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Madrid, September 20, N. S.

FOR some Time past the Duke and Dutchess of Mirandola have had an Assembly at their House every Night of Persons of the first Quality in Madrid, to which all the Foreign Ministers frequently went. Their House in this Town wanting some Repairs at present, the Duke and Dutchess had borrowed for a few Weeks another House a little without the Town belonging to the Count d'Onate, to which they removed about ten Days ago, and where they continued their Assembly: This House stands low, having a large Garden behind it upon a rising Ground, the Wall of which almost joyns to that of the Town, beyond the Garden there are also other rising Grounds, though far from being mountainous. The Assembly there on the 15th Instant in the Evening happened to be thinner than usual, by Reason of the Illness of the Marquess de los Balbafes's Son, which hindered not only the said Marquess and his Lady from being there, but also the Dukes and Dutchesses of Medina-Celi and of Arcos, the Princess Pio, and the Ambassadors of Venice, who otherwise seldom failed. The Assembly then consisted only of the Duke and Dutchess of Mirandola, the Duke of Liria, the Duke of Attri, the Pope's Nuncio, the Ambassador of Venice, Prince Pio, the Prince of Cellamare, the Abbot Grimaldo, Don Tiberio Caraffa, Don Lelio Caraffa, and some few others: Who being met as usual, a violent Storm of Thunder and Lightning happened about Nine a Clock: The Dutchess of Mirandola being frightened left the Company, and went into her Chappel to pray, three Rooms from that of the Assembly, though upon the same Ground Floor; and about Ten a-Clock a Torrent of Water that had come from the rising Grounds having broke down the Wall of the Town, did the same to that of the Garden, and in an Instant burst open the Window-Shutters of the Ground Apartment, overturned all the Tables and

Lights, and filled the Rooms with Water: The Dutchess of Mirandola with her Maids were immediately drowned. The Men ran out into the Court-Yard before the House, which they found covered with Water, and Prince Pio endeavouring to save himself in the Street, was carried away by the Torrent and his Body was found the Day after two Leagues from Madrid: Don Tiberio Caraffa got upon the Top of a Coach, which overturning by the Force of the Stream was thrown against another, by which he received a Blow that laid his Head almost open, and he was immediately drowned: The Prince of Cellamare placed himself upon another Coach which likewise overturned, but he had the good Fortune to get again upon the Wheel, where he remained till Help was brought to him, yet he was extremely bruised and had swallowed a great Quantity of Water and Sand: The Duke of Liria was running the same Fate with Prince Pio, but being a good deal taller, and seeing by help of the Lightning a Window over his Head, he jumped up and caught hold of the Iron Grates before it, by which he held till the People in the upper Apartment let down Cords to him, by which they drew him up: The Ambassador of Venice not being able to get out of the Assembly-Room where the Water was ten Foot high, supported himself for two Hours upon two Chairs, which swam upon the Surface of the Water, till it abated enough for him to get out at the Door: As for the Pope's Nuncio and the Duke de Attri, they had left the Company half an Hour before the Accident happened: The rest of the Gentlemen were saved, but how not one of them is able to give a rational Account. By the Death of Prince Pio two very great Employments are become vacant, viz. that of Captain General of Catalonia, and Master of the Horse to the Princess of Asturias; and by Don Tiberio Caraffa's Death, that of Captain General of Guisuscoa.

Letters