

ous indeed, not so much from the secrets it blabs, which are rather characteristic than novel, but from the wonderful folly of the author, who was so fond of talking of himself, that he tells all he knew of himself, though scarce an event that does not betray his profligacy; and (which is still more surprising that he should disclose) almost everyone exposes the contempt in which he was held, and his consequential disappointments and disgraces!—Was ever any man the better for another's experience?—What a lesson is here against versatility!<sup>4</sup>

I, who have lived through all the scenes unfolded, am entertained—but I should think that to younger readers half the book must be unintelligible. He explains nothing but the circumstances of his own situation; and though he touches on many important periods, he leaves them undeveloped, and often undetermined. It is diverting to hear him rail at Lord Halifax<sup>5</sup> and others, for the very kind of double-dealing which he relates coolly of himself in the next page.<sup>6</sup> Had he gone backwards, he might have given half a dozen volumes of his own life with similar anecdotes and variations.<sup>7</sup>

I am most surprised, that when self-love is the whole groundwork of the performance, there should be little or no attempt at shining as an author, though he was one. As he had so much wit too, I am amazed that not a feature of it appears. The discussion in the Appendix, on the late Prince's question for increase of allowance,<sup>8</sup> is the only part in which there is sense or honesty.

Salisbury and London, 1784; HW's copies are Hazen, *Cat. of HW's Lib.*, Nos 429, 2837. In 'Mem. 1783–91,' HW notes 'Lord Melcombe's diary published' sub 18 May 1784.

4. HW makes similar comments to Mann 3 June 1784 (MANN ix. 503).

5. In describing the negotiations for a new administration in March–April 1757 (*Diary*, pp. 392–8), Dodington comments, 'During this while, Lord Hallifax (upon whose friendship and concurrence I depended from repeated assurances, and to whom I had communicated all this transaction, and, till now, without authority), privately saw and negotiated with the Duke of Newcastle, and took measures with him to defeat it. What makes this the more surprising is, that always before, at that very time, and ever since, he has spoken of the Duke of Newcastle

to me and others, as a knave and a fool, in the strongest terms' (ibid. 393). He continues, 'I went to Lord Hallifax, who had written to Fox, that he would accept, if Robinson took the Seals—which he knew, at the same time, Robinson would not take' (ibid. 395). Dodington says that Halifax 'acted shamefully in the affair' and blames his 'duplicité' for the failure of the arrangement.

6. Ibid. 396, with regard to Fox's becoming paymaster of the Army and Dodington treasurer of the Navy.

7. See HW's note on Dodington, SELWYN 292, n. 24.

8. 'A Narrative . . . upon the resolution of his Royal Highness [Frederick Louis, Prince of Wales] to bring a demand into Parliament, for an augmentation of his allowance to £100,000 *per ann.* and for a jointure upon the Princess.'