

and by it, the least pretty that ever I saw her; and so I away and got a coach and home; and there with [my] wife and W. Hewers talking all the evening, my mind running on the business of the office, to see what more I can do to the rendering myself acceptable and useful to all and to the King: we to supper and to bed.

25. Up, and by water to St. James's and there with Mr. Wren did discourse about my great letter; which the Duke of York hath given him and he hath set it to be transcribed by Billup his man, whom, as he tells me, he can most confide in for secrecy. And is much pleased with it, and earnest to have it with us; and he and I are like to be much together in the considering how to reform the Office, and that by the Duke of York's command. Thence I, mightily pleased with this success, away to the office, where all the morning, my head full of this business; and it is pretty how Lord Brouncker this day did tell me how he hears that a design is on foot to remove us out of the office, and proposes that we two do agree to draw up a form of a new constitution of the office, there to provide remedies for the evils we are now under, that so we may be beforehand with the world – which I agreed to, saying nothing of my design. And the truth is, he is the best man of them all, and I would be glad, next myself, to save him; for as he deserves best, so I doubt he needs his place most. So home to dinner at noon, and all the afternoon busy at the office till night; and then, with my mind full of businesses now in my head, I to supper and to bed.

26-27. Up, and to the office, where all the morning almost, busy about business against the afternoon; and we met a little, to sign two or three things at the Board of moment. And thence at noon home to dinner, and so away to Whitehall by water, in my way to the Old Swan finding a great many people gathered together in Cannon street about a man that was working in the ruins, and the ground did sink under him, and he sunk in and was forced to be dug out again, but without hurt. Thence to Whitehall; and it is strange to see with what speed the people employed do pull down Paul's steeple – and with what ease. It is said that it and the Quire are to be taken down this year, and another church begun in the room thereof the next. At Whitehall we met at the Treasury chamber, and there before the Lords did debate our draft of the victualling contract with the several bidders for it – which were Sir D. Gawden – Mr. Child and his fellows, and Mr. Dorrington and his – a poor