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There were readings overlaying readings. It took a great effort, physically as much as mentally. As a reader, one was obliged to give oneself up simultaneously, eyes flicking from word to word, page to page, across a number of texts (which we may also call books, including their gutters and margins, their headers and footers, their spines and bindings) following the suggestion that one thing (that is, types of writing and thus, types of reading) may very well become another when read as another. It may be troubling when distinctions fail, for there is a certain security in naming – a name is indeed something. A number of choices appeared: hunter or gatherer, artist or gardener. The themes are contradiction, difference, incompatibility. It should not be a question of one or the other, yet often it comes down to that, to the logical impossibility having cake and eating it too, to speak in a figure of speech that neither allows more than is reasonable nor the possession of two incompatible things, and suggests a trade-off, one for the other. The proverb appears in a farce by Swift, entitled *Polite Conversation*, changing its delivery in another version, after the author's death, *Tittle Tattle*, the good manners of exchange becoming gossip, rumour, hearsay, with very little to do with truth though perhaps a great deal to do with pleasure (what delight there is in scandal). In French, it is to want the butter and the money from the sale of the butter, and sometimes the dairymaid's smile or arse is added to the expression. The conversation made extended reference to a little archive, the collection of letters, letters that arrived at their destination but remained unread for many years. A letter is, of course, despite the *caveat* above, like a book, both a message and an object. It may be unfinished yet posted anyway. It may be written in order to be abandoned or unopened. I noted that to follow to the letter is to do precisely as instructed, I would return to the letters two days later.