

nothing but that these pleasures do hinder me in my business, and the more by reason of our being to dine abroad tomorrow, and then Saturday next is appointed to meet again at my Lord Brouncker's lodgings and there to have the whole Quire of Italians. But then I do consider that this is all the pleasure I live for in the world, and the greatest I can ever expect in the best of my life; and one thing more, that by hearing this man tonight, and I think Capt. Cooke tomorrow and the Quire of Italians on Saturday, I shall be truly able to distinguish which of them pleases me truly best, which I do much desire to know and have good reason and fresh occasion of judging.

14. After dinnner by coach to my Lord Chancellor's, and there a meeting – the Duke of York – the Duke of Albemarle – and several other Lords of the Commission of Tanager; and there I did present a state of my accounts, and managed them well; and my Lord Chancellor did say, though he was in other things in an ill humour, that no man in England was of more method nor made himself better understood then myself. Thence away by coach with Sir H. Cholmly and Fitzgerald and Creed, setting down the two latter at the New Exchange; and H. Cholmly and I to the Temple and there walked in the dark in the walks, talking of news; and he surprizes me with the certain news that the King did last night in council declare his being in Treaty with the Dutch. God therefore give a good end to it, for I doubt it; and yet do much more doubt the issue of our continuing the war, for we are in no wise fit for it. And yet it troubles me to think what Sir H. Cholmly says, that he believes they will not give us any reparation for what we have suffered by the warr, nor put us into any better condition then what we were in before the war, for that will be shameful for us. Thence parted with him and home through the dark over the ruins by coach, with my sword drawn, to my office, where despatched some business; and so home to my chamber and to supper and to bed. This morning came up to my wife's bedside, I being up dressing myself, little Will Mercer to be her Valentine; and brought her name writ upon blue paper in gold letters, done by himself, very pretty – and we were both well pleased with it. But I am also this year my wife's Valentine, and it will cost me 5*l* – but that I must have laid out if we had not been Valentines. So to bed.