

I cut up some other leaves into the usual statutory size. They say of a fowl, that if you draw a chalk line on a table, and lay chick-a-diddle down with his bill upon it, the poor thing will imagine himself opposed by an insurmountable harrier, which he will not attempt to cross. Suchlike are one half of the obstacles which serve to interrupt our best resolves, and such is my pretended want of paper. It is like Sterne's want of *sous*, when he went to relieve the *Pauvre Honteux*.

October 5. — I was thinking this morning that my time glided away in a singularly monotonous manner, — like one of those dark gray days which neither promise sunshine nor threaten rain — too melancholy for enjoyment, too tranquil for repining. But this day has brought a change which somewhat shakes my philosophy. I find, by a letter from J. Gihson, that I *may* go to London without danger; and if I *may*, I in a manner *must*, to examine the papers in the Secretary of State's office about Buonaparte when at St. Helena. The opportunity having been offered, must be accepted; and yet I had much rather stay at home. Even the prospect of seeing Sophia and Lockhart must be mingled with pain; — yet this is foolish too. Lady Hamilton¹ writes me that Pozzo di Borgo, the Russian Minister at Paris, is willing to communicate to me some particulars of Buonaparte's early life. Query — might I not go on there? In for a penny, in for a pound. I intend to take Anne with me, and the pleasure will be great to her, who deserves much at my hand.

October 9. — A gracious letter from Messrs. Ahnd and Son, bill-brokers, etc.; assure my trustees that they will institute no legal proceedings against me for four or

¹ Now Lady Jane Hamilton Dalrymple — the eldest daughter of the illustrious Admiral Lord Duncan. Her Ladyship's kindness procured several valuable communications to the author of the *Life of Buonaparte*.