and the rest afterwards: but I should not care to have them ventured by the common conveyance. Madame du Deffand is negotiating for an enamel picture for me;³⁷ but if she obtains it, I had rather wait for it till you come.³⁸ The books I mean, are those I told you Lady A. and Mrs D. would give you a particular account of, for they know my mind exactly. Don't reproach me with not meeting you at Paris. Recollect what I suffered this time two years; and if you can have any notion of fear, imagine my dread of torture for five months and a half! When all the quiet of Strawberry did but just carry me through it, could I support it in the noise of a French hotel! and, what would be still worse, exposed to receive all visits? for the French, you know, are never more in public than in the act of death. I am like animals, and love to hide myself *when I am dying*. Thank God, I am now two days beyond the crisis when I expected my dreadful periodic visitant, and begin to grow very sanguine

attacked by a stroke of palsy, has lost the use of one side, and lies most dangerously ill at his house in Clifford Street' (Fortescue, *op. cit.* iii. 145). However, he survived until 1776.

33. See *ante* 5 Dec. 1765.

34. As Louis XVI's chief adviser; see *ante* 28 Sept. 1774, n. 4.

35. Stormont was British ambassador at Paris 1772–8 (D. B. Horn, *British Diplomatic Representatives 1689–1789*, 1932, pp. 24–5).

36. That of 3 Oct.; see *post* 29 Oct.

37. A miniature portrait of Mme

d'Olonne by Petitot which HW first saw in 1765; its owner, the collector Pierre-Jean Mariette, had died 10 Sept., and Mme du Deffand was negotiating with his heirs to purchase it for HW (DU DEFFAND iv. 95, n. 6, 96–8, 102, v. 269).

38. Mme du Deffand did not obtain it until Dec. 1775, when she purchased it for 3200 livres; it was brought over to HW by Horace Saint Paul the following March (*ibid.* iv. 245, 280). See 'Des. of SH,' *Works* ii. 475; it was sold SH xiv. 53 for £141 15s. to P. and D. Colnaghi for Robert Holford.