

APPENDIX 10

WALPOLE'S UNSENT LETTER TO HERTFORD OF 2 OCTOBER 1774

See *ante* iii. 682. The night before he wrote the letter, HW had called on Hertford to urge him to seek a seat for Conway in Parliament in case the Duke of Grafton, who had sponsored him for Thetford, failed to bring him in again. HW's account of what followed is in *Last Journals* i. 390-1.

At eight that night Lord Hertford arrived, and an hour after I went to him, but was struck by his porter telling me his Lord was busy and could not possibly see me, but carried me up to Lady Hertford. Lady Ailesbury and another lady were playing at cribbage in her room. She said her Lord was writing to Coventry, which he should lose, and had Lady Powis's agent with him. I thought his brother's impending danger as important as a borough lost, or as Lady Powis's boroughs. My suspicions redoubled. After some time Lady Hertford said she would go and ask my Lord if he would see me. She returned, and said not a word. I carried her into another room, and said, 'Good God, Madam! what is my Lord afraid of that he will not see me? I have told your Ladyship I would say nothing that can be disagreeable to him till the answer comes from Euston.' She protested he was so busy writing, that on looking into his room he had scolded her, and that he would soon come upstairs. A little after, Colonel Keene came up, and she asked him if her Lord was still writing? he said Yes. This offended me still more, that Colonel Keene was admitted when I was not, though wanting to speak on his brother. Soon after their son Henry came and asked for more pens; his father had used all below. This seemed a shallow art to impose upon and delay me. I grew very much out of humour, and showed it on purpose, that I might force my way to my Lord. Twelve o'clock came, and my Lord sent word he had not time to sup. This struck even Lady Ailesbury, and by signs I made her understand my anger. After supper, at which I had not spoken a word, Lady Ailesbury called for her chair, and I asked for one. Lady Hertford saw my uneasiness and sent her son to ask my Lord if he would see me: I said dryly, 'Madam, I will not trouble my Lord; I have nothing to say'; and walked out of the room with Lady Ailesbury. On the stairs I trembled so with passion that I had like to have fallen from the top