

XV.—A COLLECTION OF DELAVAL PAPERS.

BY JOHN ROBINSON.

[Read on the 27th June, 1888.]

DR. CHARLTON in his interesting lecture on 'Society in Northumberland in the Seventeenth Century,' which he delivered about fourteen years ago, made mention of the thousands of letters, etc., belonging to the Delaval family which were preserved at Ford Castle. Among them were letters from nearly all the principal families of the North of England, as well as from the leading men of letters of the last century. Ever since the delivery of Dr. Charlton's lecture local historians have longed for an opportunity to inspect the collection at Ford. Yet during all those years there has been a vast pile of letters, despatches, and old records, lying in a roofless warehouse, not a dozen miles from where we are now assembled. Some few of these have been saved, but hundreds of valuable papers have been reduced to a decomposed mass of pulp through the winters' snows and summers' rains of more than fifty years, falling upon them, for the oldest inhabitant can only remember the roof being on the building; and it is only by a portion of the roof having fallen upon the old papers that some of those you now see before you have been preserved. Yet, decayed, stained, and almost unreadable, as most of the papers taken out of the 'old granary' are, their fate has been better than that of those which we are given to understand were in a fairly good state of preservation; for about twenty years ago, when the Hartley Bottle Works, or the Royal Northumbrian Bottle Works, were closed, and the plant sold, orders were given by one of the old managers that all the old ledgers, letters, and papers stored in the 'old granary' had to be taken into his garden close by, and burnt. The order was carried out, and for a whole week the fire was fed from the accumulated account books, letters, despatches, and royal signatures which had passed through the hands of the Delaval family for a period of at least six or seven centuries. The historical interest of these burnt papers can only be estimated by the value of those which have been saved, which include the blackened parchment, but fairly preserved, with the great seal of Henry VII. attached, a privy seal and letter of

James I., autographs of Queen Anne, the ill-fated Earl of Derwentwater, etc., etc. One can almost wish that the building itself might now be destroyed, were it not that from the stone steps which lead up to it John Wesley preached to the Hartley colliers.

By the courtesy of Mr. Lumsden, agent to Louisa, Marchioness of Waterford, I have been allowed to inspect and collect what I thought would be of any interest. I began my labour of love among a vast collection of ledgers, etc., removed from the Hartley offices, which are now used as a mission room, with the object of compiling and tabulating the wages paid to the various trades and labouring work carried on in Seaton Sluice one hundred years ago; but as I turned over ledger after ledger, and countless piles of vouchers belonging to the Hartley collieries, I began to pick up packets of private letters of the Delavals, Irish State papers, and Admiralty despatches to Captain Delaval, with innumerable receipts for legacies and annuities paid to almost every family in Northumberland of any importance, together with the cost of cattle, etc., bought at Hexham and Morpeth in the year 1698, and the marketing receipts for the daily articles used in castle and cot from time immemorial. My original idea was put aside for the time, and I hope my time has not been spent in vain, when you look over the papers exhibited, which contain the signatures of families whose names 'are as familiar as household words' in Northumberland, but whose families, like the original owners of these papers, are now known only in name. Here you have the signatures of Fenwick, Ogle, Mitford, Ord, Lilburn, Bowes, Gray, Milbank, Brandling, Charlton, Reid, and Forster, and scores of others whose names are interwoven in Border history.

In the Admiralty despatches you will find names which will live as long as England's naval glory is part of history. The name of the ill-judged Admiral Byng often appears.

Among the letters perhaps the most interesting are those of Lord Chesterfield. His position as a man of letters, combined with the important offices which he then held, gives additional interest to his letters, as he was at the time Lord Lieutenant of Ireland.

Next in importance to Lord Chesterfield's letters come those of Samuel Foote, the great actor and dramatist, whose letters are characteristic of the wit and man of the world.

One of the most frequent and charming of correspondents with the family is a Miss Hammond (afterwards the wife of Dr. Waldgrave); her letters are chatty, and full of complimentary passages as to the health and happiness of her friends; and she is only one of two who in all their writing makes a quotation from the poets; she finds in Pope a couplet which expresses her wish:—

‘ May day increase on day, and year on year,
Without a sigh, a trouble, or a tear.’

The numerous family letters are a most interesting portion of the collection; through them we get a glimpse of the home life. There is every proof that while the Delavals were gay and passionately fond of amusements, yet their home life was affectionate and tender. These letters also demonstrate that the members of the family were held in the highest regard by the best families in the kingdom; and whether it be at Doddington, in Lincolnshire, or at Seaton Delaval, they were always full of company. The following letter may be taken as a fair specimen of those passing between the brothers and sisters:—

‘ MY DEAR SISTER,—I know not why I have been so long in answering a letter that gave me so much pleasure as that I received last from you, perhaps it is because when we know that our friends are well and happy we are not so anxious about them as when they labour under any uneasiness, I had a confirmation of your good health from Ned who sayd you was very well when he had the pleasure of seeing you, may you long continue so. do not follow my example in lasiness, but let me hear very soon from you, pray direct your letters to me not in a cover for my Brother it was some time before I had your last he is so often out he has been these ten days makeing visits in that part of Northumberland where George Delaval lives. Lady Isabella sets out to day for London my Lady Coddington and Miss Harcourt are here they intend staying a week longer, my Lady Coddington desires her compliments to you if they go post they intend paying you a little visit in their way, yesterday sennight we were all of us at Newcastle Assembly there was a great deal of good company, it was the day of the mayors Feast, Ridley is mayor, my Lady Blacket was there and made many inquires after you. my Lord Ravensworth dined here the other day. we never pitched the Tent by the sea side it was placed in the great oval in the garden, all the warm weather, where we drank tea every afternoon I imagin you have heard that Mr. Baley is dead. Mrs. Symons says he left ten thousand pounds he died of a fever. it is surprisising to know what great cures has been done by Dr. James powder here a very sad fever has gone round the country, all who have taken it have recovered I beleive I

told you that Sr John Long is quite well, and seven more at Hartley that have taken the Powders are cured of very sad fevers, after they had been light headed some days. do you intend going to London this year. I am sorry your Turnips have not turned out so well as they should have done but it has been a very bad season they tell me that up the country a few miles the corn is all standing about this place they have had a fine harvest breakfast is ready I tell you so to shew how industrious I am to write so early in the morning the good wishes of all here attend on you my Brother and my little namesake she must look vastly pretty with her little Teeth Adieu R. ASTLEY.'

Seaton Oc^{br} ye 15

The powders of Dr. James would appear to have been a favourite medicine of Mrs. Astley, for in another letter (Sep^{br} ye 14) she writes:—

'Long Jack is quite well [it may be remembered that Long Jack was the favourite groom who carried the letters to and from the North Tyne in the days of '45]; this is a most surprisening medicin and what no body ought to be with out.'

And then follows a piece of gossip which is dear to most ladies, and gentlemen too :—

'Miss Laake's match is quite off Mrs. Symons says there was an empty purse on both sides poor Girl I wish she had better luck.'

Again on April ye 14th she writes (she never gives the year) :—

'it is allmost incredible what a croud of people was at Newcastle waiting to see the Duchess ['Hamelton' struck out] she according to her usual goodness to the publick contrived to stand a few minutes on the steps at the Inn but when the Duke came out he was much offended that the people should dare to lift there eyes to so devine a beauty and protested if he had had a pistol he would have fired a mong them when he was in his Chais he bad the postilion drive on the more he drove over the better. you see how Jealously he gards so great a treasure.'

These old family letters confirm the popular stories about the amusements at Seaton Delaval. Tradition has given the famous seat of the Delavals in Northumberland a good character for its entertainments and amusements; but in the letters before us we have direct proof that tradition has not fallen far short of the actual truth. In February, 1753, George Delaval, writing from Mortlake to his brother Thomas, says :—

'It was in the *Daily Advertizer* that upwards of four Thousand Gentlemen and Ladies had been assembled at Seaton Delaval to see the Rope Dançers.'

And Mrs. Astley writes 'on Dec^{br} ye 16':—

'Bob has undertaken to entertain us with a Pantomin intertainment of his own composing, these Christmas holydays he has, taken in all most all the people in the house as performers I fancy it will be a very curious sight.'

In the same letter she continues :—

'Bob has performed his Pantomine entertainment before a great number of the country folk, who shewed there approbation by great fits of laughter.'

Foote wrote from London on March 13th :—

'there is no news but what the papers will bring you, but we have long & pompous accounts of the Tilts, tournements, Gambings [?] & Bullbaitings at Seaton your Uncle Price says that Mr. Pelham has hird the two dancing Bears to transmitt to your Brother by way of keeping him in the Country till the Parliament is up, & Chitty swears that the Coliers at Billingsgate employ all their Leizure hours in flogging of Somersets.'

The State lotteries offered frequent matter for correspondence between the brothers and sisters. In one of her letters Mrs. Astley writes :—

'I wounder why you think that you shall have the Ten thousand pounds I intend to have it my self and look very sharp into the news papers every post for it, tho upon second thoughts you may have one of them and I the other.'

In another letter without date she says :—

'my Brother Ned bids me tell you that he * * * is convinced that you or he must have the ten thousand pounds—every one for them selves, we hope not, my Father has promised Bob one which you may imagin is no small pleasure to him Mrs. Charlton is gone home we saw her very often while she was in this part of the country she looks in high beauty, this year Tinemouth and Collocoats were much in fashion not a room empty my Lady Ravensworth and my Lady Clavering were a month at Collocoats bathing my Lady Clavering and Sr Thomas dined here the other day they asked much after you my Lady Swinburn and Miss Swinburn are gone to live at York, I must leave of it is Chapple Sunday tho I am in a very scribbleing humour we shall have a very thin congregation to day for it is the first Sunday that Divine service has been performed in Mr. Ridleys Chapple at Blithe and curiosity will carry most of the people thither.'

On the 16th December she writes :—

'poor me, all my golden hopes are come to nothing, for my Ticket that was to have been Ten thousand pounds, is come up a Blank. I hope to hear that you have had better luck.'

I am afraid I have dwelt too long upon the purely family letters of the collection. My excuse must be that they give us pleasant pictures of society in the north well two hundred years ago.

The collection is, however, rich in documents of a more national interest, and of even wider range than our own nation. There are numerous Spanish (one of which says the king favours the giving up of Gibraltar) Portuguese and Dutch despatches, relating to the sixteenth or seventeenth century; the petition of the first English settlers in Carolina, America, who complain of being robbed of the land and agricultural implements the Government had given them; 'The Petition of the French Protestants taken in the Dutch Ships'; 'The names of the Lords Spiritual and Temporal in the Parliament holden at Dublin, the 17th of July, 1634, as they were delivered in by the King of Armes'; and numerous documents of general and local importance. In the collection there was material for numerous essays on national and local history, as well as trade and commerce. I regret that I am not equal to the task of fully bringing before you the great interest and value of such a collection of papers which embrace a period in this nation's life when the patriotism of Englishmen was put to a severe test, and which was a most glorious page in the nation's history. If one of the objects of the Society, the study and preservation of documents of importance, had been in the least furthered by the discovery of these important papers I am thankful to have taken a small share in it.

APPENDIX.

ITEMS OF EXPENDITURE.

August 15 1691—Paid my Brother Howard for a Horse	...	...	016	02	06
March 11 1694—Paid for 2 Sheap	...	...	000	11	00
May 10 1698—Bought 3 Cowes at Hexham	...	...	07	10	00
„ 4 Cowes at Morpeth	...	...	11	10	00
Ocobe 8 1720—Paid Mr. Joseph Greene for a Clock set up at Bavington...	...	...	06	10	00
July 18 1723—Paid for the Fools Coat	...	...	00	08	06
1723—Butter, 8 poundes at 6d. a pound	...	...	00	04	00
„ —144 Eggs at 4 a penny	...	...	00	03	00

August	6	1737	—Paid John Davison. Tailor for making the Postillin a pair of britches and a day's work at Seaton House	00	02	06
"	8	"	—Paid Jacob Atkinson to complement the High Shiriff	00	02	06
"	"	"	—Paid Jacob Atkinson for his Expenses Do.	00	00	04
Sep ^t	16	"	—Paid Th ^{os} Dobsons expenses at Blyth when buying Timber for the Chapel	00	00	08
"	"	"	—Paid Edmun Collings for two firrits	00	16	00
"	17	"	—Paid for 3 Pecks of boans for pins for Slating the Chapel	00	01	06
"	"	"	—Paid for six hogsheads for latts to the Capel	00	08	00
"	"	"	— " a cooper for strikin of the hoops and ends out of Do.	00	00	06
Ocob ^r	14	"	—Paid Anthōny Farlam and Th ^{os} Armstrong for Slating Seaton Chepell	03	12	09
Feby	24	1738	—Paid for a Lamb Skin to bind the Chapel Comon prare booke	00	01	04
Ocober	21	"	—Reced of Francis Blake Delavall Eq two pounds five shillings in full for a clock sett up in the kitchen at Seaton Delavall by Wm Joseph Green	£2	5	0
June	8	1740	—Paid for a pound of Scotch Snuff	00	02	00

13 Nouemb : A^o : Rⁿⁱ : R^{is} : Caroli 9^o : A^oq : Dⁿⁱ: 1633. etc.

Receuyed y^e day & yeare first aboue-written by me Tobye Bowes of Herrington w^{thin} ye Countye Palatine of Durham Gent, at the handes of M^{rs} Barbara Lauall of Seaton de Lauall w^{thin} the Countye of Northumberland, Widdowe, The just and Intire summe of Twentye & ffine poundes due vnto me The sayd Tobye Bowes, ffor one halfe yeares rent of that Annuitye, or Rent-charge of ffiftye poundes p'Annu', Granted vnto my wife Katherine Bowes by her late ffather S^r Ralfe de Lauall of Seaton de Lauall aforesayd k^t deceased To be jssueing out of ye Mannor, & Landes of Harteley within ye sayd Countye of Northumberland, Accrewed at y^e feaste of St. Martine ye B^p In winter last paste before ye date hereof: And payable to me by y^e sayd Barbara as being Committee of ye bodye & Landes of Ralfe de Lauall Esq his Ma^{ty^s} Wardes pprietour of the sayd Mannor & Landes out of wch the sayd Annuity or Rent-charge is to be Issuing as aforesayd I say receuyed as is aboue-written

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XXV.

Wittensse hereof my hand & Seale The day & yeare abouesayd

TOBYE BOWES

[The signature is followed by seal on which is the crest of a ram's head erased.]

Sexto die Julij. Anno Regⁿⁱ Reg^{is} Caroli duo decimo Annoq. Domini 1636.

Received the day and yeare first abouewritten by me Elizabeth Grey of Morpith one of the daughters of S^r Edward Grey of Morpith Castle K^t deceased, Att the hands of m^{rs} Barbara De Laual of Seaton De Laual within the County of Northu'b'land Widow, The iust and entire sume of Twenty one pounds and five shillings curant English money, due vnto me the said Elizabeth Grey for one halfe yeares rent of that Annuity or rent charge off Fifty pounds p annu' granted by S^r Raiphe Delaual of Seaton De Laual afosed k^t deceased to his daughter Katherine De Laual by his Last Will and Testament in writing bearing date the tenth day of January in the yeare of Christ 1623, to be issuing forth of the Lordsh^p of Hartley and Sea fishings there within the foresaid County, for the Tearme of Ten yeares next after his death The which Annuity of Fifty pounds, parcell thereof being Fowerty Two pounds Ten shillings, p. anu' is now invested in me by vertue of a Conveyance of the same bearing date the first of December in the Eleuenth yeare of the king anno 1635, made vnto me by Tobye Bowes of Offerton in the county of Durha', Gent', and the aforesaid Katherine his now wife, for the tearme of five Yeares next after the date of the said Conveyance, as by relation to the same more fully doth appeare. Now I the said Elizabeth Grey doe hereby acknowledge to haue received as abouesd the said sume of Twenty one pounds, five shillings for a full halfe yeares re't of the said Annuity, which did accrew vnto me at the Feast of Pentecost Last past before the date hereof, and is payable vnto me by the foresaid Barbara De Laual as being Committee of the body and Lands of Raiphe Delaual Esq^e his Maiest^s. Ward proprietary and owner of the said Lands and Sea-fishings out of w^{ch} the said Annuity or rentcharge is to be issuing as aforesaid I say received in full discharge of all payments due by reason hereof vnto the abouesaid day and yeare the sume of

lib s d
21 : 5 : 0

Witness hereof my hand and seale the yeare first abouewritten

ELIZABETH GRAY.

Witness at the signing & sealing

CUTHBERT PYE MARTIN BRIGES

S^r,

Wellbeck Nov: y^e 2: /82 [1682]

I receued yours of ye last of Oct: this day and I giue you many thanks for it as a most frendly letter as a frend can write. I doe wonder ye Romanist will appeere in publick places, I am a frend to many of y^m, but I shall never be of their Religeon. Since you mention M^r. Howard I acquaint you vpon my Lord of Carliles wishing it I have writ to my Lord Halifax to desire

he may be this yeare Shiriff, and y^e next yeare I assure my selfe he will haue ye
 Country Keeing [?] indeed I am trobled he has it not this yeare. My Daughter
 Albemarle haueing violent fitts of ye Mother. troubles me exceedingly God
 keepe you and your Family in health, I am ever,

Your most faithfull servant,

H Newcastle

Sr,

London July ye 23^d 1745.

Mr. Liddel show'd me your letter by the last post to him, and gavè me
 the inclos'd abstract of the Laws of Ireland concerning foreign Protestants &c.
 It was the more wellcome as I had been some time thinking of the methods of
 inviting a Number of French Protestants to settle in Ireland. That an increase
 of people, though without shoes and stockings, if they have but legs and arms,
 is a great advantage to any Nation that is not already overstock'd, which is by
 no means the case of Ireland at present; I take to be an uncontroverted pro-
 position; And that such an increase by protestants would be particularly
 advantageous to Ireland, considering the great number of Papists there; is
 I think as plain a proposition as the former. From these two principles the
 conclusion is plain, that such an increase of Protestants, should be got if
 possible. Now I will tell you that it is very possible; and the only difficulty
 is with regard to the manner of receiving and establishing 'em. I have a
 proposal by me from a great Number of French Protestants in the Cevennes
 and the Vivarais, who, from long indulgènce and connivance during the
 Administration of Cardinal Fleury, grew I believe a little too flippant in the
 publick exercise of their Religion, met in great numbers, sung Psalms aloud,
 and have brought a kind of a persecution upon themselves. Of these who by the
 way are a hardy laborious kind of people, I can have what Numbers I please,
 in Ireland, upon assuring 'em of a proper establishment and provision there.
 Many of 'em I believe are very poor, some would bring means along with 'em,
 but in short at the worst all would bring themselves, which I take to be Riches.
 I find the Laws in Ireland as they now stand are favourable to 'em; but that
 alone you are sensible is not sufficient ground for any body to invite numbers
 or for numbers to come upon. A settlement, and the Nature of that settlement
 must first be shown 'em. It is impossible for me at this distance to point out
 to my self or others any method to be pursued; Nor would I at present if I
 could. Lord Lieutenants are suspected Persons, their proposals have *fænum*
in Cornu, and the answer to any schemes that should take their rise from
 them, tho, singly meant for the Publick good, would be, *Timeo Danaos et dona*
ferentes. I have therefore given no answer to my Protestant Undertaker, but

that I would consider of it in Ireland, and then let him know, what could, or could not be done. A Spirit of party in Queen Anne's time defeated all the advantages that would have arisen to the Publick from the Establishment of the Palatines here. The same absurd Spirit repeal'd the Act of General Naturalization soon after, and it now costs a foreigner above a hundred pounds to be naturaliz'd. Moreover most minds are form'd rather to see, the little local and partial inconveniencys, than the great general good of an extensive plan. Some of these motives or possibly all of 'em, may render a proposal of this Nature, not only impracticable, but unpopular in Ireland, especially coming from me; in either of which cases I have done with it. I leave it in your hands at present, and I think I can't leave it in abler, to make what use you will or can of this Idea. If it is generally lik'd in Ireland and call'd for, I am not only ready to cooperate but contribute, and the people shall be forth coming. If not, I shall rest content with my good intentions for that kingdom, which surely wants, and in my opinion might make, great improvements, getting people from abroad, and keeping their own money at home, would be two very considerable ones, and are both in their own power. I heartily wish my Administration might be an Æra of some National benefit; whoever can suggest any, will be wellcome, whoever can bring it to bear will be still wellcomer, to

Your faithfull friend and servant

[Endorsed: Lord Lieut. 23.
July, 1745, R 29th.]



When I tell you that I like your letter about the Hypanians very much, I can also assure you that M^r. Pelham and M^r. Winington (to both whom I shew'd it) are equally pleas'd with it Principibus placuisse viris non ultima laus est.

The very surprizing changes that have happend cant be wrote (with truth) but I must wait till I see you to give you a perfect idea of the most impudent undertaking carried into execution with an incredible rapidity, maintaind for some few hours, by the good will of *one Decieved & abusd Person* and then crushd by the weight of Ability Property & Honesty. Our two Great Departed Statesmen seiz'd on power with no more prospect of maintaining it or foundation to support it, than King Phys and King Ush in the Rehearsal. Alas they were not able to form a Cabinet Councill. Judge of the rest—Nor coud they find even People of Quality to accept of the greatest posts in the kingdom from their hands. Courtiers woud not take money from them & Citizens woud not lend it them. White staffs and 5 P cent went a begging. Every body but themselves wonder'd what They intended Which they Themselves could not tell 'em.

However at last (or at first which you will) they order'd L^d Winchelsea to take the Admiralty and overcahd L^d Carlisle into being Privy seal. The First of these orderd his Commission to be immediatly made out with blanks to be left for the names of his Brethren but upon his Sending to M^r. Phillipson whom He had before brought to that board to come back thither with him His Lordship had the misfortune to meet with a refusal, & before he coud think of another Person to supply that vacancy his own Employment became vacant. Harder and more ridiculous was the Fate of L^d Carlisle. He was bid to go to S^t James's on the Wednesday morning to recieve the Seal, & being a Regular Man be came exactly at twelve o'clock and there he waited till near two. His Friend L^d Bath went into the Closet to prepare his way but the reception he met with there discompos'd him so much that he forgot L^d Carlisle who was waiting in the outward room and went down the back stairs At last L^d Carlisle was releasd from his long attendance by M^r Winingtons coming out of the Closet who said he had the kings orders to fetch back his old Servants to him. His Lordship upon this retir'd from Court and when he came home he had the pleasure to find a letter upon his table from the Sagacious Bishop of Lincoln directed to the Earl of Carlisle L^d Privy Seal This, with the rejoycings of his Servants and the congratulations of his Lady & family made his Lo^p have no great stomach to his dinner and I fancy did not much conduce to his passing a merry evening.

L^d Bath retir'd immediatly to his lodging at Richmond to think over at leisure his late conduct and took My Lady with him to sooth his melancholly and alleviate his disappointment He threatend loudly that he woud give the world an exact account of the whole proceeding of these transactions in a pamphlet Nay he went so far as to tell L^d Harrington that it shoud be such a one as shoud set the whole nation in a flame, but the flame has ended in smoke. There is a story goes about that one of his footmen meeting some other persons footman the other footman said, I hear Jack your Lord was near getting a good place and would have had it only Nobody woud give him a Character. He has been seen but little since his fall & as there is nothing People dont think him capable of doing so nothing He does surprizes them, and as Granville is thought to be an Enterprizing Imprudent man, He is only thought to have done a bold imprudent thing, & the other is no more hurt by it, than Chartres woud be if He were alive and catchd once more cheating at play, They blame one another but certainly Granville has got off better than Bath. L^d Winchelsea to the surprize of every body was to have had (as I have told you) the admiralty again but that enigma was solv'd by its being soon known that as soon as your session of Parliament was over he was to have gone to Ireland. L^d Cholmondeley by being at Chester, was luckily kept out of the Scrape for he was intended by Granville to have been Secretary of state, & tis said a Messenger went down to fetch him up to take the seals, L^d Sandys was to have had the board of trade in L^d Monson's place & the Duke of Rutland

was to have been Master of the horse, Willes had a mind to be Chancellour but was affraid & did not see light enough, The Court was a strange place Nobody condol'd with those that went out and nobody joyc'd with those that came in.

I have now but just room to tell you that what you wrote about was dispos'd of the day M^r Pelham resign'd the Seals, the Man dyd just then & he made use of the opportunity and put in M^r Yelverton So I have said nothing about it nor shall not till you desire me again, I wish you was on this side of the Water for my sake as well as yours Adieu Vive memor nostri. 5th March 1745/6

Dear Sir

After one day spent with Lord George Manners at Ancastré, and another with your Uncle at Wasingly we have this Evening reach'd the Metropolis L^d George goes for Newmarket on Monday returns at the end of the meeting & purposes to send M^{rs} Delaval & you a Letter of invitation to his House, tho this step may not be strictly consistent to the usual forms of provincial politeness, yet as they are people of quality, & upon the whole a good rural acquaintance, I would advise you to relax [?] a little in ceremonials

This Town is as empty as your Aunt Prices Head, & as my invention is rather disturb'd by the rocking of the Chaise de Poste, accept this only as a scrawl, in a little time you shall receive a Letter

from yrs most sincerely

Sam^l Jocke

Your Brother desires his best affections to you & your Fireside my services attend Mrs Delaval, & my Love Mrs Gash

Saturday Sep^r 30th [1752?]

[Endorsed: To John Delaval Esqr at Doddington near Lincoln

From F Delaval]

I am sorry Dear M^r Delaval should suppose he wants a subject to interest and entertain me, whilst he has it in his power to communicate his own happiness & that of his Family, to the latter you have this Morning a collateral addition by the birth of a Son to Miss Roach.

The Theatres have each produced a Pantomime That of Covent Garden is the Sorcerer revived with a new peice of Machenery, that is elegantly design'd, & happily executed, the subject is a Fountain.

The Genii of Drury Lane has some pretty contrivances, but the Inspector complains of its being barren of Incidents, defective in the plan, & improbable in the Denouement. We have had no new comedys but one given by M^r Weymondse, & his Lady. Jo Child is gone to France, The frail fair one turnd out

of Doors, and a suit for a divorce commenced Francis's Tragedy call'd Constantin is to be acted at Covent Garden, a Comedy call'd the Gamester is soon to be play'd at Drury Lane, I am writing the English Man at Paris for Macklyn's benefit, the Attorney General is to be made a Peer, the Solicitor Attorney, & York Solicitor General This is all the News I have now to offer & indeed all that I have to say except that I am most sincerely yours

Pal Mal, Jan'y 17th

SAM^L FOOTE

I beg my Compliments to every Branch of the Stock at Seaton

[Endorsed: 'To John Delaval Esq^r at Seaton Delaval Near Newcastle Northumberland;' and sealed with a seal bearing the arms: *argent a chevron sable between three birds, with crest, a cock's head erased.*]

In the North, what dye do in the North? when you are wanted in the West on the 24th instant appears a Farce of your Hble Servants, which without the powerful aid of such Freinds as M^r Delaval will I fear encounter a most disastrous Destiny

I suppose this Post will bring you the Brothers you will find some good writing, but as a play tis a heavy, uninteresting, bad conducted, ill judgd story

The Recorder of your Town of Newcastle has lately occasion'd a small inflammation at Court, about four months since He dind with L^d Ravensworth, & taking up a newspaper which mention'd the Bishop of Glouster as the Bishop of Chichesters successor in the Prince of Wals's family, declar'd that was the second great officer about the prince whom he had formerly known to drink treasonable Healths Andrew Stone being the other

L^d Ravensworth made a Report of this to the Cabinet Council, which the two delinquents with the Solicitor General, he being equally culpable, were order'd to attend, sundry examinations were had, of what nature has not transpird, the result of all is that the subsequent loyal Attachment of these Gentlemen, should obliterate the stain of their former principles & the prosecution be branded with the ignominious titles of groundless, trifling, and vexatious*

* * * * *

you must expect the Wits to be arch, but I dont know how to take your calling me *one*, in your last, as I know in what light you men of Bussness regard that Character, but I give you leave to think of me as you please in every other respect provided you do me Justice in one Article, that I am & ever be Dear M^r Delavals most oblig'd & obed^t Serv^t

London Mar 13th

SAM^L FOOTE

I suppose your Brother is on the Board, I beg my compliments to M^{rs} Delaval with a thousand wishes for a happy hour.

I am to thank Dear M^r Delaval for his last favour which I own a little dissappointed me, having flattered myself with the hopes of seeing you in Town with your Brother

*See next paragraph of this letter at page 129.

NOTE.—For 'From' in line 27 of the preceding page, read 'Free.'

The Englishman at Paris has been better received than I expected. Garrick, &c all the Deliciae [?] of the Theatre say kinder things of it than modesty will permit me to repeat, upon the whole it was damnably acted, Macklyn miserably imperfect, in the words, & in the character (oh stain to Comedy) you might have seen what I meant an English Buck by the power of dulness instantaneously transformd into an Irish Chairman

Miss Roach accompany'd by some frippery French woman occupy'd to the no small scandal of the whole House the Princes Box whilst the Dutchess of Bedford &c &c were obligd to take up with seats upon the Stage The Peice will be printed the 25th instant which I will inclose to you

I set out for foreign Parts the first of May, & shall petition for the continuance of our correspondence, I dont know whether I shall arrive time enough in France to put up a few Masses for the propitious Delivery of M^{rs} Delaval, but let me be where I will I shall not fail to pronounce for her a Juno Lucina fer open, & I dont know but that may do as well as an Ave Maria.

I congratulate you on the fertility of M^{rs} Ashly [*sic*] as every additional Blessing to your Family cant but give pleasure to

Yr most obligd & obed^t Serv^t

Pal Mal Apr 5th

SAML FOOTE

London Nov^{br} 25th 1751

Madam

* * * * * I wish Madam I could entertain you with any news or diversions that are going forward in this gay place, but I have never been out but upon business, & nothing so much talkt of as y^e Lottery, I wish I could give you joy of a good prise, tho their is many good prises come up y^e Tickets are now £16 14s. * * * * * I hear Lady Isabella Delaval is much delighted with her journey into y^e North & says it is a charming place & every thing very agreeable their. * * * * * M^{rs} Baily I find is coming to Live at Stilton.

I am Madam Your Most Obdn^t & Most Humble Serv^t

S HAMMOND

PS. every body here is in mourning for y^e Prince of Orange

Lincoln Feb y^e 3^d / 1753

Madam

* * * * * A letter from you always gives me great pleasure & particularly your last that acquaintd me your self & charming Miss Delaval perform'd your journey well. I know you was much divert'd when miss happen'd to think of Ham when a church was in veiv. * * * * *

Nothing is talkt of here so much as Ld Scarborough's fine dress & his Ladys, there has been an Asembly above Hill & all y^e gentlemen & Ladys in y^e Country came to Complement them, her Cloaths if possible was I am told finer than those she had on below hill, she had Diamonds all down her stays & a necklace almost covered her neck her Earings very fine y^e two Midle drops she said Cost £120 &

£50 without y^e hoop that is round them, for they are set transparent : & their whole Coat of arms adorns her Hair a pelican is y^e Crest & that has a very Large diamond in its mouth. all her Diamonds Cost £10,000. her fortune was £30,000. S^r George Savill gave her ten £10000 & twenty she had before. the particulars of my L^{ds} Dress I know not. his Estate is 9000 a year £14,000 in mony. & he is offerd £60,000 for y^e wood & that may now be Cut off y^e Estate & for want of it y^e Estate is worse. y^e Entertainment at his House is very grand & Cannot be relate'd properly but by those that have seen but Some few particulars I shall mention. they had a great deal of Company last week & at y^e first Course their was 32 dishes serv'd in Silver & y^e plates spoons Salts Candlesticks & knives y^e same y^e second Course there was 45 dishes and all upon Gilt plate every thing Salts spoons & knives & y^e Six Silver Candlesticks remove'd & 12 gilt brought on. 24 gilt branches round y^e room light'd, y^e dsert was Extreamly fine & y^e glass cut particularly so & y^e China very fine. their was a Foun[tain] of Orange & Hony water upon y^e table, play'd all y^e time & as y^e water fell it appear'd as if it froze. & every thing was manag'd with great order.

* * * * *

I am Madam

Your Most obligd & Most Humble Serv^t

S HAMMOND

[Endorsed : To M^{rs} Delaval at Dodington near Lincoln turn at Grantham]

I send this my Dear Sister to tell you that we are all safe and well you will think this a strange way of writeing but I was affraid you might be alarmed by one paragraff in a news paper. one wednesday at four a clock in the after noon a fire broke out in the kitchen Chimney which consumed all those rooms in the wing where we lived but was fortunately put out with out hurting the other end most mr Astley linnin and mine are burnt. what good providence that it did not happen in the night

y^{rs} affectionately

P. Astley

[?Wednesday, May 6th, 1752.]

[Sealed with a seal bearing arms of ASTLEY impaling DELAVAL.]

[Endorsed and sealed same as last.]

Seaton Delaval may y^e 22

my Dear Sister you desire an account of the damage the fire has done and how it happen'd. about twelve years ago a man undertook to prevent the kitchin Chimney from smokeing he pared away the wall at the back of the Chimney till he came to one of the beams of the dressing room above, and was so great a villain as never to mention it. it is very surpriseing how it escaped so long without being burnt had providence sufferd it to break out in the night how great had been the mischief it was first seen by my maid when she went

up after dinner she call'd out for help my Father who was in the passage immediately went up and saw the fire breaking out no bigger than a candle at the top of the ceiling. he alarmed the the [*sic*] workmen. and in less than a quarter of an hour near four hundred people were gather'd together, they by pulling down and throwing great quantities water saved the kitchen and all beyond it. the rooms where we lived and those under them are entirely demolished I mean the inside the walls are not much damaged. the fire burnt with such swiftness that it was impossible to save any of our linnin or indeed hardly any thing that was in those two room next the kitchen. my Father has set the workmen to repair the building as fast as they can. I should have sent you this account last post but I was not very able to write as I have been so unlucky as to misscarry I am at present very well as are all the family who desire to be remember'd to you and my Brother.

I am yours affectionately

R ASTLEY

is my Brother Delaval and Ned with you if they are tell them that our best wishes attend them pray let me hear from you very soon

[Endorsed same as last and sealed with seal bearing head of an old man.]

my Dear Sister we arrived here safe and well on wednesday you see I have kept my word in writeing to you as soon as I could there is no merit in it because I take great pleasure in writeing to but much more in hearing from you therefore pray let it be very soon, as we were at breakfast at Northallerton the two gentlemen arrived you see how far short were of their intention of reaching Seaton the same day they left Dodington they travelled with us the rest of the way. my mother desires you will ask Betty where the Tea spoons are that used to be with the China they are in the inventory she did not take them into her closet she desires you would be so good as to take care of them. mrs Charlton is at Collorcoats Bathing they tell me it is much the fashion this year that there is a great deal of company there and at Tynemouth. this place is in high beauty if you should be tempted to see it dont leave the little girl behind you what ever you do change of air will do her as much good as you. you know it allways agreed very much with you. I have had a letter from Tommey he is very well. you will not fail sending word to my mother what Spinxton says to you. and tell her exactly how you are the sincere good wishes of all here attend you and my Brother

I am yours most affectionately

RH: ASTLEY

Seaton Delaval July y^c 19

[Endorsed same as last, and sealed with seal of a man (a clown?) running.]

my Dear Sister I cannot help writeing to you this post tho I writ so lately to tell you what joy your letter gave me by leting me know that you are better. that you may continue to mend is I am shure the sincere wish of every body

here. I am quite of Spinxtons opinion in thinking that moderate exercise and thin diet is the best thing for you, nor can I think that Scarborough would be of any service in your case, I hope you take the air in the coach every day it is much better than walking even when you are very able, I wish you had somebody to stay with you it would not be so much confinement to my Brother tho I dare say he thinks it none and I know he is the best nurse in the world, I fancy you may have miss Hammond as long as you will and I am shure she will do what she can to entertain and take care of you, you know that she is a very good natured girl. pray did mr Hurtons friend recover that took Dr Jame's medicin, I have intended to ask you every time I writ. poor Long Jack is so ill of a fever that they think he cannot live my mother sent him some of Dr James medicin but whether they gave it him in a proper manner I can't tell but I am affraid it will not have the proper effect poor Sr John—the vanities of this life are all over with him. while he was well he appeard every Sunday at church in his fine cloaths and long wig and sword, the first time the country people ran out of there seats to make room for so fine a gentleman, but you may imagin what a laugh ensued when they found out the Jay in borrowed plumes. * *

* * * I am Just now told that long Jack has had a good night and is in a fare way of doing well what a fine thing Dr James Powder is.

my mother says that you must leave Puter and all other necessary's of that sort in your house I think you are in the right to let it if you do not propose going to London this year. all here desire their compliments to you and my Brother. pray let me hear from you very soon.

I am most Affectionately yours

R: ASTLEY

Seaton Delaval Sunday morning

[Endorsed same as last, and sealed with head of old man.]

* * * * * one piece of news you sent me has given me great concern. could it have been no ways prevented. the world will judg my Brother John master in his own house therefore I fear it will hurt you both 'tis a sad thing. tis only in ones own house that such things can do effectual harm. pardon me if I have said too much. it proceeds from that anxiety which I ever feel for what concerns your wellfare. I have not yet told it and believe I can not because it will make every body so unhappy, I had flatter'd my self that that persons eyes were opened and that It could not even happen again, no body has greater influence than you two make use of it to the uttermost to convince them of the certain ruin that must attend

I am very sorry to hear that poor mrs Hammond is so ill great cures have been done by Dr James powders here, it is great pitty she cannot be prevailed on to take them * * * * *

I am, yours:

R ASTLEY

[Endorsed same as last, and sealed with arms of Astley impaling Delaval.]

my Dear Sister I received the favour of my Brother Johns letter. I am sorry to hear that you are not better than when we left you I hope in your next to have a better account, the not hearing from you of so long a time gave us great uneasiness pray let me have a letter by the return of the post miss Hammond will write to me if she is with you I would not give you or my Brother that trouble I hope miss Hammond will stay some time with you it is much better for you than being alone I told my mother about your goods going to Downing Street she says that you are extreemly wellcome to set them in any of the rooms but that when she comes to Town she cannot answer for their safety as there is no room where they can be locked up in. the rooms being then all inhabited she would there fore advise you to save a place in your own house to lock them up in. we do not imagin your house will let the worse for it and it will be a great expence to move them we spent last week at Newcastle there were the same company as usual only my Lady Blacket was wanting they are at Scarborough every body enquired after you and were sorry you was not among them do not forget to make some body write to me immediately all hear join with mr Astley and me in good wishes to you and my Brother

I am yrs

R ASTLEY

[Endorsed same as last, but seal a figure of a man running.]

you know my Dear Sister (because you know how well I love you) what pleasure your last letter gave me * * * * * my Father has had a letter from mr Bosanquet to ask leave for my Brother Tom to take a Journey with him into Saxoney to improve his knoledge in Trade. mrs Feilding desires her compliments to you we dined with her the other day in her grotto Sr Walter Blacket dined here last monday my Lady Blacket intended coming with him but was prevented by the head ach they are just come from Scarborough we have very bad weather here * * * * * my Brother Frank is gone to shoot at Warkworth I am affraid he will not returne time enough to free this letter if he does I will make him set his hand to it the good wishes of all here wait on you and my Brother

I am yours most affectionately

R ASTLEY

Seaton Delaval Sep^r ye 14

[Endorsed same as last, and franked F. Delaval.]

upon my word my Dear Sister you are a little saucy to complain of my long silence when you were so long in answering my last letter or had you for got when you began to write that you owed me one. * * * * * my Brother Delaval is here tho I believe you will see him before you receive this my Lady Coddington is at London we had a letter from her last night she was gone from us before I had your letter I fancy the reason why she did not

make you a visit as she intended was her fear of going off the made roads she is a very great coward they were six days going to Town in a post chaise. Heskith is married to miss Cooper they keep six greys have taken a house in Pall mall and live at a great rate I hear that you are going to make Dodington very fine

* * * * *

yours most affectionately

R: ASTLEY.

Seaton Delaval No: y^e 16

[Endorsed same as last, and sealed with arms of Astley impaling Delaval.]

my Dear Sister,—I am sorry to hear that you still continue to complain of pains, in your joints. 'tho I hope, that as you are so well every other way, a little time will wear away that too. I have asked my mother about your little Girls wearing shoes, and stocking, she says that If you can prevent her walking for some time longer, it will be better. because she should not wear shoes and stockings, till she has short coats, and the weather is to cold to change her dress. you express a kind concern for my health, I am quite well. Ned and Bobs Tickets are both Blanks. what success have you had? * * * *

yrs

R. ASTLEY.

NOTE.

Writing from "Castle Howard Aug^t. 8th 1721," Sir John Vanbrugh says:—"Here's the house full of company, which I like better when it's emptye, so am going to morrow to Lumley Castle, and Delavals, which will take up a fortnight. I shall then return to York." And, on the 26th of the same month, from York:—"Cou'd you see how busy I have been ever since I writ to you last, you wou'd easily forgive my being so long before I did it again. I return'd but last night from the north (for here you must know we are in the south) where I have been near this three weeks finding a vast deal to do, both at Delavals and Lumley Castle. Since it is not easy, to go there often, I resolv'd to do all the service I cou'd while I was there now. The Admiral [Delaval] is very gallant in his operations, not being dispos'd to starve the design at all, so that he is like to have a very fine dwelling for himself now, and his nephew &c hereafter. Lumley Castle is a noble thing, and well deserves the favours Lord Lumley designs to bestow upon it: In order to which, I stay'd then near a week, to form a general design for the whole, which consists in altering the house both for state, beauty and convenience, and making the courts gardens and offices suitable to it; all which I believe may be done, for a sum, that can never ly very heavy upon the family. If I had had good weather in this expedition, I shou'd. have been well enough diverted in it; there being many more valluable and agreeable things and places to be seen, than in the tame sneaking south of England." (*Athenæum*, No. 3,280, Sept. 6, 1890, p. 322.)