EXTRACTS
QUEEN
OF
WURTEM
BURG'S
LETTERS
TO
LADY
ELGIN
1797
1804

50171

(1)

Extracts from Letters to Lady Elgin from H.R.H. the Princess Royal (Duchess & Queen of Wurtemburg)

Dec^ber 23rd 1797 ..... As to private affairs with Yourself You ought to be satisfied as you do everything in Your power to fulfill the Trust reposed in You with regard to Charlotte & you must be sensible that nobody but Yourself could so well keep out of Scrapes with either Side as you do; & if you can my dear Friend, even keep Your Charge (ignorant of the Faults (and free from them) of both her Parents; it is a great Duty but will undoubtedly bring a great blessing with it. You have already gained a great deal on her Character by breaking her in part of her sad passions & accustoming her to be a little more obedient than she was; if in

a few Months you have gained so much what power will you not have over her little mind as she gets older & what a mercy for the poor little Soul to be in the Hands of those who will not only have the purpose of giving her accomplishments, but of doing what is much better, of making her a good Christian. I wish there was a possibility of her not being an only Child, as I always think a Woman much exposed in so exalted a situation . .

11. Feby. 1798

..... I am very much pleased with yr. account of dear little Charlotte. I do not doubt her becoming good under yr. care, as I know too well yr. principles & yr. inclination, not to be convinced that you will spare no pains to make her worthy of the situation it has pleased Providence to place her in. I think you fortunate in at last having a Subgoverness who will totally follow yr. plans, & I am convinced that having the dear Baby's temper subdued by gentleness, will make a lasting impression on her mind, & that if instead of these means severity or violence were used, they wo. only have the effect of making her more violent & uneasy at any control. I was quite moved by yr. little History of her entering so much into yr. distress –

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It proves a great sensibility in her little Heart which is much in your favour to work upon.

. . . . . .

Feby 20. 1798.

. . . . . How often since I have received yr. dear letter have I thought with pity & regret of the situation you are in; & how sincerely am I grateful to God for the sake of Charlotte that you are with her - poor infant, - if amongst so many dangerous intriguing people, she had not the blessing to have a person about her capable from good principles age & situation in life, to guard her from falling a victim to these Examples - what wd. become of her. God grant that you may be enabled to keep her in perfect ignorance of the unfortunate differences between her parents. . . . . .

. . . . I hope that Miss Gale will shew herself worthy of yr. friendship by

keeping out of all Tracasseries, & then in yr. straight forward way you will keep out of ~~all~~ mischief. I am convinced that yr. health will be better now that you know of what consequence it is to the Child . . . . . .

It gives me great pleasure to hear that my dear little Charlotte is equally kind to both her parents - maybe, in the end, that little creature may itself ~~become~~ serve as a sort of magnet to make them a little better.

I am convinced that the poor baby will by yr. care receive good principles which will guard her little heart from many errors. Pray begin to employ her as early as possible with some reasonable little things, for every thing in which memory alone is required can be learnt early; let her have little prints of the history of the Bible - tell her the stories & they will already get into her little head & she will never forget them. It is the manner of teaching Children & not the things which sets them against what they are to learn. If Miss Gale is

used to young Children she will be very useful with her talents, in carrying out any of the little plans which we have often in imagination gone through. Though I abhor Mr. de Genlis's own Conduct, some of the things mentioned to fix the attention of Children in Adele & Theodore, I think good: but there is by far too much art in the whole for me to admire such an education. I acknowledge that the present style in many things appears to me to be too much for outward show & too little for inward good. Principles which are the only real ground work, forming the mind & the heart so that when left to themselves they may act religiously & with judgment, are too often neglected, — for to have many talents which sometimes serve to give a little addition to the vanity already too much implanted in our breasts. Pray do not think me severe - but the present times make me still more dread the Effects of having people agreeable instead of useful members of society. —

14. June. 1798 – Louisburg. (4) 7.

. . . . . I rejoice that yr. dear Infant is quite safe. I hear that you have, my dear Friend, exerted yr. self wonderfully, & that Miss Gale meets with great approbation. It gives me great satisfaction to think that you have now a probability of going on comfortably with yr. little interesting angel. . . . . .
I wish that you may like the being at Blackheath. I cannot comprehend how you can all be lodged in that small house.
. . . . . .

June 30th 1798 ..... I am much pleased with the account of dear little Charlotte, thank God that she has got so well through her Inoculation & that she is surrounded by those who have it so much at heart to make her good. Her little passionate Temper is in general the easiest to deal with in the end as it is accompanied generally, with a good Heart, on which we must work, & at the same time try to strengthen the judgement, as that must be good enough to regulate both the Temper & the Heart. I am assured that the whole Family unite to spoil her, that is a great trial to a spirited Child as even from the number of Playthings etc they are apt to get humoursome which is worse than passionate as it is not so easily eradicated — You are fortunate to be equally approved, God grant that you may long remain in Your present situation. I always trust that at some future period that Infant will be a point of reunion. Your attentions

to her during her Inoculation I had heard of from Mama & am delighted that You have had proper proofs of the gratitude owed to you on that account. Miss Gale seems to please, I am glad that in that situation You have a person you can depend on as otherwise You could not exist with your anxious mind....

Septber 21st. 1798..... The Papers mention Your having been with your little Charge at Windsor, how delighted my Parents must have been to see their dear Baby...

Louisburg. October 1st. 1798.... I hope at Lady Stuart's return you will write me some account how Your dear little Charge goes on – It makes me sometimes very melancholy to think of that Infant not being a Bond of Union between her Parents. I wish both parties could alter a little, it is of much greater consequence than my Brother is aware of –

Stutgard. November 8th. 1798 – .... I have received a very affectionate Letter from the Prince of Wales which by some mistake did

not come till the 20th of October though written the 5th of September, he speaks with great regard of You & expresses himself truly grateful for the care you take dear Lady Elgin of dear little Charlotte, he appears to doat on her & I hope that thanks to the pains which are bestowed on her she will always prove a Comfort & blessing to the whole Family; how I should enjoy seeing her little mind open. I am attached to that little Girl she is a most tender Plant....

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Stutgard December 16th 1798.... I am every moment expecting some Toys for dear little Charlotte which I hope will accompany this Letter, but as they depend on a Toyman at Nuremberg & not on me I cannot be certain. I should like to see that little Angel; God grant she may one day or other be the Means of uniting her Parents. The Mother is sadly to be pitied for her bad Education; indeed her Relations are unpardonable for their allowing those about her to treat her with such cruel Severity. Will you believe it, at thirteen Years old she had a Governess

who would not even allow her to go to the Window, she was seldom or never permitted to dine at Table or even come down stairs when there was any Company, if she did her eyes were always full of Tears & her Mother instead of either speaking kindly to her or leaving her alone always bid her go on crying for it was only her naughtiness, that made her so passionate. Was that the manner either to soften her Manner or to do her Heart good? Poor thing, the moment she obtained her liberty having not the strength of Principles to govern her passions, she allowed all her little evil ways to get the better & they have brought her into the unfortunate Situation she is now in. — I heard this by Chance the other day from a person who was at Brunswick during her Youth. Education is a very difficult thing, the middle way is seldom kept, though it is the only sensible one, for I look on both extremes as equally dangerous, too much Severity irritates the mind, & too much indulgence is too apt to make Young people neglectful — I believe that to act right by those one has to do with and

ourselves we must lay down a quite steady plan & go through with it without allowing ourselves to be biassed by any motive to change it. The never allowing ourselves to be irritated by the follies or foibles of our Children, the making them perceive quietly where they are wrong, & feel that when we are reduced either to punish or to reprimand them it is not from humour but from necessity. – It is the only method to conciliate respect & affection – Nothing provokes me more, dear Lady Elgin, than when people teize or find fault constantly with Children as I am convinced it ruins their temper & only ends in making them lose all confidence in those that are about them – – –

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Stutgard January 31st. 1799 . . . Many loves to your dear little Charge, what would I give to see her beautiful little face & hear her speak which would be quite new to me. Do not you soon intend getting somebody in playing to accustom her to hear French spoken, if she does not learn it early she will never acquire the accent. I know too well by experience the difficulty of getting ~~her~~ a proper person

to teach her, but I should think a well behaved little Girl might be met with who could be of great use.. Had your Louisa remained two years longer at Brussels she would have been the thing.— I think an humble Companion in Charlotte's situation of life is a sad thing but with your good Sense & Miss Gale's you would draw forth the use, guard against the mischief, & as they grow older by degrees lessen the acquaintance & the Parents might be made happy by money which would prove a great ease to their circumstances.— Do not you admire, dear Lady Elgin, how I allow myself to run on & build Castles in the Air which a single Thought overturns. You little think how much the Welfare & good Conduct of my little Niece occupies me....—

Stutgard. Feby. 4th 1799—... I rejoice at Your flattering Yourself that one day or other little Charlotte may be the means of making her Parents happy. God grant she may be a bond of reunion. I have only one reflection to recommend about her, which is to try to moderate her too great degree of sensibility. I love & admire a good feeling Heart, but to

be useful it must be guided by a good judge-
ment & we must learn to moderate its effusions.
The higher the Rank the more necessary
that Religion & good sense should always
accompany, or else we are liable from giving
too much way to it to be drawn into many
errors ..... One must instill into the minds
of Young persons the duty of assisting others,
but I think they should always be taught
that they must be just before they are
generous, & it is to those who are with them
to set them the example of refusing them-
selves gratifications to be enabled to do good
instead of preaching much on the subject:
as I then fear they will look upon it as forced
on them & not as a duty which will give
them satisfaction. On the whole I believe
that example does more than precept. My
Head is always at work on the subject of
being useful to my Children, but I think
the more they are led to every thing & fancy
it is by their own instigation the better.

4 May 1799 – Louisburg

. . . . . I am delighted with the thoughts of Y. watching little Charlotte two months; she must be a most interesting fine creature. How I sh^d. enjoy the seeing her, tho' to me the sight of all children is a pleasure mixt with pain. To catch the thoughts which spring from the opening mind must be delightful.

Miss Gale must now be very useful as having been used to teach (if you can prevent her carrying her zeal too far) she will ease very much the talk by teaching her many thing in play.

Pray, shall you place anybody about the baby who speaks French? or does Miss Gale undertake it? I am very sorry that my dear brother is ill – he ought to be very careful of himself. His life is of great consequence, particularly to his child, & he sh^d. consider that as he grows older he will not be able to go through the fatigues that he used to do. I fear that he is too indifferent about his health, & does not foresee what so much neglect must necessarily end in, if precautions are not taken in time . . . . . .

Louisbourg. May 24th 1799 - ... I trust now (14, 15)
Your dear Mind will be quite at ease &
as I believe your Health depends much on it,
You will get stronger to the great advantage
of my dear little Charlotte - How I should
delight in having that Sweet Child. I am
very uneasy at hearing my dear Brother is
still ill. I wish he were more comfortable.
when I think of his fate I feel melancholy,
what a pity so good a Heart should always
suffer - How I should wish that the Baby
could serve as a Magnet, perhaps if you make
her very good, Your dream will be fulfilled.
Some great mercy is in store for that poor
Child, as you were fixed on to form her
mind - ...

(13)

Louisbourg. July 22nd 1799. - ... From every-
body I hear little Charlotte admired. You
have certainly, dearest Lady Elgin, a great
object in view in forming the mind of that
dear Child, God grant your efforts may
succeed, & that the principles you sow may
take strong root in her Heart; I am delighted
at your having brought about her being
equally attached to her Parents, & trust that
this one day or other may bring them together.

Louisbourg July 30th 1799 - ... I am truly uneasy about your not recovering your health & strength, but hope quiet & the air of Blackheath will set You up - You are of too much consequence for the Almighty not to be merciful & spare you many Years. My lovely little Niece would be in a wretched situation were she to lose You dear Lady Elgin before her Heart & Head would be filled with good principles, dear little Soul I long to see her & hear the comical way in which she pronounces my name. I am glad my Parents indulge themselves in having Charlotte sometimes at Windsor, I shall think it a mercy however if being the only Object with so many, she is not a little spoilt. I could forgive very much, as in my opinion nothing is so engaging as a pretty little Girl ...

Stutgard. November 9th 1799. - .... I am glad sweet little Charlotte is the better for the Sea, may the dear Angel long be a blessing to her Family & useful to the World. I am perfectly of opinion that You ought to live in the House with her, it is a great object to have people of Character & weight always at hand with Children, whatever disagreements

may arise from this plan, I am sure You have too high a sense of the necessity of watching over her, & those who surrounds her, not to despise little inconveniences for to bring great good about. At her age an improper word or look has more effect than can be imagined & I am an equal enemy to weak indulgence or harshness, the latter often spoils the temper, & can only make Children deceitful, I know too well the fatals effects it has on dispositions, I know it a great error & am sorry that after the Experience which has been made of its mischief, it should again be taken up - I love a steady quiet way with Children & believe it is ever very useful to those who are about them, as to fulfil my plan they must constantly watch over themselves - In "Lettres de Rosselle" there is a delightful one on that subject, in which the Mother gives an account of the Education of her Daughters, it delights me & if ever the Almighty blesses me with Girls it shall ever be my object to have them constantly with me, & to try gently to correct little faults. A lie or the proof of a bad

Heart I think alone allow of severity. Religion if properly applied will from the earliest Infancy make them attentive to their own thoughts and Actions & be the greatest security for their turning out well. I do not like wonderful Children as I think besides hurting their health it is too apt to make them vain, but I am convinced that much can be taught them early, if we take the pains to repeat to them Stories out of the Bible & History, instead of nonsense, which opens their mind & makes them more ready to read — . . . . .

(15)

Stutgard. February 10th 1800 — . . . Many thanks for your account of my lovely Niece, she must be a most engaging Child. I should delight in seeing her & in observing the good sense which appears already, so forcibly among her little passions & will be the greatest of blessings when well trained. Her little prayer has given me great pleasure & shows wonderful reflection for her Years. It is a great Spirit with so quick & spirited an Infant that all the people about her should join in the same plan & that the means should be gentle but from that bring her to rights, all violent methods

would only make her obstinate & passionate; I know that by experience.....

I am very unhappy about my Brother, I fear his health & spirits are both very bad, he ought to consider the situation of his child & the distress of his Mother if anything should happen to him. God grant Your dream may be fulfilled & that Charlotte may be the cause of the Reunion, I should then think her a blessed Child & doubly so were a Brother to take her out of the awful situation she appears to be destined for. Though whether old England has not frequently been at the summit of its glory under an Elizabeth & an Anne is another question, we will leave that as all other things above our Understanding to be decided by a higher Power who knows & ordains what is for the best.-------

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Erlangen - July 24th. 1800

. . . . . Everybody finds dear little Charlotte charming. I hope this Campaign at Weymouth will set her quite up & enable you to go on with her education. I am sure that her temper & mind will be the first consideration, & talents only a secondary object. I easily imagine the weeds you have to fight with. I believe gentleness & steadiness the best methods to be used with her dispositions, which shewed themselves very early, as even before I left England they were to be remarked. I cannot sometimes help envying you having the care of her. What an interesting employment & amusement would she be to me in my situation. . . .

. . . . . .

Erlangen. October 15th 1800 .... As for my pretty little Niece I think that her Character requires great steadiness but would be ruined if the least violence was used towards her, as it would only make her obstinate & bold. but on the contrary if she sees nothing but mildness & steadiness opposed to her little Passions, she will get ashamed of them, & be brought to look on them as not only wrong but childish. Her being strongly impressed with the omnipresence of God will be the most certain method to root out her disposition to tell stories & the not only never laughing if she shows cleverness in her inventions, but speaking of them as disgraceful will have more effect on her mind than great punishments, the persuading her as she grows older to punish herself for any faults she has committed by refusing herself Fruit or any other indulgence she is fond of. I think would strengthen her mind & make her guard against falling into the same errors. Her Vanity will be the most difficult thing to be got the better of as it is encouraged by everybody. Great gentleness must be used, but

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I think it might be made of use & forced to a better purpose by never praising her for her beauty or her cleverness but doing it whenever she shows a proof of good Heart or self-government, the desire of being commended will of itself lead her to set the greatest Value on whatever obtains that, & she will think no more of things of less consequence if they are treated with indifference. I wish she had a Child a little older than herself to play with as that by degrees would teach her to prefer others to herself & would prevent her thinking that everybody must attend to her. I think all trifles should be treated as such & not be made of consequence by making them an object which unfortunately is too often through life the case when Children have been plagued about them. And often even the fear of being contradicted for nonsense makes them false & they conceal their little follies which only take deeper root as they are hid in their minds. I would always try to draw a Girl to love gentle plays, but not by force set her against them & make her look on a whip or a stick as the greatest of pleasures because it is forbid...

Erlangen - 21st Feby. 1801 -

. . . . . I quite tremble at the uncommon parts & cleverness of Charlotte, as I think she is likely to discover by that means the sad variance which reigns between her Parents - For her happiness as well as theirs I wish she may be many years without being acquainted with them . . . .

. . . . . .

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Erlangen. May 14th. 1801 - . . . . I am very happy that You so kindly bestow so much of Your time on my little Niece & hope her gratitude will lead her to follow Your good advice & adopt the good principles you will instil in her young mind. How unfortunate her situation is: to Your good Heart I am sure it gives pleasure to think that you can be so useful to this Infant, & that hereafter millions will owe to You the good escample she will set. I hope that You will very soon make her begin to read with Mrs Gagrine a short History of England, & have her accustomed as soon as she finished reading, to give a little account of the contents of her Lesson & then lead her to make some slight reflections on what she has learnt. I am quite of Your opinion that a valuable good woman is better to be kept in Miss H's place than to seek for talents & may be meet with some person who will seek to meddle & intrigue in the House which would ruin the Child. If Miss H. can teach Charlotte to read French, a little French Girl would soon make her speak it,

& in the situation Charlotte is most likely to be called to foreign languages are not so necessary as the speaking & writing English with great Correctness. - There are so many pretty Childrens' books in French & German that by that means she might soon be made to try to understand them, were I with her I would begin by telling her a story in English & then make her follow by reading it in whichever of the two languages it is wrote. — I am glad that Charlotte takes to her Doll as it will make her gentle & ingenious, many little works may be taught her in play, & if she can once be brought to teach her Doll it will engrave her lessons in her mind. In following Madame de Genlis' "Nouvelle méthode d'enseigner aux enfants" you will see these hints of mine more enlarged. It appears to me a sensible Book. As soon as I shall return home I intend bespeaking a set of China at Lousbourg for Charlotte's Doll; pray give my love to her & tell her I am delighted to hear that she is a Good Child ..... - I suppose You will

return to Weymouth this Summer, & I hope that our pretty little Love will not by her Uncles be drawn in to offend by Boy's play. I do not doubt that at least two or three of them will visit the King during his stay there. I a little envy the day in which Augustus arrives & that the twelve will be all at once with my Parents — .....

(21)

Louisbourg. May 24th 1801. — Though it will be some time before You receive this Letter I cannot deny myself the pleasure of writing comfortably to You, & conversing on Your dear little Charge who I often wish I could run away with for a few Years & educate her quietly here. I long to hear so many particulars about her that I fear my enquiries may appear troublesome concerning her little Studies? her disposition, temper, & person? If she understands French some very pretty Books might be read to her, as often when Children learn to read they attend more to the words than to the sense & a sensible person reading to her by way of reward, will not only make her understand the Stories better, but also give her a habit of attention

which it is very necessary to acquire at an early age. Madame de Beaumont's "Magazin des Enfants" is a charming Book for Young Children & her other works as they advance in age have great merit. "Les Conversations d'Emilie," though much admired, I should fear would be more suited for Charlotte two Years hence than at present, as also Madame de la Fite's "Contes Moraux". — Watts's little Catechism & the little Sunday lectures of Marshal are the serious ones most calculated for so young a Mind; as she grows older Mrs Trimmer's History of the Bible will be a very useful Study. As the chief object must ever be to give her good principles I believe we must be very careful to make her love Religion by not overloading her with too much of Serious Reading which the moment it fatigues the Mind does mischief, as it accustoms to a degree of inattention which is too often followed by indifference & if once adopted is not easily get the better of. I hope that the Vanity you complained of last Year is a little diminished, & that nobody will praise her either for her beauty, or her Cleverness I should have suppresed that being always

with grown up people she would have felt her own inferiority, & have been more inclined to humility than Vanity. – I hope if she goes to Weymouth she will quite get the better of her Stammering which being much owing to the weakness of her Nerves I should think the Sea bathing will by degrees remove as it strengthens her. – Some people think her charming & very handsome others say she is the image of my Brother but not so well. – However that is of infinitely less consequence than the goodness of her Heart which would be much improved if the jealousy of other Children could be eradicated, which You will never succeed in unless by great management, any violent exertion to bring about an amendment would only do mischief & perhaps make her conceal her feelings but not get the better of them. I dwell on this as I am sure that many people will give You very different Advice on the Subject but I speak by experience ....

Pray tell little Charlotte that I send her a Fan & when I go to Stutgard shall not fail to bespeak some silver Toys if she continues a good Girl ...

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Louisbourg. June 2nd 1801.... One of my first employments was to send for the silversmith & bespeak Charlotte's Déjeuner or Tea service for her Doll; I wish it may give her half so much pleasure when it is finished as it does me to think I shall be the means of giving her some amusement — I am very anxious about that dear Child & wish I could be of any use to her. I think Your determination of spending Your Winter in the Country very fortunate as I am sure it avoided You many unpleasant moments & much better for Charlotte who by this means can run into the Garden whenever the Weather is tolerable...

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Louisbourg. June 25th. 1801..... I rejoice sincerely at Your recovery & hope the Almighty will grant You a fresh lease of life, I fear the various anxieties You have gone through of late Years have hurt You but flatter myself that returning strength will give You Courage to overcome any little thorns You may meet with in the path of life — Your account of the 4th quite overcame me, I trust the dear Grandfather's Prayer may ever rest as a blessing on the Child who I hope will become

as amiable & good as we all wish — How fine a Scene; Charlotte must have a most charming Heart to have felt so acutely my father's words: this must be a great comfort to You & lead You to hope that when her principles are once fixed she will turn out well notwithstanding the pains that are taken to spoil her. — I heard much from General Mulins of Charlotte's Musical Genius, speaking & repeating French well & of her pretty manner. Though all this sounds very well I was a little hurt that she displayed all these accomplishments without showing any timidity, were she my Daughter I should prefer more modesty. Reading well, a little Historical & Geographical knowledge; to these Talents which as I have on different occasions taken the liberty to mention are too apt to encourage Vanity if they are exhibited indiscriminately & make Children averse to more serious studies as their application gives them no opportunity to shine in Company. — I should think the seeing sometimes Children a year or two older than herself whose Talents being more cultivated would shew Charlotte that she is not the wonder she imagines I hear she has a Frenchwoman about her, pray be on your Guard before she is much left alone

with her. I always fear flattery from those sort of people. — I should also think that to make her more modest without constantly finding fault which frequently only hurts the temper, one might make a selection of interesting stories in which humility & goodness of Heart should always be preferred to parts. If Miss Hunt has as much knowledge as I have heard her praised for she might easily undertake such a plan. — I cannot say I much approve of Charlotte's hands being tied unless she is violent as it may only harden her. — I hope you will go to Weymouth this Summer, it would at least for some weeks prevent her being so Vain as I am sure many of the Family think just as I do on the subject. My Brother has written me a very kind letter & made me happy by sending me a beautiful Locket with Charlotte's Hair. I love that little Girl dearly & am anxious about her as if she were my own Child — Her Tea Things are bespoke but will not be so soon ready as I could wish, but some Dolls dressed like our Peasants, & a Citizen's Daughter of Stutgard will go by the first safe opportunity

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Louisbourg. 2. Oct. 1801.

. . . . . Poor little Charlotte's character certainly requires constant watching, great steadiness; but no harshness which, by yr. own account wd. only make her obstinate. Am I to say everything I think, I regret much the weakness of the Mother in making a plaything of the Child, & not reflecting that she is a Princess & not an Actress. Were she my daughter I shd. try to teach her everything I know, but never let her shew the little knowledge, unless to her nearest relations, & persuade her that she can be of no consequence to anybody else, unless as she grows up she makes herself beloved by her good qualities. I am not fond of Children

burning by Heart - because it too frequently leads their parents to make a shew of them which by degrees takes away that Modesty & diffidence which are so charming in Youth. As she has once found out she is clever, nothing but being with older children will ever get the better of this unfortunate vanity, which is a little in her blood, as you know full well. I approve very much of yr. trying to get the better of her covetousness. As she has been inoculated when you are in the Country you shd. lead her into some Cottage where the children are all in rags & in want of food, & see whether such scenes of distress wd. not soften her heart - particularly if you wd. have some Cloaths made in the house, & some days afterwards shew her those very objects clean & happy. I am a great enemy to give to Beggars,

& believe as much care must be taken to teach young people to give properly as to be charitable. As for Charlotte being too much to one side, you wd. easily get the better of it in making her wear a weight in her pocket of the opposite side; the bunnies of the foot is the worst, I believe that must be watched & stopped at once. The being constantly with people so much older than herself naturally gives her a serious turn; the seeing so little of her parents must make her melancholy, particularly after having been amongst all her relations at Kew. My Sisters praise her very much, & express great gratitude for the pains you take with her . . . . . .

. . . . I understand the unpleasantness of yr. situation, but think yr. staying with the dear Child perfect charity, as God knows into what hands she might fall . . .

. . . . You do not mention Drs. Gagrin,

& only speak of a French person about Charlotte. Pray, who recommended this Maid? .... I long for the Prayers you have so kindly promised me, & for the Model of our dear Infant. I wish I c^d partake in y^r charge & sh^d be delighted to assist in forming her mind. I am glad you have taken the trouble to compose prayers for her, as very few are calculated for a Child's comprehension. Berquin's "Ami des Enfans" I think w^d amuse her – & many Stories in the "Lectures pour les Enfans" – w^d be very proper for her, though others are above her age. . . . . .

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Stutgard. December 8th. 1801. . . . . I hope Charlotte was very patient & that when once got rid of her Ague she will grow very tall: every time my Sisters see the dear Angel they mention her being improved; I cannot help sometimes longing for the same pleasure, I should delight to be with the dear Child & to watch the unfolding of her little Mind: at her age every day is interesting & every moment may be turned to advantage . . . . . I suppose you will my dear Lady Elgin soon be obliged to be more at Carlton House as Masters will require being followed with regularity; if I dare give my opinion on the subject, not too great a mixture of subjects for Instruction at present, Charlotte is very young & as a tender plant must be trained with great gentleness.
I hear much of her musical talents & of the pains my Brother takes to make her speak French which I should think may sometimes rather alarm her as by all account she is very nervous & has still sometimes a hesitation in her Speech which alone prevents one's speaking very correctly as one feels that certain words will cost one pain to pronounce & for that one avoids them

& makes use of some other not so suitable.
I know this by experience & whenever I am very nervous avoid any word which might lead me to stammer; but this of course prevents the language being as good as it would be without this.....

Stuttgardt 23rd Dec. 1861

. . . . . Mr. Tyrwhitt has given me a most charming account of dear little Charlotte & assures me that she improves daily in all her little accomplishments. God grant that her heart & mind may also continue to improve, & the little shadows you complain of in her character may by degrees be lessened. I shd. be very sorry if they went off too fast, as I shd. then look on the amendment as not radical, but only for a time. Generosity can only be taught by degrees, particularly to a Child who has no companions, & therefore but little opportunity to learn the pleasure of obliging or the necessity of yielding to others. You have never yet given me any account of the French maid, & whether

Mrs Gagrin continues Dreser: much in my opinion depends on the people who are about Charlotte & I fear the variety, as according to the old Proverb: "Many men, many minds". I regret that it is so very difficult to find Childrens' Books which do not affect her too much, from the stories of naughty children being constantly mixed with the good. I wish that I had cleverness enough to compose some little books for her amusement, & can assure you nothing wd give me more satisfaction than to be in any way of use to this poor Angel, whose situation ever works on me when I think of her growing older, & the difficulty there will be to keep her as ignorant as she ought to be of many thing which the imprudence of some Servant may easily discover to her. I think that the winning her mind early

with the comforts of Religion is highly necessary as that alone can give her strength to go through whatever it may please the Almighty to ordain without shrinking from her task. Pray send me the prayers you have composed for her. I shd. like very much to see them....

. . . . . .

Stutgard. March 16th 1802 — I rejoice much that You are in better health & have taken the generous resolution not to leave Charlotte. I admire both Your Head & Heart which have made You give up Your own comforts for her advantage. I am sure that the Child's being constantly under Your Eye is a great blessing & that if anything can prevent her being spoilt it will be Your care. I perfectly understand her being more tractable & good when she is with You: but must humbly represent that You must not overdo Your strength, & by attending to her too much fatigue Yourself which in the end must disable You from watching over her with Your usual anxiety. — Your good sense my dear friend & the having had children of your own certainly makes you more patient with Charlotte & prevents her falling out with You, but this same disposition of hers makes it necessary for You to be very firm with her, & to be very serious whenever You find that she forgets herself towards others. If she should again fall into

these passions I believe that it would be necessary when once over to make her sensible that it was wicked to yield to such humours & that if she does not try to restrain them she will not only forfeit Your good Opinion but that You shall be obliged to use a Rod as You cannot look on her as a reasonable Creature when she forgets herself so.

I am, forgive me my dear friend, not quite of your opinion in Your wishing to have an additional person, as Charlotte has now more people than we had altogether at her age. The more people the more minds & thoughts You are fortunate in being the only person to direct; people of a middle class are too apt to push themselves forwards, & have they been Governesses in other Families, or Teachers in Schools, are not always easily led & on account of their knowledge are very difficult to be reduced to follow the plans laid down. Till we were seven or eight Children we had no English teacher, Lady Charlotte Finch & Mrs Coxwoth having taught us all to read, but the Subgovernesses ill health preventing her giving us the proper attention Lady Charlotte

could not teach us all & begged Mama to take some Clergyman's Daughter to assist her. Notwithstanding which Lady Charlotte continued to read with Augusta & me every day sometimes two but always one hour. I am very glad that You have taken the English Lessons, it will avoid many disputes & Your presence makes the Child more attentive. Miss Hunt ought to prepare her for her Master or Mrs Gagneur who having been used to teach would perhaps succeed better. The many Complaints on Charlotte's Temper I believe much owing to those about her not being used to Children, & to desire of gaining double approbation if they succeed & of avoiding blame if things do not turn out as they wish. — Forgive me dear Lady Elgin dwelling on a Subject which as Your friend I think it my duty to do, pray do not be offended if You are accused of spoiling the Child but make it appear you do not by being gentle if possible but if she really behaves ill to others by punishing her severely, this alone can put a stop to this nonsense and enable You to follow Your own plan. —

For lies or violent passions I believe the Rod a very necessary punishment, for ill humour great firmness & coldness, for bad Lessons the making Learning a favour & the not allowing her to learn the next day if she is idle — When she is good great pains should be taken to amuse her, & when the contrary nobody should take notice of her. From the earliest times her heart may be much softened & corrected by Religion which can alone in any situation of life give her strength to support herself — . . . . .

Louisbourg. May 2nd. 1803 . . . . . I am quite delighted with my sweet little Niece's work which is placed in my Cottage & I intend soon to return her my thanks for her pretty present. I wish I could see her & express to her by word of Mouth how much I am attached to her and grateful to You for the care You take of her Education, by all accounts she must be grown very amiable, I am assured that she plays wonderfully on the Harpsichord for her age & that in all

the Branches of her Education she does You my dear Madam credit. God grant, dear Lady Elgin, that Your success may encourage You to go on with an undertaking You have so well begun, & that You may reap great Comfort & pleasure from this Important Child .....

Louisbourg. July 5th. 1803 .... I beg many kind loves to my dear little Niece whom I love dearly though I have not seen her so many Years. I hope that she continues to attend to all Your good advice & am sure that her attachment to You is the most likely means of her turning out good & amiable as her love will lead her to attend doubly to Your good Example & make her engrave in her Mind the good principles You try to instill into her Heart. — For God's sake teach her early to think of the uncertainty of life & how little dependance one can have on all earthy advantages. In Religion alone can she find support in every Trial,

& when the World neglects her she will ever
find comfort if she seeks it in offering up
to the Almighty all her Afflictions & praying
him to grant her strength to fulfil her duty.
I hope that You will go to Weymouth this
Summer & enjoy the Society of my Family
who all value You .....
Stuttgart. January 30th 1834 ..... It is I am
sure Your good principles my dear Friend that
have supported You through many trials, &
I am sure You will be rewarded here &
hereafter for Your exerting Yourself to be
of use to my poor little Niece who born
to a great situation is more to be pitied than
many a poor Infant who is not exposed to the
temptations & heart felt misery she will be
by the disagreement of her Parents & by the
flattery she must sooner or later meet with.
Pray therefore my dear friend do not abandon
Your little charge, train her up to put her
whole trust in God, & strengthen her Mind
against those dangers to which she must be
exposed; & which even at present surround her

as You cannot choose those that are placed about her. — I regret that Miss Hunt's bad health prevents her being as useful an assistant as You require & wish You may have it in Your power to meet with a pleasant & sensible person who could join with You in improving the Child & correcting any little faults that are in her Character — I believe that in all Countries nothing is so difficult as to find proper people to place about Children, I am almost become an Enemy to great Talents in those situations & think that good Sense, Principles & Temper are infinitely preferable —

I always feared that the poor little Girl's cleverness should lead her to gain her points to be cunning; She will if she lives more in mixed Society meet with too many successful examples, not to imitate what in same Company she may be praised for. Therefore dear Lady Elgin pray watch over her as a tender Plant & try to get the better of this unfortunate propensity. Her being an only Child is a great disadvantage as her little faults can be less observed from

her naturally not conversing with those about her with the same heedlessness that she would do with Children of her own age where she would not be on her guard. Vanity I have always heard was a reigning passion but this I wonder less at as it is the misfortune of her being in some Societies too much praised for her Beauty &c.

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Louisbourg 17th June 1864.

I ever think of you with regard & shd. be very happy cd. I flatter my self to see you again but fear that the duties you have taken on yself & which you so very conscientiously fulfil, will prevent my having that pleasure. I think that though higher motives than worldly approbation are the rules of yr. conduct; it will however give you some satisfaction my dear Friend, to hear that the manner in which you devote yself to Charlotte, & the Education you give, are very much approved of & that it is generally thought that you are the only person who cd. conciliate the good opinion & good will of all parties. God grant you may long have it in your power to watch over the mind of this precious Child, & engrave on her heart the principles which must be the rule of her Conduct to render her happy here & hereafter. I shd. be very much delighted cd. I see her, & that she may not quite forget me I have sent my mother a little necklace for her.

I fear that the dear King's illness & the deep affliction of the Queen have precluded you from being much at the Queen's House all this winter, which I think a loss for the child, who otherwise unfortunately has so little opportunity of seeing anything like domestic happiness. I fear the being so much alone & without any companion of her own age must make her rather too serious for her age, & will perhaps lead her to dwell more than she ought to do on the causes of her being obliged to live in a house alone & to see so little of her parents. If I am to credit the newspapers, the Mother appears to me too fond of shewing her in public, which appears to me a disadvantage at her age.

I hope that her English master has by dint of pains & patience got the better of the hesitation in her speech – which is unfortunately very common on all sides in the Brunswick family. I hope that you are better satisfied with Miss Hunt & that as Charlotte grows older & more companionable her temper is not so often tried & that she

is at least able to afford a little in her lessons without tormenting her. Mlle. Victoire I suppose continues speaking French & attending to the music. Pray, whenever you have time, dear Dr. Elgin do have the goodness to give me a little account of the manner in which she spends the day & what books she reads . . . . . .

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