Mr. J. to M--n

Dublin Nov. 20th. 1786

A month in Dublin without writing to Mr. Richardson, and not to offer so kind a condescension an invitation on his part, dear Sir, don't fancy either Mr. Sheridan or I will be so vain as to set about making an Apology for this omission. If a starved creature were invited to a Banquet & happened to outstay his time, no body would expect excuses from him, or if he attempted to make any apology some one would blame him. Short & with a smile of pity ask the poor wretch what unforseen misfortune had detained him. Let me make the application and instead of apologising to lament our situation that has thus long detained us from the rich Regard which a letter from you would have afforded us.

The truth is since our arrival here Mr. Sheridan has not had one single hour unemployed in very necessary very disagreeable Business. Perhaps your Goodness may ask me what I have been doing. Why, to answer you truly I have had my share too, but I dare not enlarge on these particulars for fear of falling into the Error I disclaimed at my first setting out, let me hasten then to tell you something of our present System of Theatrical & Domestic Affairs.

Mr. Sheridan, on his return, found he had a more formidable Enemy to combat against than any who had ever yet attacked him on the Necessity, & he was not even to be resisted by force nor overcome by strategy and yet an enemy that he was obliged to enter the Lists with, and was no other than a very poor and almost depopulated Town, such is Dublin at present. He has however been too well used to difficulties to let this wholly dishearten him & he resumed the reins of Government in his little theatrical Kingdom with great prudence & spirit. Having reformed many things in his own territory he thought it most prudent before he again launched out into a trusted idea to conciliate the Minds of the few remaining Malcontents for this purpose on his first appearance he made a short Speech to the Audience wherein in very few words he modestly vindicated himself from the Imputation of ever having intended to give public offence. As this was the utmost that was desired by any one of more than was expected by all, they would scarce permit him to finish what he had to say, indeed one half of it was drowned in their clamorous approbation. I believe almost every body of my Fashion that was left in Town was at the
Theatre that night & I found fully verified that we were bearing a word spoken in season how good it is. Since that, we have gone on with great peace & tranquility. The people are very glad to have their entertainment restored to them & only want to be a little richer to purchase it cheerfully every night, but this circumstance, calamitous as it is, in general gives us the advantage in regard to the theatre, for I never remember to have seen such constant, genteel audiences, but the cause is too melancholy a one for the effects to produce any pleasure, & it will call up all our tenderness, attention & diligence to get thro' as uneventful a season with any tolerable advantage.

As for my own little family, the joy of seeing them again has been embittered by the illness of my two youngest children, they have both had fevers & are but now recovering; our present abode we find on many accounts so inconvenient & in an air so very confined that we have been looking out for a little retreat where the children may breathe more freely, & my Thedlund be more master of his time. Such a portion of it I mean as he is not unavoidably obliged to pay in Dublin, we have at last fixed on a little place in the neighbourhood of the Dean of Down's Villa to which I believe I shall remove next week where Mr. Thedlund hopes to find time himself to tell you how much he esteem, how much he honours you, mean whilst he commission me to say that much for him.

I have troubled you with trifling particulars but I know the worthy heart I write to interest itself even in the trifling concerns of those it much prefers to approve.

Pray tell good Mrs. Richardson that I love her for her own sake as much as I do for yours, take that Mr. Richardson, Mrs. Patty, Mrs. Nancy & Mrs. Sally have all a just claim to my warmest affection & they have it: Charles talks of many green every day & is a sincere & constant lover of your whole family, indeed I should disown him if he were not pleased with you. When you see Mr. Duncomd to make our compliments to him of the amiable Mrs. Prescott when I get to my cottage at Glanparvin I will do myself the pleasure of writing to them both. I cannot bear the thought of being forgotten by persons of value. I have had a long letter.
Is this letter to Samuel Richardson? Yes

By his second wife he had five daughters: Mary, Martha, Anne, Sarah. In 1754 he moved to Parsons Green, Fulham.