

Dear Madam

5
Hillsmead y^e 15 Jan^y

It is impossible to express to you how much I was mortified that I miss'd of the happiness of seeing you, when you call'd in Hillsmead. Yet kind intentions & actions, being of celestial origin, never can be destroy'd, or annihilated; I have been in some degree happier for your kind intention, I have continually hoped for a bright clear day, when the worst to be feared from the weather would be its taking one by y^e nose, & making it blue, but we have had a perpetual fog & malicious sullenness of sky. Why do you continue in the Country when the sky is ^{not} blue, & y^e fields and Trees are not green, which are y^e chief merits of y^e Country? Winter is the only Season of the year deficient in all the qualities which make an agreeable tête à tête. The foolish gaiety

Spring

Summer

the sublimity of the undclouded summer sun, & the
sober serenity of autumn, render moral retirement agree-
able, but surely in December & January the chill-chill
of society is infinitely preferable. I long to hear that you are
coming to settle in London, as you will make it agreeable
to your friends, it is ungrateful in you if you do not think
it will render it so to you. To say the truth, you have
all the virtues that make solitude tranquil, & all the
talents that make society pleasant & lively, so that you
may chuse, freely, but pray have a little compassion
for us, who, perhaps, have only those qualities which
put in a crowd.

I have been busy every morning in hastening the
labours at my new House, it will be fit for habitation
next month, so I wish (but wish in vain) to find some
Person to purchase this House. I wd sell it cheap, & it
is really a very good habitation the ground ^{only} £ 8
to you: about 70 years of unexpired lease, 2 coach houses,
stables for 8 or 9 Horses. Many people want a House,
I want money, till I can sell it I am obliged to

pay all done or doing at my new House out of
my yearly income, which obliges me to be a great
economist, Economy is an unpleasant unfashionable
thing, it is impossible to be at all at home while one
has to grin at it, if you know any of the Captains
who are towing in a great Dutch frigate pray propose
my House.

A certain Mrs Pipet, of Scotch extraction, whom I have
known many years, has a great ambition to be your
House keeper Lady Darnley whom she served in that
capacity will give her a very good character, she left
her ladyships service on account of the irregular home
of Lord Darnley, of whose life the morning & evening
do not make the day. Mrs Pipet is sensible & discreet
I shd imagine fit for the office of Housekeeper, she
will be fortunate if received into your family.

Being sorry for our Brethren in yr West Indies & angry
with our ^{the Dutch with} old allies I will say any thing about them
for the tones of grief & anger are unpleasant, if I could
indeed hit the accent of the Crocodile whose lamentation

about the heart, I wd adopt the plaintive note which
brought you from Stratham to London, & then I wd drop
of crocodile character entirely.
Pray present my most affectionate respects to Mr. Thrale
& to Dr Johnson, & all that express the tenderest good
wishes to Miss Thrale & all yr family, certainly not
forgetting my spiritual Daughter. Miss Gregory &
Montagu hope you will accept these most respectful
compl^{ts}. I spent Saturday even^g with Mr & Mrs Peppys
Miss Fanny Bowdler who is come to town for a
short time was of the party.

With the most sincere & most affectionate esteem

I am Dear Madam

Yours &c

E Montagu