

you that it arrived very safely, and we were all delighted to see the rare and beauteous Phoenix which seemed to have arisen so miraculously from the ashes of the old one. When I had developed the packet I called out, "Oh, what a beautiful tea-pot! Well, Johnny has indeed done the thing handsomely! I think I never in my life saw a handsomer or more elegant thing of its kind." Mrs. Unwin instantly roared out, "Is it solid silver? Are you sure it is real solid silver? Mine was silver."—"Indeed, madam, I do not know; plated things look sometimes very handsome, and 'tis so large, one might *almost* suppose it was not, only Johnny is the last man in the world to take a silver tea-pot, and return a plated, unless *you* had ordered him to do so." Our dear cousin then said, "No, no, it is silver very plainly; besides here is the hall-mark," to which she with a *grunt*, "Oh you're sure 'tis silver, very well." I then proceeded in my admirations and explanations of this dear, delightful tea-pot, and spoke with great admiration of the manner in which the *arms* were engraved—how well they were executed—"and here," says I, "is your crest, my cousin, on the other side." She immediately called out with great vociferation, "What is the crest?"—"Oh," says I, "the bear's paw and cherry-branch." She then screamed louder, "Oh, that's not right, that's not right."—"Yes, yes," said our cousin, "it is quite right;" to which she rejoined, "No, that is not the Unwin crest—the other tea-pot was mine."—"Oh," says I, "our friend Johnny never thought of that I daresay," and Mr. Cowper added, "Pho, pho, what does that signify between you and me?" She hemmed and grunted again, and at last said, "Well, I'm very glad Mr. Johnson has sent it to you, my man, very glad." And as she repeated this at different intervals thro' the whole evening, I gathered that she was *not glad at all*.

This little scene certainly does not present Lady Hesketh in a very engaging light, but it is obvious throughout the correspondence that she was inclined to grudge the rest of the world any share in her beloved cousin's affections, the same feeling being expressed, though in a milder form, in the following letter to Mr. Johnson, written in the winter of 1790:

How much I love and honour your enthusiastic zeal in the service of your friends, my good Sir John Croydon [one of Johnny's nicknames], let this quick return to your letter of yesterday assure you. Nothing delights me more than to see people active in the cause they have undertaken—that passive spirit which is often honoured by the name of good nature, but which is contented with sending good wishes to those they love from a comfortable sofa, or an easy chair, is not the sort of goodness which suits my taste. I like the impetuosity of your spirit which inclines you to do and think of everything by which you