

I hope by this time My Dear Wife  
Hamilton that your Mind is a little more com-  
posed than it was when L<sup>d</sup> Darkey was so obliging  
as to write to me, <sup>when I answered her,</sup> I took the liberty <sup>to</sup> to enclose  
~~you~~ a short letter to you, only to express to you  
my Affection of the past & take in every thing  
which concerns you, which I flatter myself you  
can never doubt of.

We have been constant inhabitants of this  
place ever since the 13<sup>th</sup> of December excepting  
one day on which we went to Town to give  
a dinner to forty four English who are now at  
Naples, The Court (that is the little Court consisting  
of one Lady in waiting, seven or eight Gentlemen  
of the Bedchamber, the Grand Chambellan, the Grand  
Veneur, & the first Minister) are here, the rest only  
come occasionally the English are not pleas'd that  
we are so distant from Naples, tho' they have reason  
to be satisfied as they all come to dine with us  
every time they come to Caserta which is a  
great convenience to them as there is no Auberg  
which they can go to in the near time I<sup>th</sup> says  
his Court & keeps his health by the great

almost constant exercise he uses, for he seldom misses going out shooting with The King, when His Majesty thinks the sport will be good which is usually three or four times a week - they set out at break of day dine in the field, if he comes home just to drink tea when he returns again to the Palace where he plays at a game called Biribis with the King & Queen, they afterwards sup, & he is at home by a little after nine o'clock, this kind of footing is a curious one for the King of England - Minister to one of the Bourbon family, & what makes it still more particular is that the French of Spain Minister come but once a week in a formal way & usually come together as if to keep one another in countenance - all this must appear very strange to you My Dear Miss Hamilton - but I do believe this is the most extraordinary Court in Europe, so full of Spanish etiquette at times, then, no etiquette at all, the situation of the Royal family (which you must have heard of) at the time the poor little Duc de Berry was taken ill & died was no extraordinary as every thing else, I really believe he perished for want of proper assistance, two days after his Death the Queen sent for M<sup>r</sup> de M<sup>rs</sup> & one of us was with her near two hours during all which time she spoke of nothing but the little Prince in so feeling & affecting a manner, that thro' (as

you know) I was aware of the changeableness of her character, I yet could not refrain from tears & was tempted to think she had then received a blow she would never recover, especially as she was then very near lying in - in this situation Her Majesty remain for a week or ten days at the end of which she began to get up her spirits, & at the end of three weeks was as gay as ever & even laughing upon subjects which one would have imagined must have renewed her grief since this the Queen has lain in very happily, & is (I believe) intent upon nothing so much as getting the Reins of Government entirely in her own hands, in which she makes a rapid progress, for The King unused to any serious application, is glad when he is tired out with Memorials, & Affairs of State to take up his gun & leave the termination to the Queen who has sufficient Art to make him think, that ~~she~~ she ~~is~~ is only the instrument of fulfilling the plans he has himself laid - her lying in has not decreased her assiduity, & every affair of consequence has been referred to her thro' still in her bed, where she plays at Biribis every evening, & M<sup>r</sup> de M<sup>rs</sup> decided from going since her M<sup>r</sup> was brought to bed, but The King by the Queens desire, told him to come & play with them as usual, so he went there last night & is gone again this evening after shooting from five o'clock in the morning - you may imagine My Dear Miss Hamilton that I should not venture to say all this to you if My letter was to pass

Had the Neapolitan Post, I am in hopes of a good opportunity of sending ~~xxx~~ <sup>it</sup> in a few days. This enables me to write with that freedom which I should not otherwise dare use - as to telling you all the trifling events which happen here, they would be of not interest you, as you are not acquainted with the people concerned, but I must mention to you a piece of good fortune which has happened to L<sup>d</sup> Maynard who with her Lord is return'd to make another attempt to get onto company, a Prince Massimo a favourite of The King was taken with a violent putrid fever of given over by the Physicians. Dr W<sup>m</sup> mentioned James's powder to His Majesty & he desired him to give him some with the directions how to use it - Dr W<sup>m</sup> did so & The King gave it to the Lady in waiting to send it to Naples for Prince Massimo - The Lady in waiting either lost or forgot it but it was accidentally known in Naples that The King intended the Prince should take it upon which L<sup>d</sup> Maynard flew to Prince Massimo's Palace & notwithstanding repeated denials insisted upon admittance, tired with waiting they at length allowed him to come into the sick room where he found the Patient conscious, & senseless, & the Doctors assuring he had not more than three hours to live - he then propos'd the powder which they refus'd to give saying it would kill him sooner. L<sup>d</sup> Maynard then took it upon himself, gave the powder with success, & after a very few hours the Prince Massimo was out of danger - the Pignatellis (of whom he is one)

full of gratitude immediately went & visited L<sup>d</sup> Maynard & I am told they intend to ask the Queen to receive her at court as the best return for the obligation they are under to L<sup>d</sup> Maynard but it is very doubtful if Her Majesty who knows (tho' not from Dr W<sup>m</sup> or me) her former life will, or can receive her especially as she was so publickly seen with the D. of Dorset, let it be as it will, I am quite easy about it as it is not possible for me to be the channel made use of, & therefore neither Dr W<sup>m</sup> or myself have any thing to answer for. The Princess Belmonte sister in law to Count Pignatelli Minister in England wrote to me to ask my permission to take notice of L<sup>d</sup> Maynard who she said had paid great court to her (her letter is curious for as it not too long I would send it you) to this I answer'd that I beg'd she would follow her inclination, as no civility L<sup>d</sup> Maynard could ever give me the smallest displeasure, & I think it is very likely she will be well receiv'd by some of the Ladies here as I hear she has been clever enough to make them many presents a method which has great weight in this Court - In the mean time I am much satisfied with being at this distance from the Capital having time here for many occupations which are perpetually interrupted when I am at Naples, the greatest inconvenience I feel is that constant application sometimes hurts my eyes & forces me to lay down a book often at the most interesting passages which when one is alone is a real mortification - at these moments I cannot help sending a wish towards England, & thinking how happy we should be to be quietly & comfortably settled there, but I drive away the thought, as I do not see at present any likelihood of our meeting with such a piece of good fortune. - both Dr W<sup>m</sup> & I are happy in the idea of your situation. My Dr Miss Hamilton - your good sense teaches you to prize it & I see with pleasure (by your last letter) how full of love by

gratitude your heart is to the Queen for Her great  
goodness to you - What a difference between Our Queen &  
other Queens! - j'en suis témoin - if ever you have a good  
opportunity I desire you will say every thing that is  
dutifull & respectfull both from S<sup>r</sup> W. & me to Her  
Majesty, & you may do it with a good grace for we  
really feel it - I hope I shall hear from you very soon &  
let me know how all the young Princes & Princesses do,  
& particularly the beautiful little Prince Adolphus - tell  
me if he is as handsome as ever - S<sup>r</sup> W. joins with  
me in kind love of Son My D<sup>r</sup> Miss Hamilton  
y<sup>r</sup> very affectionate Aunt  
Hamilton

I hope you go to see L<sup>dy</sup> Stormont sometimes, I had  
a letter from her some days ago which pleased me  
much, as it seem'd to express great family happiness, &  
a perfect regard, friendship & esteem for L<sup>dy</sup> Stormont -