To Conway 21 May 1784

From Conway, ca Tuesday 18 May 1784

Missing; answered post 21 May 1784.

To Conway, Friday 21 May 1784

Printed from Works v. 228-9.

Strawberry Hill, May 21, 1784.

I am perfectly satisfied with your epitaph,¹ and would not have a syllable altered. It tells exactly what it means to say, and, that truth being an encomium, wants no addition or amplification. Nor do I love late language for modern facts, nor will European tongues perish since printing has been discovered. I should approve French least of all. It would be a kind of insult to the vanquished: and besides, the example of a hero should be held out to his countrymen rather than to their enemies. You must take care to have the word caused, in the last line but one, spelled rightly, and not caus'd.

I know nothing of the Parliament but what you saw in the papers.² I came hither yesterday, and am transported, like you, with the beauty of the country; ay, and with its perfumed air too. The lilac-tide scents even the insides of the rooms.

I desired Lady A. to carry you Lord Melcombe's Diary.³ It is curi-

¹. An epitaph for the monument, erected by the States of Jersey, to the memory of Major Pearson, killed in the attack of that island by the French, in January 1781 (HW). Francis Peirson (1756-81), ensign 36th Foot, 1772, Maj. 95th Foot, 1779, was buried 10 Jan. 1781 under the tower of St Helier's Church. The monument, placed in the chancel, is inscribed: 'To the memory of Major Francis Peirson, who, when this island was invaded by the French, fell bravely fighting at the head of British and island troops. He died in the flower of youth and in the moment of victory the 6th day of January 1781, aged 24. The States of the island in grateful testimony of their deliverance caused this monument to be erected at the public expense' (Société jersiaise. Bulletins, 1915-18, viii. 176; an account of his death and funeral is ibid. 1875-84, i. 318-23).

². The new Parliament, with a majority for Pitt, assembled 18 May; in the debate on the election of a Speaker for the House of Commons Fox questioned the legality of the conduct of Thomas Corbett, high bailiff of Westminster, in granting a scrutiny and leaving the two seats for Westminster vacant (London Chronicle 18-20 May, lv. 481-2; Daily Adv. 19, 20 May; Gazetteer and New Daily Advertiser 19, 20 May). For the further progress of the scrutiny see MANN ix. 502 and nn. 7, 8.

³. The Diary of the Late George Bubb Dodington . . . From March 8, 1748-9, to February 6, 1761, ed. H. P. Wyndham,