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THE COMPLETE
LETTER-WRITER;
OR,
POLITE ENGLISH SECRETARY.

CONTAINING
FAMILIAR LETTERS

On the most important OCCASIONS in LIFE.

ALSO

A very great Variety of elegant LETTERS for SPECIMENS of fine WRITING and Improvement of STYLE, collected from the most approved Authors, with many Originals interspersed, on the most common Occurrences.

AMONGST MANY OTHERS, ARE LETTERS ON

TRADE and COMMERCE, || RELIGION and Moral INSTRUCTION,
The RELATIVE and other DUTIES,
COURTSHIP & MARRIAGE, || CONJUGAL AFFECTION,
MORTALITY & ETERNITY;

ALSO SEVERAL

Descriptive, humorous, entertaining, and instructive EPISTLES, on almost every Subject.

The whole comprehending a System of Morality, and a Display of the social and other interesting Duties, with proper Rules of Conduct in our several Stations in Life.

To which is subjoined,

An ESSAY on the proper MODE of EDUCATION; with occasional Reflections and Remarks, tending to improve the present prevailing Systems and Plans of academical and boarding-school Instruction. With an ADDRESS to PARENTS on this important Subject.

What can bespeak the Gentleman, the Scholar, or the Man of Business, better than a well wrote Letter? How very persuasive it is! how anxiously it pleads its Master's Cause! presenting a beautiful Picture of his Mind! Be the Theme Love, Humanity, Religion, Business, or what it may, such a Letter comes with a thousand Arguments: For when cloathed in Purity of Style, and the silent Eloquence which our Language so copiously affords, it is almost resistless.

A N O N.

V O L. II.

L O N D O N:

Printed for S. CROWDER, PATER-NOSTER-Row,
AND
B. C. COLLINS, SALISBURY, 1789.

P R E F A C E.

THE distinguished Reception of the first Volume of this Work through seventeen large Impressions, is the best Test of its Merit, and the high Reputation it holds in Society. In a Nation no less celebrated for Commerce than its Advancement in all the liberal Arts and Refinement of Life, to excel in Epistolary Correspondence is not only highly requisite, but a most valuable and polite Accomplishment. It is not enough that the Writing be fair to the Eye, and will stand the Test of Grammar; but there should be a Stile and Manner throughout a Letter, bespeaking the Writer redde in the more elegant Classic Authors, and possessed of Diction to be found only amongst the polite and informed. The first Volume of this Work is intended to introduce Youth in this charming Art, from the tenderest Age, to more advanced Life; but much Solicitude has been expressed by many Ladies and Gentlemen, that in Letters upon Occasions more immediately concerning the great World, active and social Life, it is by no Means sufficiently ample. The Editors have long felt this Defect, and it is their principal Reason for publishing a second Volume.

THE numerous Letters composing this Volume, comprehend Business and Pleasure, religious and moral Happiness, the relative and social Duties, conjugal Affection, and the Concerns of our present and future Life: They are intended at once to fix the Stile in Elegance and Ease; and to instruct the Head, and amend the Heart: They are given as Specimens of Chastity in Language, and Pertinency of Sentiment; and, it is presumed, will be found by no Means unacceptable to the more learned Reader. To him whose Pen is already cloathed in elegant Fluency, they may teach some new Sentiment; or at least afford solid Entertainment in a vacant Hour; and, to all, they will certainly present many very valuable Ideas and Maxims, for their just Conduct upon the great Theatre of human Life. Such is our End and Aim:—We present a Work partly Original, and in part selected; and those Letters which best dictate to the Head and the Heart, have been most preferred.

The EDITORS.

C O N-

C O N T E N T S.

P A R T V.

EASY and FAMILIAR LETTERS, calculated to train
the Mind to a proper Sense of Duty in the different
Stages of Life.

LETTER

I. <i>A N affectionate Letter from a College Tutor to a young Gentleman, who had been his Pupil</i>	<i>Page 1</i>
II. <i>From the young Gentleman, in Answer</i>	<i>3</i>
III. <i>From a young Lady to her Friend, on the Scarcity of worthy Men</i>	<i>5</i>
IV. <i>A Sequel to the preceding. Her Portrait of a Husband</i>	<i>7</i>
V. <i>On a Town and Country Life. To a young Gentleman</i>	<i>10</i>
VI. <i>Contested Elections ruinous to Virtue and Merit</i>	<i>12</i>
VII. <i>From a Gentleman just returned from abroad to his Friend</i>	<i>15</i>
VIII. <i>In Answer to the former</i>	<i>16</i>
IX. <i>On the Danger of trusting too much to Appearances. From a Brother to a Sister</i>	<i>18</i>
X. <i>The Advantages of refined Conversation. From a Lady to her Friend</i>	<i>ib.</i>
XI. <i>A friendly Letter to a Lady in Town, from a Gentleman in the Country</i>	<i>20</i>
XII. <i>On the Nature of Education, and the Necessity of a gradual Acquaintance with the World</i>	<i>ib.</i>
XIII. <i>Aaron Hill, Esq. to Mrs. Mollet</i>	<i>21</i>
XIV. <i>Thoughts on complimentary Expressions in friendly Epistles</i>	<i>22</i>
XV. <i>On Simplicity of Style</i>	<i>23</i>
XVI. <i>On the Necessity of endeavouring to accomplish a Reformation of Manners</i>	<i>ib.</i>
XVII. <i>On the Pleasures and Advantages of a Country Life</i>	<i>24</i>
XVIII. <i>To a Lady, unexpectedly deprived of her Fortune</i>	<i>25</i>
XIX. <i>From the Lady, in Answer</i>	<i>26</i>
XX. <i>From a Gentleman to his Friend, on a second connubial Engagement</i>	<i>27</i>
XXI. <i>On the Inconsistency of wishing to live long, and yet fearful of being old</i>	<i>28</i>
XXII. <i>The Reason of the Opinion, in Answer</i>	<i>29</i>
XXIII. <i>From Aaron Hill, Esq. to Governor Graham</i>	<i>30</i>
XXIV. <i>On expressing our Gratitude to the Supreme Being, and the good Effects of religious Examples</i>	<i>31</i>
XXV. <i>An unwelcome Visitor described</i>	<i>33</i>
XXVI. <i>To a Friend, announcing an intended Visit</i>	<i>ib.</i>
XXVII. <i>On the sweets of domestic Life, from a Lady to her Friend</i>	<i>34</i>
XXVIII. <i>On the Consequences of a base and cruel Disposition. The hard-hearted seldom commiserated under Misfortunes</i>	<i>36</i>
XXIX. <i>On the Caprice of Fortune, and the Duty of Resignation; To a Gentleman who had met with frequent Disappointments in Life</i>	<i>37</i>
A 3	XXX. <i>Eq.</i>

XXX. To a married Lady abroad, from a Gentleman recommending the Care of his Son	39
XXXI. To a Friend. The Contentment arising from rural Bleff- ings	40
XXXII. From a young Gentleman at School in England to his Father in the Island of Jersey	42
XXXIII. The Father's Answer	43
XXXIV. From a young Gentleman at School in the Country to his Uncle in Town	ib.
XXXV. A Letter of Gratitude from Mr. Hughes to Earl Cowper	44
XXXVI. A Letter of Thanks from a young Gentleman to a Clergy- man who had been his private Tutor	45
XXXVII. Of the Blessings of Benevolence. From a young Gentle- man to a Lady who had requested a Favour for a Person in Dis- tress	46
XXXVIII. From a Lady to her Friend on the Day of her Daughter's Marriage	47
XXXIX. A familiar Description of a retired Country Life	48
XL. A friendly Epistle from a Lady to a Gentleman	50
XLI. On the Necessity of the Soul's being active. From the same	ib.
XLII. From Dr. Watts to Mr. Duncombe	52
XLIII. From a Gentleman to his Nephew at Oxford	53
XLIV. On the Dangers and Temptations of the World. From a Lady to her Friend	54
XLV. On rural Pleasures and the Follies of Fashion. To a young Gentleman	55
XLVI. The Advantages of a good Education. From a Father to a Son	57
XLVII. From a young Lady of fourteen to her Friend	58
XLVIII. On the proper Education and Treatment of young Ladies	60
XLIX. From a Lady in London to her Friend, before her Retirement into the Country	61
L. In answer to the preceding	62
LI. A Letter of Introduction from a Lady abroad to her Friend in England	ib.
LII. From a young Lady to her Mother, lamenting her Absence	63
LIII. On the Use and Importance of mathematical Knowledge. To a young Nobleman	64
LIV. On the Utility and Importance of Friendly Advice. To a young Gentleman	65

P A R T VI.

Entertaining, instructive, and humorous LETTERS, on
various Subjects, and on various Occasions.

I. An humorous Letter of Thanks. From the Rev. Mr. Straight to Bishop Hoadly	66
II. An humorous Epistle to Sir James Honeywood in Town, from his Friend in the Country	67
III. From a single Lady to her Nephew at Oxford	68
IV. In Answer to the preceding	69
V. From a Gentleman to a Lady who had got the Ague	70
VI. Re-	

VI. Reflections on the Absence of Friends. To a Lady	71
VII. On the Happiness of a liberal and generous Disposition. Benevolence and Charity a Duty incumbent on Persons in affluent Circumstances	72
VIII. On the Seat of the Soul. To a Lady from a Gentleman	74
IX. From a Lady, just recovered from a violent Fit of Sickness	75
X. From a Lady in Town to her Friend in the Country	76
XI. From a Lady abroad, describing the Punishment of a vain, impertinent Coxcomb	78
XII. From a Gentleman in Town to his Friend, ridiculing his Method of spending Time	80
XIII. In Answer to the preceding	81
XIV. From a Country Girl in Distress, to a Lady, requesting a Favour	82
XV. From the Lady, in Answer	83
XVI. On the State of Life and Manners in different Ages	84
XVII. From a Lady at Bath to her Friend in Town	85
XVIII. On rural Diversions. From a Gentleman to a Lady	87
XIX. A familiar Epistle from a Lady abroad to her Friend in England	88
XX. A facetious Expostulation from a Lady to her Friend, occasioned by her not receiving a Letter	89
XXI. An Apology for the preceding Letter, acknowledging the Receipt of some Letters after it was sent	90
XXII. On the disagreeable Consequences false Breeding is frequently productive of	91
XXIII. From a little Lady of six Years old to her Mother. In the Style of true and artless Simplicity	93
XXIV. On the requisite Qualifications of an Historian	94
XXV. An Application in behalf of a poor Soldier	95
XXVI. An entertaining Epistle from Bishop Herring to Mr. Duncumb	ib.
XXVII. An humorous Letter from a Gentleman on his Travels to his Friend in England	98
XXVIII. To a Lady, on selfish Shrewdness and Suspicion	99
XXIX. To a Gentleman, on the Folly of complaining of the present Times	101
XXX. On the Value of Time. To a noble Lord, on being disappointed of seeing him	102
XXXI. A friendly Apology for not answering Letters	ib.
XXXII. An humorous Rebuke to a Friend for his Neglect to write	103
XXXIII. On the Importance of following good Advice	ib.
XXXIV. On the imprudent Conduct of a Lady after her Marriage	104
XXXV. In Answer, with some Reflections on the Effects of improper Education	105
XXXVI. On improper Conduct towards Dependents. To a young Lady	107
XXXVII. From a Lady to her Son-in-Law, the Year after his Marriage	109
XXXVIII. An humorous Description of the Nature of familiar Correspondence. To a Lady from an elderly Gentlewoman	110
XXXIX. Re-	

viii C O N T E N T S.

XXXIX. Remarks on the Nature of Conversation. To a young Gentleman	111
XL. On the common Notions of Friendship. To a young Gentleman	112
XLI. An humorous Letter to a Friend, on the Report of a very extraordinary; and unexpected Incident	113

P A R T VII.

LETTERS to and from Persons of different Sexes or their Friends, on the interesting Subjects of LOVE and MARRIAGE.

I. From a Gentleman to a Lady, an Approbation of her Conduct	115
II. Reflections on the epistolary Correspondence of Lovers. To a Lady	116
III. The following Letter from a Lady in the Country to her Husband in Town, describes a happy Mixture of the Operations of the human Passions, and of the rational Faculties	117
IV. From a Gentleman to a Lady, an Excuse for not waiting on her for some Days	118
V. To a Lady from a Gentleman, whose Company she had solicited for a musical Party; with a polite Apology for his being deprived of that Pleasure	119
VI. The following is an Instance of Delicacy highly commendable in a Gentleman previous to an open Declaration of his Sentiments	120
VII. On personal Attentions in mixed Companies	121
VIII. A congratulatory Letter from a Gentleman to his young Friend, with Directions for his Choice of a Wife	ib.
IX. From a Gentleman to a Lady, who had hinted his Propensity to deep Contemplation	123
X. To a Gentleman, on the Necessity of restraining his Affections	124
XI. From a Lady, in Answer to a Gentleman who had sent her a Basket of Flowers	125
XII. In Answer to the preceding	126
XIII. A Lesson to Parents, respecting the Disposal of their Children in Marriage	127
XIV. On the disagreeable Consequences frequently produced by second Marriages	129
XV. A Sea-Officer's Letter on the Subject of his approaching Marriage	130
XVI. From a young Woman, a Letter of Gratitude to her Preserver	132
XVII. To a Lady after her Recovery from a dangerous Sickness	133
XVIII. From the same to the same	134
XIX. To a Friend, on the Subject of hopeless Love	136
XX. From the same to the same, on the same Subject, after Sickness	137
XXI. An open Declaration of a Gentleman to a Lady, with whom he had been for some Time acquainted	139
XXII. To a young Lady from a Gentleman to whom she was engaged	ib.
XXIII. To	

XXIII. To a Gentleman from his Friend, on a young Lady who had made him an Overture	141
XXIV. To a Lady, alluded to in the preceding	ib.
XXV. To a Lady, from a Gentleman, complaining of her Delay to reward his Passion	142
XXVI. From the Lady, in Answer to the preceding	143
XXVII. From a Lady to her Friend. A pleasing Description of a Family	145
XXVIII. An Answer to the preceding, with some Reflections on the Choice of a Wife	147
XXIX. To a Friend, on his Wife's Want of Oeconomy	ib.
XXX. To a Lady, whose Coquetry had burried her into an indiscreet Marriage. On the Duties of a married State	149
XXXI. To a Lady from a Gentleman, describing the State of his Mind	151
XXXII. To a young Lady from a Gentleman, in Answer to her Account of some slanderous Reports of him	152
XXXIII. From a Mother to her Daughter, congratulating her on the Birth of a Son	153
XXXIV. The Duties of married Ladies, in a Letter to a Daughter	ib.
XXXV. On the Affection of Wit in young Ladies. To a Female Friend	154
XXXVI. From a Gentleman to his Friend, on returning from abroad	155
XXXVII. From a young Lady's Friend to her Mother. An Overture of Marriage on Behalf of a young Gentleman	156
XXXVIII. A Reply in Favour of the Proposal, with some useful Reflections	ib.
XXXIX. From a young Gentleman to his Friends, on his Prospect of successful Love	158
XL. The Folly and Cruelty of unmeaning Compliments exemplified. To a fashionable young Gentleman	159

P A R T VIII.

Exemplary, descriptive, and pathetic LETTERS, wrote by Persons of Eminence and Abilities.

I. On Learning, and a proper Acquaintance with the World	162
II. To the Author of <i>Clarissa</i> , on that celebrated Performance	164
III. Aaron Hill, Esq. to Lord Tyrconnel	165
IV. On the Prejudices of the World, with respect to Learning and learned Men. From a Gentleman in Town to his Father in the Country	166
V. Reflections upon undue Compliance with the Customs of the World. From a Clergyman in the Country to his Son in Town	168
VI. To a Lady under great Distress and Anxiety of Mind, from her Friend	170
VII. A complimentary Epistle from Mr. Pope to Mr. Hughes	171
VIII. From Mr. Hughes to Earl Co-wper. On his resigning the Office of Lord Chancellor	172
IX. From a Nobleman to his Son on leaving the University	173
X. From	

X. From a Lady to her Brother. An Exhortation to Oeconomy and Frugality	175
XI. From a Gentleman to his Sister, in Answer to the preceding	176
XII. On the present Inequality of Rewards and Punishments. To a worthy Gentleman in Distress	177
XIII. To a Gentleman who had the Misfortune to break his Leg by a Fall	178
XIV. From a Lady to her Friend, describing the Conduct of a Gentleman lately reformed from an inveterate Habit of Swearing	179
XV. The Blessings of Resignation. From a Lady to her Friend	180
XVI. From a Gentleman in embarrassed Circumstances to a neighbouring Earl	181
XVII. From the Earl, in Answer; a Pattern for the Great	ib.
XVIII. On the Fall of Dueling. To a Gentleman who had declined accepting a Challenge	182
XIX. To a Lady from a Gentleman, describing his Distress on the Death of a Friend	183
XX. On the Exercise of our Reason and Freedom of Enquiry in Matters of Religion	184
XXI. To a Gentleman from his Sister, who fancied he had Cause of Displeasure against her Husband	186
XXII. The Gentleman's Reply to the preceding	187
XXIII. From a Lady abroad to her Friend in England	ib.
XXIV. Mr. Hughes to Mr. Addison	189
XXV. To Mr. Duncombe from Bishop Herring, a descriptive and entertaining Epistle	190
XXVI. To a young Lady just recovered from a severe Sickness	191
XXVII. On the Nature and Tendency of metaphysical Writings, and of their Use and Abuse. To a Metaphysical Writer	193
XXVIII. On the Nature of Gratitude. To Sir John North, Kt.	194
XXIX. On the Happiness of a contented Disposition. To a young Lady	195
XXX. From a Lady to her Brother, a Congratulation on his Recovery from a grievous Indisposition	196
XXXI. From a Lady to her Friend, giving an Account of her Brother's ill Health	197
XXXII. From one Sister to another, with Reflections on her improper Conduct	ib.
XXXIII. The Variety of the great World, with the Advantages of Rides, duly exercised, as exemplified in the Character of a Nobleman. To a young Gentleman	199
XXXIV. To the Rev. J. Duncombe from the celebrated Author of Clarissa	201
XXXV. From Archibishop Herring to the Rev. Dr. George Benson, an eminent dissenting Teacher, on the Blessings of Toleration	202
XXXVI. A Letter of Thanks for a Favour conferred upon the Writer in his Absence	203
XXXVII. On writing Letters, and the Necessity of answering them duly	ib.
XXXVIII. To a young Lady, on the Injustice and Cruelty of judging others	204
XXXIX. On the Advantages of innocent Employment. To a young Gentleman	205
XL. The	

XL. <i>The Qualifications of an independent Senator described. To a young Gentleman from a Nobleman</i>	206
XLI. <i>On due Confidence in Professions of Friendship. From a Lady to her Son-in-Law</i>	208
XLII. <i>On taking Care of one's Health. To a Lady</i>	209
XLIII. <i>From a Gentleman to his Brother-in-Law on his Marriage</i>	210
XLIV. <i>From a Gentleman to his Constituents, in Gratitude for their Election to serve in Parliament</i>	211
XLV. <i>On the Folly of Indolence in a State of Perplexity</i>	ib.
XLVI. <i>On the Pleasures of familiar Friendship. To a Lady from her Mother</i>	212
XLVII. <i>On the Choice of proper Objects of Charity. To a young Gentleman</i>	213
XLVIII. <i>On the Satisfaction and Pleasure of a religious Life</i>	214
XLIX. <i>A Letter of Introduction, on Behalf of a young Gentleman. From a Lady in England to her Daughter abroad</i>	215
L. <i>From a Gentleman to his Friend, on Recovery from an alarming Sickness</i>	216
LI. <i>From a Gentleman to his Friend, in Answer to a Letter acknowledging the Error of his former Conduct</i>	217
LII. <i>A facetious Letter from a Gentleman to his Cousin at School. On the Importance of correct Writing</i>	218
LIII. <i>To a Lady, on the Necessity and Importance of attending to Health</i>	219
LIV. <i>On the Advantage of studying the Nature of particular Constitutions</i>	221
LV. <i>On the Nature of Time, and the Changes produced by it</i>	222
LVI. <i>On the Foundations of Virtue and Vice. To a Lady</i>	ib.
LVII. <i>On the Nature of Fashions and Propriety in Dress. From a Lady to her Friend</i>	223

P A R T IX.

LETTERS wrote mostly on great and solemn Occasions, or on the most serious and important Subjects.

I. <i>On the Death of a Patron, from a Clergyman in the Country to his Son in Town</i>	225
II. <i>An affectionate Letter on the Loss of a Friend</i>	227
III. <i>In Answer to the preceding</i>	ib.
IV. <i>An Epistle of Condolence to a Gentleman on the Death of his Lady</i>	228
V. <i>On the Death of an only Son. From a Lady to her Friend</i>	229
VI. <i>The Vanity of terrestrial Enjoyments, with Reflections on our Duty to our Creator. From a Lady after Sickness</i>	231
VII. <i>To a Lady on the Death of her Husband</i>	232
VIII. <i>On the Death of Mr. Richardson, the celebrated Author of Sir Charles Grandison, &c. To a Friend</i>	234
IX. <i>A young Gentleman's Answer to a Challenge, highly deserving the most attentive Consideration</i>	235
X. <i>On the Necessity of preparing for Death. To a Friend</i>	236
XI. <i>On the Loss of a Friend. To a Gentleman</i>	ib.
XII. <i>Re-</i>	

XII. Reflections on Mortality, occasioned by the Death of a Friend	237
XIII. From a young Clergyman to his generous Friend, who had procured him a Living	238
XIV. From Mr. Needler to Mr. Duncombe. On the Imperfection of our present Condition	ib.
XV. From a Lady who had lost her Son, a promising Youth of nine- teen	239
XVI. To a Lady, seized with immoderate Grief on her Husband's Death	240
XVII. To a Lady, on the Comforts and Advantages of Religion	242
XVIII. From Archibishop Herring to Mr. Duncombe in his last Ill- ness	245
XIX. From a Lady, in Answer to a Letter of Condolence on the Loss of a Friend	246
XX. From a Lady in Town to her Friend in the Country, describing her Husband's dangerous Sickness	ib.
XXI. To a young Clergyman on the Subject of Oratory	247
XXII. From a Clergyman to his Friend. On Philosophy and Re- ligion	248
XXIII. On the Impiety of arraigning Providence. To a young Lady	249
XXIV. On the Duty of Resignation. To a Friend	250
XXV. To a Lady, on the Death of her Husband	251
XXVI. Reflections on a well-spent Life, and its Advantages at the Hour of Death. To a noble Lord	252
XXVII. From a Clergyman to his Friend, during his last Sickness	253
XXVIII. From the same to the same, in a more advanced State of his Illness	254
XXIX. On the melancholy Effects of youthful Dissipation. To a young Lady	255
XXX. From a Lady to her Friend, on the Pleasures and Advan- tages of Morality	256
XXXI. In Answer to an Epistle describing the Sickness of a Friend, with Reflections on a Death-bed Scene	257
XXXII. Religion, the only solid Foundation for Futurity. From a Tutor abroad to his Friend in England	258
XXXIII. On the Death of Friends, with some useful Reflections. To a Gentleman	260
XXXIV. On the Rheumatism and its Effects. From a Lady to her Daughter	262
XXXV. The late Lord Buckingham's Letter, when Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, to his particular Friend Dr. Cradock, Archibishop of Dublin; congratulating his Recovery from a putrid sore Throat	263
XXXVI. Reflections on an early and immature Death	ib.
XXXVII. On the Inhumanity of speedy Interments, and the Ne- cessity of steady and persevering Patience. To a Gentleman in England	264
XXXVIII. Reflections on the Death of Friends, with the Effects of excessive Joy or Sorrow. From a Lady to her Friend	266
An ESSAY on the present prevailing MODES OF EDUCATION, and a rational one pointed out; with an Address to Parents on this important Subject	268



The COMPLETE LETTER-WRITER.

P A R T V.

Easy and familiar LETTERS, calculated to train the Mind to a proper Sense of Duty in the different Stages of Life.

L E T T E R I.

An affectionate Letter from a College Tutor to a young Gentleman who had been his Pupil.

Dear Sir,

THE Pleasure I took in executing the Office of College Tutor to you here, left an agreeable Impression upon my Mind. Your ingenuous Heart and sweet Disposition engaged my Affections to you at the Time, and have interested me in every Thing which has since befallen you. I have made Enquiry after your Situation and Conduct, and have gained Intelligence of every Step you have taken since you left College. Your Guardian—good Heaven! what a Guardian for a virtuous Youth!—finding you have not acquired the Ton of fashionable Life, nor the Spirit of Vanity and Dissipation, has sent you to Lady Belmour to finish your Education, and to give you what he is pleased to call the Polish of a fine Gentleman. Being also informed that you have not yet disgraced the Character you acquired in the early Part of your Life; nor quitted the Path of

Virtue for that of Vice, I have formed a Wish and preserved some Hope that I may still be of some Service to you. The Situation you are in at present is similar to that of the young Hercules, balancing between Virtue and Pleasure; but you will permit me to shew you the surrounding Dangers, and point out the Path whereby you may escape them. You are cast upon the Island of Calypso, who has ordered her Nymphs to spread their Toils, and exert all their Wiles to ensnare you; and the Goddess herself has not lost all her Powers of Attraction. But sensual Pleasure is an enchanted Cup, which intoxicates the Heart and stupifies the Reason; and while the Soul is in the State of Inebriation, all its nobler Faculties are suspended, if not lost. The Heart is insensibly corrupted and depraved; and gradually loses all its finest Perceptions, till at length it becomes wholly immersed in Grossness and Brutality. It was not for such a State that your honest Heart was made; it despairs the Bondage, nor can I believe that the Chains fit easy upon you till I am assured of it from yourself. If my Conjectures and Hopes are well founded, write to me, and either encourage or forbid my future Admonitions. As to Bellinda, she is the Priestess of Venus, and the convenient Friend of both Sexes. She keeps a Gaming-house all the Winter in Town, and is visited by People who, in the present Age, pass for Persons of Rank and Character; but in the Summer she carries on her Business in the Country, where she provides Mistresses for Youths of Quality and Fortune, and Husbands for Girls of fashionable Education and doubtful Virtue. Through her Mediation, old jointured Dowagers purchase young Husbands, and toothless Dotards young Wives; and she even condescends to accept a Consideration for these Services. She has methodized Pleasure into a System, and conducts her Offices with an Air of Decorum and Regularity, which conceals the Deformity of Vice from its captivated and ensnared Votaries. But let me caution you to guard against her seducing Arts; and if you have hitherto avoided them, make Haste to escape the Snares. Should you have been betrayed into the deluding Artifices, break your Fetters at once, before Habit has riveted them upon you. My Friendship and Coun-

sel

sel shall pursue you till you refuse me with Scorn and Contempt; till I am well assured that you have given up your nobler Hopes and virtuous Prospects; and till you become the voluntary Votary of Vice and Folly, I will persist to call myself

Your affectionate Friend and Monitor,
THOMAS ADAMS.

LETTER II.

From the young Gentleman, in Answer.

SIR,

I Have been most agreeably surprised by a Letter from my worthy Tutor and Friend Mr. Adams, and still more gratified with the Contents, upon which I have often meditated with increased Pleasure. Is it possible, that the Qualities he imputes to me can have given me a Place in his Memory? It is his enlarged and benevolent Soul, which, in Pity to my Youth and Situation, has induced him to extend his Hand to my Assistance, to extricate me from the Snares of Vice and Folly. In this Manner do wise and good Men give Consequence to those they instruct, in order to lead them into the Paths of Virtue. A Man who thinks himself unable to overcome Temptation, will sink into Inactivity and Despondency; and he who is encouraged to exert his Ability may be assured of Success. By the generous Artifice you have used with me, of giving me Credit with myself, you have prompted me to aspire to your Friendship; but whatever Motive I am indebted to for it, I receive it as a Gift from Heaven. For such a Friend I have often sighed, and sighed as I thought in vain, not even daring to hope that such an one would be granted me; it is you, my generous Tutor and Friend, who have held up the Light of Truth before my Eyes, and shewing me the Dangers which surrounded me, have given Directions how to escape them. With my whole Heart, therefore, do I embrace your Friendship. Continue, my dear Sir, your generous Cares for me; for to you alone will I be accountable for my future Conduct; to you alone will

communicate all my Steps. My Actions and Motives shall ever be open to your Inspection; and considering you as my second Conscience, your Admonitions shall encourage or restrain all my Undertakings. What Genius gives you Intelligence of every Thing which happens to me? As one of your Familiars, it must be a good one; and tells the Truth when he compares this Mansion to Calypso's Island, though it more resembles the Isle of Cyprus. The Nymphs and Swains breathe that Air of Softness and Voluptuousness which is so contagious to all who encourage its Influence. The Charm has not yet infatuated me; how long I should have continued to resist it, is uncertain. Sometimes my Heart seemed half inclined to give Way; but the Shield of Minerva, which you have held over me, has dissolved the Enchantment, and I feel myself delivered. Inclosed I send you a Letter which has lately arrived from my *exemplary* Guardian, as the first Proof of my Ingenuousness. My Heart rises with Indignation, mingled with Contempt, whenever I am led to think of him and his Instructions. It was his Company and Advice which misled my Father into Courses which brought upon him both Shame and Sorrow. He severely repented upon his Death-bed the Sins and Follies of a Life spent unprofitably to himself and others. I have frequently wondered that he did not alter his Will, which gave this Man the Care of my Person and Fortune. God of his Goodness gave me a wise and virtuous Mother, the greatest Blessing a Child can receive; for as her Precepts were the Guide of my Childhood, so her Remembrance will ever be sacred to me. Too soon was she taken from me, or she would to this Hour have been my Monitor and Director. But to supply her Loss, Heaven has sent me a Preceptor and a Friend in Mr. Adams; and by his Advice and Assistance I trust I shall escape the Labyrinth of Vice and Folly, into which this unprincipled Guardian and his Emissaries have brought me. If you can think it worth your Attention, I will tell you, my dear Friend, all that has passed here lately; and when you shall be acquainted with all the Circumstances of my present Situation, I shall then hope to receive your Advice upon it. Should you judge it necessary, I will immediately burst the Bands

The Complete LETTER-WRITER. 5

which detain me here, and come to you at Cambridge; but I have either *convinced* or *persuaded* myself, that though I dwell in the Land of Vice and Folly, I am engaged in the Service of Virtue. On this Subject I rest for your Decision. For nothing shall I be so anxious, as for your Advice, Instruction, and Correction; therefore write to me soon in any or all these Respects, as you shall think necessary, and I will receive them with Submission and Obedience. Be assured that I shall never be wanting in Gratitude for the Protection and Friendship which you have ever shewn to,

Dear Sir,
Your very obliged
And grateful humble Servant,
JAMES WILLIAMS.

LETTER III.

From a young Lady to her Friend, on the Scarcity of worthy Men.

MY dear Mrs. Elliot deserves my particular Thanks for her Portraits of the two charming Ladies. She has excited the most ardent Desire in the Breast of her Emilia to view the bright Originals, and to rekindle those sweet Affections which warmed our infant Bosoms. Your Wish that a Passion more powerful than Friendship may detain me at Home, is generous, and surpasses even the Desire which you, who cannot be insincere, express for my Company. But why this Wish? I see, my dear Mrs. Elliot, that you suspect the Love of Liberty to have suppressed the tenderer Affections in your Emilia's Heart; but I must not suffer you to think so. To you I would display the inmost Recesses of my Breast, and am impatient to unfold every Sentiment which it contains. Every tender Emotion, every soft Sensation, which can excite to virtuous Love, are congenial to my Heart. Perhaps it is ever too tremblingly alive to such Impressions, but I have never yet been blest with the Sight of that Man to whom Reason could

authorise me to direct its warmest Affections. I could give up my Soul to Love, but I fear the Repentance which must follow the Admission of an unsuitable Guest into my Heart, having never yet met with an Object entirely corresponding with my Ideas. I have hitherto been happy enough, though not without some Efforts (for what feeling Heart will not sometimes wander in Despite of Reason) to keep the Conqueror from making me his Captive. While my Mind was yet unformed, I confess that the first Starts of youthful Imagination, and the first ardent Wishes of Happiness, directed my Ideas to Love, as to the only Source of that Felicity which warmed my inexperienced Bosom with the Glow of Hope. I have often anticipated in Thought the Pleasures of a maturer Age; but Reason and Acquaintance with the World have shewn me how difficult this Happiness is to find, which I once thought so attainable. I do not even yet despair of meeting in the other Sex a Mind suited to my own; neither can I believe that Nature could design me for a solitary Being. But it is most true that this *rare Creature* and myself may possibly spend our Days apart, each sighing for the Mate our Hearts require; and probably, being lost in the wide Circuit of the World, we may never meet. If this should be the Case, I have an amiable Pattern before my Eyes, who is happier and more respectable in a single State than half the Wives of my Acquaintance. Let the World exclaim as much as it pleases, I shall think myself fully justified in pursuing my own Happiness rather than sacrificing my Peace to avoid the Censures of the ill-judging, or to gratify the Vanity even of a respected Relation. I fear you will think I place too high a Value on myself, and that I seem to think it scarce possible to find a Man sufficiently deserving of me. This is not my Idea; it is not Vanity, but a Consciousness of the Weakness of my own Heart. Perhaps my Temper may have been rendered too irritable by Indulgence and the constant Sunshine of Prosperity; this seems to deter me from placing myself in a Situation which requires so difficult a Line of Conduct as a Marriage in any Respect unsuitable. I want not something superior to the rest of Mankind, but something more adapted

adapted to myself. Indeed, my beloved Friend, possessed as I am of the Advantages of Youth and Fortune, I am far from happy. I have had some Admirers, who have possessed Qualities to engage my Esteem, and to merit some Return of Tenderness; but I have not yet seen the Character I should wish to associate with for Life. I am always fearful lest I should be surprised into such a Degree of Tenderness for any of these, which I might afterwards repent of. My Heart sighs for an Object, which may fill its tenderest Affections without wounding its Sensibility. Such a Man my Fancy can clearly delineate; and if you wish for his Picture, I will give it. But at present I must have some Compassion to your Patience, and shall only add my Aunt's Love, and an Assurance of the lasting Affection of your

EMILIA HORTON.

LETTER IV.

A Sequel to the preceding. Her Portrait of a Husband.

My dear Mrs. Elliot,

I Find myself obliged implicitly to subscribe to all your Observations, though it must be allowed that the State of Dependence is more absolute on our Side than that of the Men. Indeed I have so high an Idea of the Confidence necessary to be placed by the Wife in her Husband, that I cannot think without Horror on submitting to the Direction of one whose Judgment I could not prefer to my own. The Laws of Society, and even of Nature, have placed this Authority in that which ought to be the superior Sex; but Men unhappily are too often rendered unfit for this Pre-eminence by the much greater Temptations to which they are exposed. We are suffered to obey the Dictates of Religion, and animated by every Consideration to keep within the Bounds of Morality; while they have too many Inducements to depart from both. The Fortune indeed which Heaven has kindly bestowed upon me, is sufficient to give me all the Satisfactions of Life, even

8 The Complete LETTER-WRITER.

though the Man of my Choice should have nothing to add. If I should ever know a Mother's Name, I would not wish to see my Children great: Content to bestow on them a Competence, it should be my Care to teach them a better Road to Happiness than lies within the Regions of Wealth. It is my Wish to find a Man above the Temptations of Interest, the Allurements of Pleasure, and the Follies of Custom; who would lead with me the Life of Reason, and shun the Paths of Folly and Dissipation. It is my Wish to find the natural Powers of his Mind truly great; not exhausted by vain Researches, or overstrained by intense Application, but turned to every Study which can refine the Manners, or render Life delightful. I would wish him to have all the Learning becoming a Gentleman, and necessary to his own particular Employments. His amiable Qualities should be well mixed, and in equal Proportions; none of them should press forward before the rest. Superficial Observers may mistake or overlook the real Merits of such a Person. Some may wonder that a Man of such warm Feelings should have so much Prudence; for the Excellence of his Understanding appears only to Minds somewhat similar to his own. As this consists of a nice and penetrating Judgment of human Actions; it can only be known, in its utmost Extent, to very few, because his Benevolence always inclines him to shew the fairest Side of Things. His Heart is replete with every generous and refined Feeling; warm and steady in Friendship, he is particularly formed to enjoy all the Pleasures which can result from a Harmony of the Affections in every Connection of Life. His Knowledge of the human Heart teaches him what to expect from all, and how to direct his own Benevolence; so that his Temper is not likely to be soured by the Disappointments arising from ill-founded Attachments. It will perhaps be thought strange that a Man of an open, ardent Disposition should be so well skilled in the various Doublings of the human Breast; but he has read Men and Books together, and they have served as Comments on each other. It is a gross Error to think that Men of cold insensible Tempers are fittest for the Study of Mankind; for though they may penetrate so far as to find

the

the weak Side, they will oftener shew their Ignorance than their Knowledge, by judging of others from the Narrowness of their own Hearts. How different are the Views of the Man I describe ! who studies Mankind, not only to defend himself, but to diffuse Happiness around him, and to practise with more Exactness the golden Rule of reciprocal Well-doing. His Inclination, Reason, and Knowledge, also conspire to strengthen his Reverence for Religion. In Matters of Faith, as well as in the Wonders of the visible Creation, all Things beyond the Bounds of his Comprehension he puts to the Account of an all-wise Being, and rests satisfied. Politeness he learns from his natural Delicacy, and adds to it a thorough Knowledge and easy Practice of all the Forms of good Breeding. However ardent his Temper, yet his Manners are gentle ; his open Behaviour is guarded by his nice Judgment in Character, and he has no Reason to repent of it. He can assume a sprightly Air with innocent Triflers, as if Pleasantry was his *Forte* ; and is guarded against vicious Characters, neither fearing to censure any flagrant Indecorums, nor making War upon them with ill-timed Severities. By balancing nicely between himself and the World, he is Master of his Time and the Choice of his Company, but always preserves a proper Attention to his particular Interests. He peculiarly feels every refined and elegant Pleasure which arises from Works of Genius in Literature and the fine Arts ; though perhaps he is not critically skilled in every Trifle which is an Object of Taste. The Consciousness of intrinsic Worth defends him from Envy ; and the Consideration that many excel him in different Branches of Learning, and in some Powers of Genius, excludes Vanity from his Breast. The Temperance and Regularity of his Exercises both of Mind and Body give Reason to hope that his Perfections may be as lasting as they are engaging. His personal Atattractions, like those of his Mind, are rather pleasing than striking ; and though his peculiar Virtues are strongly marked in his Countenance, the Expression is still plainer on an intimate Acquaintance than at first Sight. But the Desire of appearing amiable to the Object of his highest Esteem, powerfully influences every small as well as important

10 The Complete LETTER-WRITER.

Action; convinced that those only who studiously conform to the Taste of each other, can enjoy true Happiness. This is too natural a Character to be supposed out of Existence; and I am apt to think such an one was in Being, and not unknown to my dear Mother, though she discovered its Excellence too late for her own Peace. It is the Knowledge of this which has deterred me from the Thoughts of an early Marriage, or fixing the Choice where the Heart and Judgment are not entirely satisfied. I am, my dear Mrs. Elliot's

Ever affectionate
EMILIA HORTON.

LETTER V.

On a Town and Country Life. To a young Gentleman.

I Thank you, my dear Sir, for the late Proofs you have given me of your sincere Attention. A young Man, engaged in the most interesting Pursuit of his Life, seldom thinks at all of distant Friends, especially of those advanced in Years, who so frequently assume the Office of Monitors. Under these Circumstances, every Mark of Attention increases to a ten-fold Value; as such I esteem it, and it is the best Proof that my Counsels have been well received and as carefully remembered. But I hope your Residence in London will not continue much longer, as the Air of that Place is unfavourable to Simplicity of Manners, and to virtuous Love. The Venus of that City is gross, earthly, sensual; and the chaste and delicate should not be allowed to set her Foot there, lest she imbibe the Spirit of that Soil. Let the honest Lover remove far away the Sweetner of his careful Hours, and his Companion for Life. The Spirit of Luxury and Dissipation, and the still worse Fiend who presides over the Gaming-Table, there takes up her Residence. I would therefore advise you, and I wish you to extend that Advice to your Companion, to remove from this Place the fair Partners of your Hearts; for its Poisn will insensibly operate both upon you and them,

them, and it is therefore necessary you should carry them where they may breathe the purer Air of Virtue and Simplicity. I wish with you to taste the Sweets of the Village of T—. I love and revere the Parsonage House, both for its late and present Possessors; and through your Means I must be personally acquainted with the present Owners. When I think upon their History, my Heart warms and glows within me; and all Vanity and Parade shrink to nothing in the Comparison. For it is only in domestic Life that the utmost Happiness can be found of which human Nature is capable; in vain will it be sought for any where else if it does not occur here. Those who cultivate social and domestic Virtues will not fail to find enough to sweeten all the Cares and Misfortunes to which this transitory State is liable. I cannot help transcribing the following Passage from an Author, which is as much worthy of Admiration, as in other Places his Opinions are to be condemned.

“ I do not advise you to take up your Residence in a populous City; on the contrary, one of the first Examples which the Virtuous ought to set to the rest of Mankind, is to prefer a country Life. This patriarchal State is the most peaceful, and the most agreeable of all others to an undepraved Mind. A benevolent Mind can but ill gratify its Disposition in the Midst of great Cities, where it scarcely finds any other Objects of Compassion than Knaves and Fools. Those who retire from great Cities are useful to Society by the Circumstances of their Retreat, because all the Vices of Society arise from its being too numerous. With what Pleasure do I anticipate the Scenes of Benevolence that will surround the simple Retreat of my Constantius and his Cæcilia! With what Joy will they inspire the indigent Peasants around them! I see the People already increase, their Fields bear more plenteous Harvests, and their Meadows are covered with new Verdure. The Number of Hands, and the Plenty with which they are provided, convert their Labours into Amusement; while, amidst their Rejoicings, they send forth the loudest Acclamations in Praise of the amiable Pair, to whom they are indebted for the Cause of their Happiness.”

Such is the Situation in which I wish to see you ; and in this terrestrial Paradise, expect to see me to rejoice with you in your Happiness. For the speedy Advancement of this desirable Period, you have the Wishes, Affections, and Prayers of

Your sincere Friend and Servant,
WALTER JONES.

LETTER VI.

Contested Elections ruinous to Virtue and Merit.

Dear Sir,

I find the Occasion of my late Disappointment has been represented to you in the same unfavourable Light as to others. I slight not the World's Opinion ; I would wish to set a fair Example to all whom that Example can influence. but am sensible it is impossible to escape Misrepresentation. Even in the limited Circle, where my Actions can be conspicuous, I can only feel an anxious Solitude to justify myself to those whom I highly esteem. When honoured with the Name of Friend by one so truly respectable as the Person I now address, I cannot but be eager to prove myself deserving of the Title. I am indeed ambitious to appear in the fairest Light to you ; and though I would scorn to use an artificial Gloss even to attain this desirable End, yet I earnestly wish to remove every dark Cloud which may obscure my just Intentions, and shade them from your View. I shall therefore beg Permission to relate every Circumstance of the Affair alluded to.

Mr. R. to whom my Grandfather has rendered several important Services, from the Time he was informed of my taking Orders, promised me the Living in Question as soon as it should become vacant. I paid him a grateful Respect for his Intentions in my Favour, which I considered in the same Light as a Benefit received ; the Promise and the Performance being inseparable in a Man of Integrity, unless a moral Defect in me should dissolve his Engagements. And as I wished to justify his Partiality

tiality by shewing myself deserving of it, which I did not imagine was to be effected by any mean Compliances with my Patron's Interest or Passions, should he so far forget himself as to require any ; but I thought I had nothing to fear from Mr. R. till Time convinced me of the Deception. One Morning he sent to speak with me, and I attended the Summons. He informed me that he intended being a Candidate for the County where he resides ; and knowing that my Grandfather had great Interest there, though too far advanced in Life to take an active Part in such a Scene, he hoped for my Endeavours to serve him. As he expected a very powerful Opposition, he should be obliged to me to hurry down as soon as possible, and he would provide me with a Sum of Money to expend in the usual Liberalities on such Occasions. I hesitated not to own, that he had given me Pain by pointing out a Service in which I must unavoidably acquit myself very ill. I told him I would with Pleasure announce his Name as a Candidate, but that I could by no Means approve of the Measures practised in all contested Elections ; that I thought them (even where actual Bribery was avoided) a Disgrace to this Country, and a Scene particularly unsuitable for one of my Profession to preside in ; if in this I differed from his Opinion, as I feared was the Case, I hoped he would not be offended, but would be as candid to me as I should be to those who thought Custom a sufficient Excuse for the Practices in Question. But he affected a smiling Air, though he looked disconcerted ; and asked me, what I was afraid of ? " Sure, says he, it will be " no great Offence to your Sanctity to be instrumental " in ordering a Treat for the honest People in your " Grandfather's Neighbourhood ; and if you drink loyal " Toasts with the neighbouring Gentlemen a little " more freely than your accustomed Sobriety would " lead you to, do you think any Mortal will be rigid " enough to blame you for a few occasional Excesses to " serve a Friend who is so attentive to your Interest ? "

I answered that " I was truly sensible of my Obligations, and would wish to deserve his Favour, but " doubted if I could do so by forfeiting my own Approbation. For though I would wish to avoid Singularity, " yet

“ yet I cannot give up my Sentiments, when convinced
 “ that they are just, because they are uncommon. In-
 “ temperance I consider as a despicable Vice, and cannot
 “ countenance in others what I scorn to be guilty of my-
 “ self. Custom and the Opinions of the World might
 “ acquit me, but I should always condemn myself for
 “ being instrumental in involving a whole Town in a
 “ Scene of Riot and Confusion ; those very People too,
 “ whom perhaps I have a little while before warned with
 “ the most solemn Authority from the very Vices into
 “ which I should then lead them. You may urge, per-
 “ haps, that this would be but a short Deviation from the
 “ Rules of Sobriety ; but is not that which is wrong in
 “ itself to be avoided in every Degree ? And how many
 “ Crimes productive of lasting Remorse may be com-
 “ mitted in a few short Hours of mad Intemperance ?”

It was with visible Impatience that Mr. R. heard me out ; when he replied, with a sarcastic Smile, “ Sir, “ I have nothing farther to say, and should be sorry to be “ the Means of lessening you in your own Eyes. I “ must wish you a good Morning, for my various En- “ gagements will not allow me the Pleasure of your “ Company any longer.”

As soon as I withdrew, Mr. R. sent immediately for a Clergyman of the same Neighbourhood, who happened to be in Town, and with whom he had a slight Acquaintance ; he gave the same Commissions to him that had been offered to me. He presently engaged in the Business with great Spirit, and Mr. R. got his Election. The Living, which was promised to me, became vacant about a Month after, and was bestowed upon the active Rector to console him for a Fever which had been the Consequence of his Exertions in this *glorious* Cause. All the Votaries of Interest have condemned me without Mercy ; while some have given Mr. R. a Share of the Blame. Even those who are most severe upon Mr. R.’s Conduct have thought me too rigid ; but my own Conscience acquits me, and I wish for the Happiness of your Judgment in my Favour. Consistency I have ever aimed at ; and the purest System of Morality can little avail, if our Actions are not conformable to our Opinions. From early Youth I have had a most ardent Love

Love of Virtue, and have read with enthusiastic Rapture those Sages who paint her in the fairest Light. The World around me has seemed to be deformed by its Attentions to Interest or Pleasure ; but these erring Mortals were bound to me by the strongest Ties. Society had all its Claims on my Affections ; and when I found any who reminded me of that bright Image of Virtue which my favourite Studies had raised in my Imagination, the Remembrance was dear to my Heart. I then wished so to enlarge my Benevolence, as to preserve myself free from the Vices and Follies which infected Society ; and I thought it would be more easy to accomplish this happy Purpose in a humble Sphere and a contracted Circle of Duties, than in the extensive Scene of Action which enlarged Connexions and the higher Walks of Life would have engaged me. Thus content with my own confined Situation, the Choice of a Profession was natural, the particular Duties of which would lead me to exercise the best Feelings of my Heart, which would permit me without Singularity to adhere to a strict Decency of Manners. And as Reason was strengthened by Time, and enlightened by Knowledge, my Choice was fixed, and I adhered firmly to my Purpose of taking Orders. I have not repented my Resolution ; the Profession I have chosen appears with new Dignity as my Judgment becomes more mature and my Acquaintance with sacred Truths increase. My Confidence in your Candour has given this unbounded Liberty to my Pen.

I am,

Yours, &c.

LETTER VII.

From a Gentleman just returned from abroad to his Friend.

REJOICE with me, my dear Nelson, your Friend is happily returned to his native Land. The gay, the splendid Scenes, the Beauties of Nature, and the Wonders of Art, now no longer before my Eyes, serve for Topics in the domestic Circle at Thorp. I am returned, like most Englishmen, with an increased Attachment

ment to my Country, but, I hope, with a more candid Allowance of the Advantages of others than every Traveller can boast. However, I am still a warm, and perhaps a partial, Advocate for English Beauty. My Mother has under her Protection two Nieces whom I found here at my Return ; which exceed, in my Eyes, all the polished Dames of France, and all the seducing Beauties of Italy. I confess that I feel my Heart in Danger, though it is not yet gone ; but surely it is dreadful to fall into such a Snare the first Hour of my Return home. How has your susceptible Soul escaped the tender Inflection so long, Nelson ? That Honour and Delicacy which preserve you from the Snares of wanton Beauty, must incline you to yield to the Impression of virtuous Love. But, as they say, your Time is not yet come, I suppose. I have the Satisfaction to find my Father in Health, in Spirits ; and as indulgently fond as ever of a Son, whose Bosom glows with the most ardent Desire of realizing his highest Hopes. My Mother, I think, looks younger than when I left her. She has with her an old Friend, a Mrs. Lovell, the most agreeable Compound of good Sense and good Humour that ever (to the Disgrace of Mankind) met together i . an old Maid. I hope soon to have the Pleasure of introducing you to these Worthies, and to the divine Girls ; when my dear Nelson will meet the most faithful of Friends in his

JAMES WILSON.

LETTER VIII.

In Answer to the former.

WITH the truest Joy I bid my dear Wilson welcome to his Country, to his domestic Connections, and to the Bosom of Friendship. Though I long to greet you in Person, my Engagements here forbid me that Pleasure at present ; but I shall hope to see you at Sir James Seymour's, who always receives my Friends with Politeness. Under that Character I shall be happy to introduce you. That I have hitherto escaped the Fetters

Fetters of Love, is partly owing to good Fortune, perhaps partly to good Conduct, or possibly to a greater Variety of Causes than you would have Patience to attend to, should I attempt to investigate them. But I have dreaded nothing so much as being the Slave of Passion; which all are who love without the full Approbation of their Reason in Favour of the Object. To retreat prudently in the Hour of Danger has hitherto succeeded; but the Day may come when I may be a willing Captive. Early Marriages indeed I have always disapproved, and Fortune has united to repress my Hopes of making such a Connection; hitherto I have not repined at this Happiness being deferred, but since my Residence here my Wishes rise to Impatience, as I daily see and converse with a Woman who exceeds the brightest Ideas I had ever formed of female Excellence. All the Charms of Youth united to the maturer Graces of an accomplished Mind; a Heart, the Residence of every Virtue, softened by the most exquisite Sensibility; an Understanding clear and penetrating, animated by Genius, improved by a liberal Cultivation, and adorned by the most polished Manners, united with the most engaging Simplicity. I feel myself so lost in Wonder at her mental Perfections, that even the Beauties of a Form worthy of such a Mind excite but an inferior Degree of Admiration. If farther Acquaintance should confirm the Faithfulness of the Portrait, your Friend is irrecoverably lost; he must infallibly love, and as infallibly despair. She is generous, and far above all interested Views, but—the Distance between us is too great. Rank and Fortune are her undoubted Right, and her Friends will expect her to do this Justice to herself. I have nothing to offer but what is unavoidably liable to the Suspicion of interested Motives. Her Wealth is a Blessing to all, and, therefore, doubly so to herself; but though she is adored by all, no Vanity can touch her Breast. But my Pen would run Riot in her Praises, and therefore I must desist with adding how sincerely I am

Your

EDWARD NELSON.

L E T

LETTER IX.

On the Danger of trusting too much to Appearances. From a Brother to a Sister.

Dear Sister,

IT would be one of the most melancholy Hours of my Life if I could suppose myself capable of giving you any just Grounds of Offence. That you might not be caught with the Glare of Falshood instead of Reality, I have ever endeavoured to give you all the Caution in my Power. Far would I be from debarring you of the least Pleasures that are reasonable, but only wish you to be moderate in the Pursuit of them. If Caution of every Kind comes not best from a Brother, from whom can it come? He can have no Interest but yours. The only Struggle or Competition which ever ought to happen amongst Children, should be in their Endeavours to make most happy the tenderest and most affectionate of Parents. I will not suffer myself to suppose that you have ever indulged or even felt the least Resentment; but you will allow me on all Subjects to speak the free Sentiments of my Heart, convinced as you must always be of my utmost Sincerity and Affection, and believing me ever,

Your affectionate Brother,

*Henrietta-street,
May 9, 1788.*

T. B.

LETTER X.

The Advantages of refined Conversation. From a Lady to her Friend.

WONDER not that Mr. Williams should stand so high in my Harriot's Favour. He wears the most flattering Appearance of genuine Merit, and we have no Reason to suspect him of Hypocrisy. He must certainly be a delightful Companion. Your Sentiments on Conversation coincide with my own. An instructive Writer has

has given us the true Reasons of an Evil which is but too prevalent. “ The greater Part of the busy, the learned, and the serious, says he, are no sooner released from their respective Pursuits, than they throw themselves loose into a Listlessness of Disposition which wanders impatiently in Quest of public Diversions. Sometimes it diffuses itself in private through the Vacuity of idle Talk, as if there could be no Medium between Gravity and Folly; as if People could not find Relief from the Stretch of Application in the agreeable Unbendings of moderate Amusement and rational Discourse.” The Disadvantages to themselves are great; but to the young and ingenuous Mind, eager for Information and willing to improve, it is the Height of Cruelty. For though all agree in despising Ignorance; yet, when Knowledge is produced in Conversation, it is too commonly condemned as pedantic, and Sentiment as tiresome. But surely a contrary Practice would be the Means of fixing our Acquirements in our Memories, and our Sentiments in our Hearts. Should it be urged that were Subjects of Literature and Systems of Morality considered more closely in common Discourse, it would destroy the Vivacity of such Intercourse; polished Manners would effectually prevent any such Consequence. An Air of Gallantry would diffuse itself over the most serious Disquisitions, and entirely obviate the ill Effects of supporting positive Opinions. But a Habit of advancing Opinions contrary to the real Principles of the Speaker will destroy all the Advantages of Conversation. Every Species of Deceit is in my Eyes detestable; it calls the Judgment as well as the Veracity in Question, and is very different from that humorous and agreeable Irony which some Persons excel in. Yet this amuses the Hearers, and can never deceive for a Moment. All Things are much as usual here, and the Affections of all Friends sincere, as in Times past, to their beloved Harriot; in which Number is included her

Faithfully attached

LETITIA WARDEN.

L E T-

LETTER XI.

*A friendly Letter to a Lady in Town, from a Gentleman
in the Country.*

Dear Madam,

I AM to thank you for a Piece of Flattery so very delicate, that I could not avoid reading it with Pride and Pleasure. These elegant Compliments, “ where more is meant than meets the Ear,” are of all others most insinuating. I never expected that Sentence to be so applied. But do you know that I am coming to Town again? You will know it very soon, for I shall make you one of my first Visits; and to save the Trouble of introducing the Subject, will acquaint you before-hand with my principal Errand. Being under the Necessity of altering some Dispositions of my Effects, and intending to bequeath you a small Token of my sincere Regard, I would chuse to do it in the Manner most agreeable to yourself. Nor let your Delicacy be hurt by the Idea of such a Legacy; for you will not receive it till a Time when the Disinterestedness of the Motive will appear. But Heaven only knows how near that Time may be, and therefore it behoves not me to delay my Intention. Adieu.

LETTER XII.

On the Nature of Education, and the Necessity of a gradual Acquaintance with the World.

I Flatter myself, my dear Louisa, you are too well convinced of the Sincerity of my Friendship, to imagine me actuated by a Principle of Ill-nature or Envy in this Address. In most Things you come as near Perfection as Woman can do, but in one you seem to open a Door for that very Misfortune you wish most to avoid. Kind and indulgent to those under your Command, faithful to your Friends, and affectionately tender as a Wife, it is your Study to be the best of Mothers; but it is here that I perceive your Error. Your Son's Education

cation you leave to your Husband's Care; and your Daughter has been early instructed in the Principles of Virtue and Religion. You have given her every Accomplishment becoming her Sex and Rank, and keep a most vigilant Eye over all her Words and Actions. To Flattery indeed she is a Stranger; and to such Flattery as tends to raise the Seeds of Vanity I hope will ever remain so. But perhaps it would be better to acquaint her so far with the Nature of Flattery and Disimulation in others, that she may not be exposed to the Snares which are always spread for Innocence. In Spite of all your Care, some Accident may put it in the Power of the self-sufficient Coxcomb or the artful Libertine to poison her Heart with all the Rhetoric of a pretended Passion; such Discourses will be the more dangerous, because they are new to her. It seems necessary therefore to prepare her to answer as she ought, and to treat such Fooleries with the Contempt they deserve. Too much Restraint may be as dangerous as too much Liberty; and if the young Emilia should be a little more acquainted with what you so carefully hide from her, good Sense, and the excellent Rudiments you have given her, would teach her to despise such Impertinences, and make her all which you wish her to be. Company prevents me from enlarging on this Subject, which must be resumed at an early Opportunity, by

My dear Louisa's
Most affectionate, &c.

LETTER XIII.

AARON HILL, Esq. to Mrs. MALLET.

Madam,

I Have received with Pain the Honour of a Letter, though it was yours, and am alarmed for my Friend's sudden Illness. Any Attack upon his Health will immediately give Alarms to those who know him as they ought. From his Head particularly I must wish Pain absent for the World's Sake, and from his Heart for your Sake;

22 The Complete LETTER-WRITER.

Sake ; there being, I dare say, no Atom in it, which your Image could escape a Wound in. As soon as I enjoy the Pleasure of his bidding me congratulate his Ease and yours, I will take my Chance for finding you without Engagements. If I fail in my first Venture, it will guide me better in a second ; for not all the Weight of so polite a Will as Mrs. *Mallett's* shall prevail upon me to assume such undeserved Importance, as to dream of previous Notices for Troubles meant you by a Man, who knows no Title he can make to your Regard, but from a much more due Respect in,

Madam,

Your most obedient Servant,

A. HILL.

L E T T E R XIV.

Thoughts on complimentary Expressions in friendly Epistles.

SIR,

THE Substance of your Letter is a very agreeable Lesson in moral Philosophy ; but I wish you had omitted the Conclusion. How often must I repeat that you owe me no Obligation ? The Act of rendering you a small Service was its own Reward ; and the endeavouring to improve our Acquaintance into Friendship was to please myself. Why then do we not correspond upon equal Terms ? Why any *Respect* ? why *the utmost Respect*, my *most devoted* ? How am I to account for the Use of these Terms ? Can the trifling and accidental Difference of our Rank make any Impression on your Mind ? Impossible ! Your Soul is undoubtedly superior to that Weakness. It is enough to say that

I am

Unfeignedly yours.

L E T-

LETTER XV.

On Simplicity of Style.

SIR,

I Cannot express the Satisfaction your Letter gave me. I have been reading it ever since, and rejoice to discover in it that elegant Simplicity of Taste which is my chief Admiration. Though your Heart was rather tedious in expanding, you now declare that it is open, and that you accept my Friendship. Cherish, cultivate that Friendship, and give me yours in Return. You may be assured that I will prize it highly, and compare it to a benignant Star. My Sun of Happiness is set, and the Shades of Night cannot be very far distant; but your Friendship, like a Star glimmering in the Twilight, shall illumine and chear my pensive Walk through the Evening of Life. But I am coming to Town, therefore write not till you hear from me. I hope we shall meet oftener than we did last Year. Adieu.

LETTER XVI.

On the Necessity of endeavouring to accomplish a Reformation of Manners.

SIR,

To adhere to the Rules of Virtue in Times when Vice is the surest Title to Respect and Favour, is truly great; but to espouse publicly the depreciated Precepts of Religion and Morality, and to dare the Tongue of Censure in such a Cause, is Christian Heroism. Wit is too often applied in Sneers and Sarcasms upon every Thing which opposes the Rage of Libertinism; but your superior Talents may, and I hope will, be exerted against the Affronts of the wicked and impious. Examples, however bright, are confined within the narrow Circle of our Acquaintance; but public Enormities should have public Reproof. Some who cannot be won by Precept or Example, have been shamed from their Errors by Satire; every Method should be tried to check this

this Inundation of Corruption and Immorality. When Vice no longer skulks in Corners, or seeks to hide its odious Head, but proudly stalks with gigantic Strides over the guilty Land, licensed and uncontroled; then, if ever, where Heaven has bestowed Talents, it expects them to be exercised to stem the Torrent. If what some have observed be true, that the Nation is more infatuated than wicked, the greatest Hopes may be formed from such Attempts. Many who act merely by Imitation, may mean well though they do ill. They have never taken any Pains to examine the Merits of a Cause, nor the Justice of any Principle; trusting all to their Superiors, they seem entitled to our Endeavours to set them right, and to have every Claim upon the serious and well-disposed.

I am,

Sir,

Your very sincere Friend.

LETTER XVII.

On the Pleasures and Advantages of a Country Life.

Dear Madam,

IT is now the Season when the Town Diversions summon the gay Part of the World to quit their rural Seats. Plays, Balls, Masquerades, and Operas, are already begun. The Country is almost as desolate of Inhabitants, as the Trees are of Leaves. But I am still here by my own Choice, though all my Acquaintance have left me for what they call Delights more agreeable to the Season. These, in my Opinion, cannot come in Competition with the Pleasures of Retirement. I am here free from the insincere Civilities, the vain Ceremony, and fantastic Pomp which my Rank in Life obliges me to partake of. I want neither Company nor Amusements, while the wide Creation is spread out before me. The Court of Heaven, with all its Glories, lays open to my View; uninterrupted Tranquillity assists Contemplation to lift me above this dull Earth, to travel in Idea through the æthereal Regions, and to anticipate the Privilege of Immortality. But I do not at all Times indulge

theic

these Contemplations; I am not so wholly absorbed in Raptures, as to forget the Duties of my Station during my Stay upon Earth. As a Wife and as a Mother, there are Duties for me to discharge which cannot be dispensed with; I am bound to please him to whom, by the most tender and sacred Obligations, I am united, and I am engaged to form the Minds of those to whom I have given Birth, that they may act up to the Dignity of rational Beings. The Knowledge that they are born for Eternity should be considered as an early Object to be instilled into their Minds; and while I amuse them with the Study of natural Philosophy, I turn their Reflections on the Supreme Author of all the various and amazing Productions they behold with so much Pleasure. From hence you will perceive, that the Performance of these Duties will not suffer Time to hang heavy upon my Hands; and as these Studies form my principal Amusement, you will cease to wonder that I am not in Haste to visit a City where they must too frequently be interrupted. But I am just now informed that we are shortly to depart from this Scene of true Content, and to repair to the Seat of Gaiety and Pleasure. Adieu, for the present, and till I have the Satisfaction of assuring you personally how much I am,

Dear Madam,

Yours.

L E T T E R XVIII.

To a Lady, unexpectedly deprived of her Fortune.

MY dear Maria, in every Situation, is herself; but I confess I am greatly affected by this sudden Change, though far above paying that Homage to Wealth which is given by vulgar Minds. I cannot see my beloved Girl deprived of her Fortune, and, in consequence, dependent on the Generosity of a Relation, who so little understands her real Happiness, without feeling the most painful Uneasiness. I am sorry to add, that the Situation of our Friends here will not at all contribute to

dispel my gloomy Ideas. It would be useless to indulge in melancholy Reflections, and will therefore only allow myself to assure you how truly I am

Your ever affectionate

ELIZA THOMAS.

LETTER XIX.

From the Lady, in Answer.

THE Trial, my dear Madam, is past, and your Friends are safely arrived at Helston. I have bid Adieu to Affluence, and to the favourite Spot I vainly thought would be my future Residence. I have bid Adieu to that Circle of Friends who fixed my Choice there, and induced me to employ my Fancy in improving the Place. I could not forbear dropping an involuntary Tear on the Shrubs I had planted; and in the Bowers, so lately the Haunt of Friendship, which now bloomed so fair to invite some new Possessor. My Heart suffered a deep Wound from the Gratitude and unfeigned Distress of my Domestics, when I discharged them from my Service. My Soul was pierced with the Cries and Lamentations of those whom Providence had enabled me to assist, though it has now thought fit to deprive me of that Power; but my generous Friends, whom I shall leave behind, have promised to make all those who will suffer from my Removal, the peculiar Objects of their Bounty. Yet what were my Emotions when I beheld my Lætitia's Distress as our Separation approached! The parting Scenes with my other Friends were concluded on the Evening before my Departure; but this dear Girl passed the Night with me, which, as you will suppose, was almost a sleepless one. She saw us enter the Post-chaise early in the Morning, but not till her anxious Affection had many Times stopped us; and when at last we drove away, her sorrowful Look pierced my very Soul. I shall endeavour to resign to my

my Lot: at present I must drop my Pen, with assuring you that I am, as ever,

My dear Madam,

Yours ever sincerely,

MARIA EDMUND3.

LETTER XX.

From a Gentleman to his Friend, on a second connubial Engagement.

I Had read, my dear Sir, some Time ago, in one of the publick Papers, an Account of the new Alliance you are entered into; and not having been fince in London, to receive a Confirmation of it, I was doubtful whether it was prudent to precipitate Congratulation, on a Ground so liable to mislead rash Believers. Nor do I send it now as a mere fashionable Compliment, but with the Warmth of a Joy becoming a Friend who must take Part in every Promise of your Happiness. And indeed I should much wrong the Confidence I have in such a Judgment, not to conclude that in a Resolution so important to your private Peace, your Motive was wise and well-founded. I must indeed confess that you have fired my Curiosity to see and hear this Lady, who has had so strong and speedy an Influence on a Heart so firm and so impressed as yours was, by the Memory of a former Sweetness. The Lustre must be amiably severe and sparkling; and such as you deserve to glitter in the Warmth of, which had the Power to attract into itself a Flame so generous as your first; which your Pen delighted to describe with such a manly and unmodish Tenderness. May you both be happy in so social a Degree of Sensibility! and may your Wit, penetrating as it is, be unable to discern whose Part in the united Fulness of Felicity, is greatest or most delicate! and may this Blessing be as lasting as accomplished! I wish I had the Power to limit its Duration for you, and so I hope in a few Days to tell you personally; for I can never have a

more agreeable Inducement to see London than the Joy
to see you happy in it. I am, with great Truth,
Your very affectionate Friend.

LETTER XXI.

*On the Inconsistency of wishing to live long, and yet fearful
of being old.*

My dear Sir,

I Have been thinking that our Understandings are as liable to be unhinged as the Frame of our Bodies. The least Jar of Surprise puts it out of Tune, and one cannot presently get it into Order again. We are not aware of the Passions of the Mind till some sudden Accident calls them forth ; but they are as capable of suspending the Faculties of Reason, as the Diseases of the Body are of obstructing that animal Fluid, on the due Circulation of which depend our Health and Vigour. That we have all a natural Aversion to grey Hairs and Wrinkles, cannot be denied ; and it requires the utmost Exertion of our Reason to overcome the Uneasiness which their Approach inflicts. But this is certainly an Inconsistency, a Kind of Absurdity in our Habit of thinking. While we ridicule a thousand lesser Follies of Mankind, we pass over that which more than all deserves Censure, the being ashamed or afraid of attaining what all the World as well as ourselves would wish to arrive at. But we would live for ever if we could, and yet be always young : We would annihilate the Depredations of Time from fifteen to sixty, and are even then scarcely content to be thought on the Decline. I should not be surprised so much, if old Age were terrible to us, merely as it is the Forerunner of Death, or as it is generally attended with Infirmities which render Life a Burden. But Death and Diseases seize upon Youth and Strength, and no Time of Life is a Security against either. Neither is it the Apprehension solely of being deprived of that Share of Beauty which Nature may have bestowed upon us, which renders it so alarming ; for that may be lost by a thousand Accidents. It is the Name,

Name, and not the Effects, which we so much dread ; it is that Something which would lead us to prefer Deformity with Youth to Comeliness with old Age. Can any Thing more strongly convince a thinking Person of the Importance of human Understanding ? I have only to wish sincerely that you and I may grow old in Friendship, and that our Minds may be in perfect Unison, whatever Effect Time may have on our Persons. This alone will sufficiently balance against the Mortifications in the Power of the old Gentleman with the Hour Glass.

I am, my dear Sir,

Yours ever,

MATILDA.

LETTER XXII.

The Reason of the Opinion, in Answer.

My dear Matilda,

I Do not look upon this Aversion to old Age to be so great a Weakness as you seem to think it. There is another Misfortune, which you have not mentioned, which for the most Part attends it ; which is, being treated with Contempt by every one who is a few Years younger than ourselves. This is the true Motive which makes People afraid of growing old, ashamed when they are so. Every one, even the aged themselves, have a Prejudice in Favour of Youth. It is this which attracts the Love, the Respect, the Services of all the World ; whilst Age may live alone unpitied and unregarded. The Folly must be imputed to those only whose Behaviour gives them Cause to dread being old. Long Life is a Blessing which all desire to attain, and all endeavour to preserve ; but we absurdly despise that in others which we take so much Pains to arrive at ourselves. The only Way to ward off the Slights which old Age is liable to receive, is to lay up in Youth a Stock of Knowledge for our own Entertainment, when no Body else will think it worth their while to entertain us. For if we make a good Use of our early Years, we shall have less Reason to regret that we are left alone. But Age may be ren-

dered agreeable to others, only by preserving a Medium between the Grave and the Gay, without endeavouring to conceal our Age, and by rebuking the Faults we see in others rather by Example than Precept. It has been indeed remarked of Age, that it magnifies the Errors, and renders the Virtues of the Person less conspicuous ; but it is our Business to correct the one and improve the other, before we arrive at that Stage of Life in which nothing will be excused which proceeds from Levity and Want of Judgment. And as every Year, by furnishing new Matter of Observation, should add to our Knowledge ; Age must indeed appear despicable, if Experience has not improved the Talents we received from Nature. Yet we shall meet with no Severity from those whose Treatment is worth our Notice, how old soever we grow, and how much impaired soever in our outward Form ; if we have taken due Care to beautify and enrich our Minds. Instead of counting how our Years run on, we should endeavour to profit by the Mistakes of others, and examine how our Knowledge increases ; we should trace the Progress made in rooting out our darling Follies, and planting the beneficial Seeds of Piety and Morality in our Hearts. To succeed in this Attempt, I am confident, will afford us an inward Satisfaction, infinitely superior to all we could receive from our Toilette, or the Flatteries of the World, while in the Bloom of Youth.

I am,
My dear Matilda's
Affectionate Friend,
BENEVOLUS.

LETTER XXIII.

From AARON HILL, Esq. to Governor GRAHAM.

SIR,

I Had last Night the Misfortune of losing you so suddenly, that I was deprived even of an Opportunity to thank you for the Pleasure of a Day you had so kindly contributed to make entirely delightful. Much less could I re-

I recollect any particular Reason why, instead of waiting on you to Day to that double Elegance of Taste, which a Dinner at your House is sure to entertain with, I can only have the Honour to beg Admission for an Hour or two in the Afternoon about Tea-time. In the mean Time, as no Part of the Day can be better employed than in promoting your Health or your Happiness, I have inclosed a Direction for making that Spirit which I recommended to your Use; and if its Effects were to be measured by the Extent of my good Wishes, it would have Virtues as uncommon as the fine Qualities which distinguish your Family. I am,

With great Truth and Respect,

Sir,

Your most obedient humble Servant,

A. HILL.

L E T T E R XXIV.

*On expressing our Gratitude to the Supreme Being, and
the good Effects of religious Examples.*

Dear Madam,

I Shall take no Notice of the ridiculous Light in which you place my Manner of Life. Your representing me as a Recluse, and the Companion of the young Druid, with your Invocation to the rural Gods and Goddesses on their receiving me into these sequestered ever-verdant Shades, have such a Mixture of Pleasantry and Humour, that I could not help laughing very heartily. I mention this the rather on Account of that solemn Sanctity which you lay to my Charge; but your Ridicule has a Levity, in my Opinion, bordering a little upon the profane. But you are blinded by the Tyrant Custom, which makes us ashamed of our Duty. We are ashamed of uttering solemn important Truths, though of the greatest Moment; for however we may talk of the social Duties, it is with Reluctance we mention those to our Maker.

32 The Complete LETTER-WRITER.

That kind Sovereign of the World, who has endued us with Health, and enriched us with Affluence, shall not he be adored by us for such distinguished Goodness? Shall we not, with united Hearts, at once express the full Sentiments of our Souls, and keep alive the pious Ardour which longs for Utterance? Prayer is one of the first Duties of natural Religion, the elder Sister of Christianity, and naturally arises from our Obligations to the Universal Parent of Mankind, the most amiable and benevolent Being in the Universe; it is a Duty enjoined by Christianity, and enforced by the Example of our great Lawgiver himself. The Exercise of this Duty changes the Dispositions of our Minds, and renders that fit for God to grant, and us to receive, which before was not so. It exalts and refines the Mind, by leading it to contemplate the most sublime and important Truths. It calls away the Heart from the Pursuit of Folly and Madness. It checks the Growth of Pride, Self-sufficiency, and Malice; and awakes the tender Sentiments of Humanity, Gratitude to our Maker, and Affection to our Friends. We seldom omit going to Church twice every Sunday; not so much to gain any new Acquisition of Knowledge, as to keep alive a Sense of our Duty, and at the same Time to set an Example to the rest of the Parish, a Matter of the utmost Importance in its Influence upon the inferior People. If this Letter does not give you the Vapours, I may entertain a Hope that you will in Time be good for something else besides giving Felicity to one Man, Pleasure to a few Friends, and Happiness to a Number of Dependents; you may then become *ridiculous* enough to exercise the Wit and to exhaust the Spirits of your gay Companions, but you will never have the Honour like me of finding a Friend who will, with such sparkling Wit and fine Address, endeavour to laugh you out of your Religion. I have the Honour to be,

Dear Madam,

Your very humble Servant.

L E T-

LETTER XXV.

An unwelcome Visitor described.

SIR,

I Write this Afternoon at your Request, though I am in a very unsuitable Disposition. The Persecution of a Visit of four Hours long from Mr. Thomas, has made me extremely peevish, tired, and fatigued. Perhaps you may have heard of him. I had received your Letter, and was sitting down to answer it the very Moment that he came in. I was under the Necessity of asking him to dine—but such a Diniier! With what tedious Homilies did he weary my Spirits? This Coxcomb is not one of that brisk lively Species, who engross all the Conversation, for such I can well enough bear; but a grave, solemn one, who pauses and takes Snuff, and asks impertinent Questions, and divides and subdivides the ridiculous Nothingness of his Discourse, till he forgets the Beginning of his Story, and then wonders you cannot remember it. He then pauses again, hesitates, recollects, and enters anew upon the *important* Narrative of some Family Connexion in the last Century, or the true and surprising History of his own Travels through London and Westminster. You will imagine that he is but just gone, because my Fretfulness has not yet subsided. But I had Cause to be angry, for he banished from my Mind a Train of very agreeable Ideas, which are now irrecoverably lost. I am,

Sir, as ever,

Your Friend, &c.

LETTER XXVI.

To a Friend, announcing an intended Visit.

SIR,

Intending myself the Honour of seeing you very soon, I decline any particular Answer to your last; and the many generous Proofs I have received of your

34 The Complete LETTER-WRITER.

Friendship induce me to request your Advice on a Subject of some Importance. It was my Wish to have decided for myself, but I have not Strength of Mind sufficient to determine between two Alternatives. Should your Judgment be contrary to my own Wishes, I will neither appeal from it, nor will I be partial in the Evidence. Vouchsafe to hear and decide this Cause, if possible, to-morrow, for which Purpose I shall wait on you about Noon; and if you shall either be abroad or engaged, shall expect to hear when it will be more suitable. We read in the Volumes of Romance, that a certain fortunate Knight had an infallible Guide or Director in a mystical Pyramid of Adamant, on the Sides of which there appeared every Morning, engraven by an invisible Agent, the Actions he was that Day to perform. While I consult you thus frequently, and have the Benefit of your Advice, your Friendship is to me that Pyramid, that Guide, that steady and infallible Director.

I am, Sir,

Yours, &c.

LETTER XXVII.

On the Sweets of domestic Life, from a Lady to her Friend.

AFTER so long a Silence, Madam, you may justly wonder that I have the Assurance to confess that I am still alive. But however ashamed I am of my Negligence, I have neither the Complaisance nor the Resolution to leave the World out of a Punctilio of good Breeding; for I am in perfect Health, and so happy in my present Situation, that I can, without the least Pain, think of deferring for many Years a Visit to the heavenly Regions. You tell me I have lost in the Wife the Affection I owe to the Friend; I will not take the Trouble to justify myself from this heavy Charge, though I would have you impute my Negligence to the different Turn of my Affairs, to my Indolence, Stupidity, or any Thing rather than to a Want of that Affection which I shall ever feel for you. Fatigued with these ceremonious

Visits in Consequence of our Marriage, which could no otherwise be prevented than by Change of Situation, we removed hither about two Months after my last. Our Friends, Mr. and Mrs. Edmunds, by living near us, afford all the Satisfaction of the most intimate Friendship, and we are entire Strangers to all Ceremony. You will expect from me a Description of the Place. The House is neat, but remarkably plain; but the Situation is charming, being surrounded with Woods and Groves. In the Front is a tall and stately Wood, composed of Oaks which are venerable from Age, with no other Opening but a large Area and a Vista directed to the Center of the Building. Behind is a Garden of considerable Extent, and in the midst of it a Summer-House upon an Elevation, which with Fish Ponds, evergreen Hedges, and other Ornaments of Nature and Art, render it delightful. In the Summer Season, I am convinced, they will appear enchanting. Such is the peaceful Retirement we enjoy; such the Tranquillity we possess. We have the Satisfaction of passing our Time in the proper Employment of reasonable and immortal Beings; no wayward Humours to interrupt our Peace, no little Jars to fret the tender Cord of sweet Content and mutual Complacency. Religion too affords a Source inexhaustible of rational and sublime Delight. We address the supreme and sovereign Good as our Father, our Friend, our Benefactor; we admire the Wisdom, the wondrous Skill of the divine Architect in all his Works; we adore his Goodness, and pour forth our Gratitude in humble Praise. And what Transport can equal that of Gratitude? Nor do we want for Amusements. The Summer-House, which is furnished with the most valuable Ornament, a fine Collection of Books, affords the most rational Entertainment, and much of my Time is employed in the Management of my Family, or in working at my Needle. You see that I am become a domestic Animal, and what is more, that I have the greatest Reason to be pleased with my Amusements, for they preserve Peace and Order in the Family, and give a greater Relish to what are called superior Pleasures. It is so long since I have felt those modish Disorders, the Vapours, that I scarcely know what they mean; not the rosy Milk-Maid, happy

in her humble Obscurity, which sings or laughs from Morning till Evening, can be less troubled with the Spleen than I am. I can only add, that I am, as ever,

My dear Madam,

Yours most affectionately.

LETTER XXVIII.

On the Consequences of a base and cruel Disposition. The bard-hearted seldom commiserated under Misfortunes.

SIR,

YOU have proved yourself so totally a Stranger to the softer Emotions of Humanity, that having pitied none, you might reasonably expect to be by all unpitied. Perhaps you will scarce believe me when I say that I am sorry for your unhappy Accident, yet nothing can be more certain than that I am truly so. Your worthless Life has indeed been of little Consequence, unless for the Work of Mischief; and that Power who feeds the Ravens will doubtless take Care of the Family you may leave behind, if they do not follow your bad Example. But I am concerned for your immortal Part, lest the Offences you have committed in this World should render you miserable in the next; and I now employ my Pen to admonish and to conjure you to devote the Time which may yet be permitted to you, in examining your Heart impartially, and in just Reflections how little those base and inhuman Habits you have so much indulged and gloried in, will qualify you for that Society of Beings who exercise themselves in Acts of Piety and Mercy. It is a *Fiend-like* Disposition to be pleased with the Calamities of others, but you have endeavoured to add to them; yet I hope, before you launch into Eternity, you will be perfectly convinced that it requires proper Restitution and a more than common Penitence to atone for the Evils you have occasioned. There is something so remarkable in your Fate, that it seems to me as if inflicted by the Mercy of Heaven, to awake your too long sleeping Conscience. If you view the Cause of

your

your present Affliction, and consider that Providence punishes you by those very Instruments with which you intended to oppress others ; if you remember your barbarous Assiduity in hiring a mercenary Rabble to insult the Distresses of Persons every Way your Superiors ; if you reflect how very possible it is that the Mob by whom you are reduced to this Condition, might be partly composed of those individual Wretches employed by your infernal Zeal for the base Purpose just mentioned ;—if you think of any or all these Things, you cannot fail of being touched with that Remorse and true Contrition, which alone can give you any Claim to Compassion here, or to Pardon hereafter. Though an Enemy to your Vices, I am not so to your Person ; and that you may merit Compassion and obtain Pardon, is the sincere Wish of,

Sir,

Your very sincere Friend.

L E T T E R XXIX.

*On the Caprice of Fortune, and the Duty of Resignation ;
to a Gentleman who had met with frequent Disappointments in Life.*

S I R,

YOU have no Friend more truly concerned for your repeated Disappointments than myself ; but I am much concerned to find with how little Temper you sustain them. I had not the Opportunity last Night of communicating my Sentiments, and therefore now exercise the Office of Friendship to endeavour to call you back to your former self ; for it is unworthy that Philosophy you profess, to suffer that unavailing Passion to triumph over Reason. If you have not a sufficient Stock of Resignation to the Divine Will, to look upon all Afflictions as permitted or directed by Providence, at least consider them as unavoidable, and that Impatience and Repining always render them worse, never better. Prudence demands we should attempt a Remedy for every Event, if any ; but otherwise, that we should think as

as little of it as possible, for cross Accidents are common to all Men; and to murmur at our Fate only serves to render them more grievous. I know you have not had the best Success in your most laudable Attempts; I know too you have much wherewith to accuse the Injustice of Mankind; but consider we live not in an Age where either Virtue or good Sense has any Plea for Favour and Protection. Were you to pursue contrary Methods, you would doubtless have more Success; but as I dare answer you never will do it, so it should be your Comfort that though you have been ill treated by the World, you have not deserved it. Your Heart bears Witness that the Prospect of private Advantage could not tempt you to join with your principal Oppressor in his Schemes of oppressing others. The Generality of Mankind only know you have been unhappy in your Pursuits, but are entirely ignorant of the Cause; they know not that you are so, merely because you have too much Honesty to join in any villainous Scheme. The misguided Multitude go with the Current which Way soever it carries them. This is a Folly to be pitied, rather than to excite your Anger, and you must be satisfied with living an inactive Life. Those you wish to serve refuse it, and endeavour to render ineffectual all the Means you can use to render your Virtues or your Abilities conspicuous. You seem indeed to regret your Waste of Time principally, and the Triumphs of your Enemies on your ill Success; but these are only the Consequences of your Disappointments, and a Moment's Reflection will tell you, that you ought rather to make the best Use you can of future Time than regret the past. Your Enemies may rejoice in those Misfortunes which were unavoidable, but they will have more Cause to do so when they find you bring others on yourself by giving Way to fruitless Discontent. You will pardon the Freedom of these Remonstrances, as they flow from a Heart full with good Wishes for your Welfare.

I am, Sir,

With the utmost Respect,

Yours, &c.

LETTER XXX.

To a married Lady abroad, from a Gentleman recommending the Care of his Son.

Dear Madam,

YOU will receive this from the Hands of that Son I have before had the Honour of recommending to your Esteem. I have accompanied him myself as far as Paris, where being perfectly satisfied with his Behaviour, and convinced that generous Minds are best won to Virtue by implicit Confidence, I have dismissed the Tutor I proposed to have sent with him to Italy, shall return to England myself, and depend for his Conduct on his own Discretion, his Desire of obliging me, and that Nobleness of Sentiment which will make him feel the Value of my Friendship for him in its utmost Extent. I have given him Letters to the most worthy Persons in every Court I wish him to visit ; but my chief Dependence for the Advantages of this Tour are on the Count and yourself, and therefore I have advised him to spend most of his Time at Rome, where, with the Honour of your Friendship, I doubt not of his receiving that last Finishing and that delicate Polish, which I flatter myself is all he wants to make him perfectly amiable. To you, Madam, and to the Count, I commit him ; defend him from the Snares of Vice and the Contagion of Affection. He is an unexperienced Youth, with lively Passions, a warm and affectionate Heart, an enthusiastic Imagination, Probity, Openness, and Generosity ; he is not wanting in any Advantages of Person and Mind, which a liberal Education can bestow. From your Hands I expect to receive him a Gentleman, a Man of Honour and Politeness, with the utmost Dignity of Sentiment and Character ; and these adorned by that easy Elegance, refined Simplicity of Manner, and unaffected Graces of Deportment so difficult to describe, but which every one must acquire who converses much with you. The Power of Beauty, which is irresistible, makes it of the utmost Consequence what Part of the Female World he converses with. He has been habituated from Childhood

40 The Complete LETTER-WRITER.

hood to the most lovely and polite amongst the best Part of the Sex, to give him an Abhorrence to the Indelicacy of the worst. I have endeavoured to impress on his Mind the most lively Ideas of the native Beauty of Virtue; and to cultivate that Elegance of moral Taste and quick Sensibility, which is a nearer Way to Rectitude than the dull Road of inanimate Precept. With the same anxious Cares I send him to perfect his Education, not in Schools or Academies, but in the Conversation of the most charming among Women. An ardent Desire of pleasing you, and becoming worthy your Esteem, inseparable from the Happiness of knowing you, will be the keenest Spur to his Attainments; and I shall see him return all the fond Heart of a Parent can wish from his Ambition of being honoured with your Friendship.

To you, Madam, I shall make no Secret of my Wish that he may come back to England unconnected. I have a View for him beyond his most sanguine Hopes, to which indeed I entreat he may be a Stranger; the Charms of the Lady cannot fail of attracting a Heart which has no Prepossession, from which I conjure you, if possible, to guard him.

I am, Madam,

With the most lively Esteem,

Your ever devoted Servant,

T. FRANKS.

LETTER XXXI.

To a Friend. The Contentment arising from rural Blessings.

I Am indeed, my dear Charles, the most happy of human Beings; happy in the paternal Regard of the best of Parents, the sincere Esteem of my worthy Relations, Lord and Lady Berkley, and the Friendship, the tender Friendship of their lovely Daughter, the amiable Lady Barbara. An Increase of Fortune which you are kind enough to wish me might perhaps add something to

to my Felicity, but is far from being necessary to it ; nor did it ever excite in my Bosom an anxious Wish. My Father instructed me to be satisfied with my own moderate Situation, and that Independence was all a generous Mind required ; that Virtue, adorned by the liberal Education his unsparing Bounty had lavished on me, would command through Life that heart-felt Esteem from the worthy of every Rank which the most exorbitant Wealth alone could never procure its Possessors. Other Parents hoard up Riches for their Children ; mine, with a more noble and more enlightened Solitude, expended his in storing my Mind with generous Sentiments and useful Knowledge, to which his unbounded Goodness added every outward Accomplishment that could give Grace to Virtue, and set her Charms in the fairest Light. I will not murmur because I was not born in Affluence ; nor would I be the Son of any other than this most excellent of Men to inherit all the Stores which Avarice and Ambition sigh for. I am prouder of a Father, to whose discerning Wisdom and generous expanded Heart I am so much obliged, than I should be of one whom I was to succeed in all the Titles and Possessions which Fortune can bestow. From him I receive and learn properly to value the most real of all Treasures, Independence and Content.—What a divine Morning ! how lovely is the Face of Nature ! The blue Serene of Italy with the lively Verdure of England. But behold a more charming Object than Nature herself ! the sweet, the young, the blooming Lady Barbara, who is this instant stepping into her Chaise with Lady Harriot Chambers. How unspeakably lovely ! she looks up to the Window and smiles, which I perfectly understand. I will order my Horses directly to follow her, and accept the Honour which she permits. Adieu.

Yours sincerely,

J. ELLIOT.

L E T,

LETTER XXXII.

From a young Gentleman at School in England to his Father in the Island of Jersey.

Honoured Sir,

Sept. 17, 1783.

I Am happy to inform you that my Situation is in every Respect agreeable to my most sanguine Expectations. My Master and Mistress are particularly kind to me, and I have the greatest Reason to hope for every Improvement in my Education which the warmest Wishes of my Friends may lead them to conceive. The Gentleman who assists my Master is very well acquainted with the Mathematics, and I hope for your kind Permission to receive some Lessons from him in Geography, with the Nature of Maps and the Use of the Globes. I have been much pleased with the Explanations he has given to some of the young Gentlemen on these Subjects, when I have had an Opportunity of attending to them; it will be but a small additional Expence, and I have a great Desire to be more fully instructed in a Branch of Education of such an agreeable and useful Tendency. I am now learning Vulgar Fractions, and shall soon advance to Decimals and the Extraction of Roots; he teaches these from his own Papers, prepared for the Press, in a very improved Method, which incorporates and unites the Theory with the Practice in a plain, easy, and familiar Way. Several young Gentlemen are here from the Island, who are all equally happy with myself in so agreeable and healthy a Situation. I beg you will present my Duty to my Mother, with my Uncles and Aunts, Love to my Sister, and Respects to all Friends. Please to accept of this Instance of a proper Sense of Duty to yourself, from, Honoured Sir,

Your very dutiful and
Affectionate Son,

THOMAS LE FEVRE.

L E T.

LETTER XXXIII.

The Father's Answer.

Dear Thomas,

YOUR Letter to me of the 17th last gave all our Friends a very sensible Pleasure. The Desire you express to be acquainted with the Principles of Geography I most readily encourage; and the Account you give of your Progress in Figures induces me to that Compliance, as it gives me Reason to hope you will make a proper Advantage of your Opportunities. Your Master will furnish you with such Books as you may want, and particularly those which are or may be published by the Gentleman who assists him. We were also much pleased with your Improvement in Writing, which I hope you will not neglect in your Anxiety to become acquainted with other Parts of Education. Poor Mrs. Benson, our Neighbour, died about three Weeks ago. Your Mother and all your Friends join with me in Love to you, who am,

Your affectionate Father,

WILLIAM LE FEVRE.

Jersey, Oct. 10, 1783.

LETTER XXXIV.

From a young Gentleman at School in the Country to his Uncle in Town.

Honoured Sir,

I Have embraced this Opportunity of writing to inform you that I am in good Health, as I hope this will find you, with my Aunt and all Friends. Having waited for some Time in Hopes of being able to send you some Intelligence worth your Acceptance, I thought you would conclude me deficient in Duty and Respect if I deferred longer to write, though the same Cause would still have prevented me. I beg yours and my Aunt's kind Acceptance of this Testimony of my Duty. Please

to

to present the same to my Father and Mother, and Love to Sisters and Brother. With my Love to my Cousins, and my best Respects to all Friends, I conclude, with wishing you every Blessing which the New Year can produce, Honoured Sir,

Your ever dutiful Nephew,

January 7, 1784.

WILLIAM JAMES.

LETTER XXXV.

A Letter of Gratitude from Mr. Hughes to Earl Cowper.

My Lord,

I Have great Reason to think it will be a Satisfaction to your Lordship to have some Account of the Progress of my Health since your going to Town. I thank God, my Fever is quite off (I hope past Danger of a Return), and I am as much better for the Time as can possibly be expected. I have recovered a tolerable Appetite, and feel an Accession of Strength every Day. As I cannot but have the utmost Regard to all your Lordship's Commands, which are so kindly intended for my Good, I have not changed my Lodging, but am going on here in a regular Course of few Medicines and moderate Exercise; and have good Encouragement to hope I shall soon satisfy my Doctor that this Air is not less restorative than the Downs of Surrey. But now that I have Time to look back on my past Suffering, I am very much concerned and ashamed at the Trouble I gave your Lordship; but when I recollect the Experience I had on that Occasion of your exceeding Humanity, and the inexpressible Relief it was to me under extreme Pain and Apprehensions of the worst Consequences, my Heart is melted, and it is not in the Power of Words to shew the Sense I have of it. I can truly say, that after a long Course of ill Health and Misfortune, which had almost made me indifferent to every Thing, it was your Lordship's very kind Notice of me which first made Life more desirable; and I shall think it one of the greatest Pleasures of it while it lasts to employ it in all the Returns of

of Duty and Thankfulness which are within my poor Ability. I beg that (with my humble Duty) my Lady Cowper may know how troublesome a Guest I have been, and that, though it happened in her Ladyship's Absence, I have not wanted any Thing necessary or convenient. I have begun to call in Music in Aid of my Cure, and sometimes have tried the Harpsichord; but it will make no Harmony in the Absence of that Hand it has been used so absolutely to obey. I wish your Lordship much Prosperity in your new Habitation, and am, with very many Obligations,

My Lord, &c.

JOHN HUGHES.

LETTER XXXVI.

A Letter of Thanks from a young Gentleman to a Clergyman who had been his private Tutor.

Honoured Sir,

YOUR kind and parental Letter has reached me almost at the very Moment of setting off to Mr. Hamilton's, where we are going to pass two or three Weeks; I have not Time therefore at present to read it as I ought to do, though it would be impossible for me to cast my Eyes over it more hastily than I have done, without perceiving that it abounds with the fatherly Kindness which has mingled itself in every Act of yours to me. For this, and for every Thing, I feel myself grateful beyond Expression, and shall continue to be so while you can receive my Gratitude, and while I can pay the Tribute of it. I have snatched a few Moments in the Hurry of our Departure to express this short Acknowledgment of your Goodness; and to assure you that the first Opportunity which is to be found, which I shall anxiously wish for, you will hear again and at large from your most obliged and dutiful

JAMES FREEMAN.

LETTER XXXVII.

Of the Blessings of Benevolence. From a young Gentleman to a Lady who had requested a Favour for a Person in Distress.

THE Commands, my dear Madam, I had the Honour of receiving from you last Night, are already obeyed. By a strange Combination of Circumstances, which I believe were never related to you, your humble Servant is a Governor of the Hospital here. The poor Woman who is so happy as to have your Recommendation is by this Time carefully deposited there; her Husband also is at Ease, and has every Reason to be contented. I related their extraordinary History this Morning, and my Aunt has desired to have the Credit of protecting them; and as they cannot be in better Hands, your humane Wishes for them will be more than satisfied. I do not know how it is, but I never leave your House without some tender Sentiment, some Maxim of Wisdom, or some valuable Acquisition which I had not before. I am a very considerable Gainer in the little Traffic of good Offices between us, and I feel myself more obliged to you than I can express for this Day's Employment. It is Matter of the greatest Astonishment to me that the Rich and Powerful do not continually exert themselves in doing Good and relieving Distress; they might raise modest Merit, and wipe away the Tear from the Cheek of Misery, without infringing even upon what may be called superfluous Satisfactions. But I suppose my Astonishment will lessen as I become more acquainted with the World. There are many Persons of Rank and Fortune now at this Place, though I have not heard of one of them having done a real Act of Charity; not even from Ostentation, which seems to have so much to do in the Charities of the Times. My Uncle indeed is wholly employed in Acts of Goodness; but his Character, if given in Writing, would be thought a fulsome Panegyric, though applied to those who are considered as the best Men of the Age. He has lived for some Years in Retirement; and his Fortune and Manners will make him respected wherever he goes, but his real

Worth

Worth is little known except in the Country where he dwells.—There the Eye that beholds him blesses him, and every Tongue is eloquent in his Praise. With Respect to myself, I feel a Veneration for him which is not to be expressed; and a Gratitude which, however fervent, is not equal to the paternal and gracious Acts which call it forth. My Aunt, though a different Character, is equal in Worth to her Brother, and my Obligations to them both are the same. I have now taken the Liberty of introducing my Family to you, though there is another Person belonging to it whom I had forgot; but I cannot say much in his Behalf; yet, if you were to read his Heart, you would find some Tints of Regard, Gratitude, and Admiration, which you might claim as your own. Believe me, my dear Madam, however distant I may be removed from you, I shall never cease to remember you with real Pleasure; and wherever I am, if in my Power to do you any Good, or perform you any Service, and you should not employ me, you will be guilty of a great Injustice both to me and to yourself, for there is none who is, with a more real Zeal,

Your most faithful Friend,
And humble Servant,

Southampton,
April 29, 1788.

WILLIAM TRENTON.

LETTER XXXVIII.

From a Lady to her Friend on the Day of her Daughter's Marriage.

ONE Line, my dear Harriot, is all that I can write to you; but I am sensible that in my present Circumstances you will excuse it. This Morning my Daughter was married, and I now steal from the surrounding Crowd to acquaint you with this important Event, from a Persuasion that you will be no less interested in it than myself. Charlotte bids me tell you that you were not mistaken when you allowed her to have a large Heart, and the Departments which the Mother and the Husband occupy by no Means exclude the Friend,

48 The Complete LETTER-WRITER.

Friend. She adds, that the utmost of her Wishes is to give you personal Assurances of this. Straitened as I am, I must yet say one Word on the Subject of poor Miss Chambers; but were I in your Situation, I would endeavour to obtain her Friendship. At my Years one may do many Things that are not suitable to yours. We form our Judgment of People from their Connections, and your Youth will not allow you to have any that are suspicious or exceptionable. I agree that the Prejudices mentioned in your last Letter are ridiculous; nevertheless, while we live in the World, we must in some Measure conform to it. That World will permit you to see the contemptible Part of your Sex, provided you do not make Friends of them, and that your Connexion with them extends no farther than common Politeness. Your Friendship with a weak Girl would expose you to certain Censure. Have a proper Regard to this Foible (which, however, cannot in one Sense be accounted such) without giving up your Intention of serving the unfortunate Woman. You may, pardonably enough, contract a Friendship with her Lover; but, what you will not be pardoned, and what nevertheless I would have you attempt, is to engage him to put an End to this Affair in one Way or another. I murder the Subject for Want of Time; but it deserves to be more seriously discussed, and I shall resume it as soon as I am more at Leisure.

Yours, &c.

D. MALLET.

LETTER XXXIX.

A familiar Description of a retired Country Life.

My dear Sir,

AS I was sitting alone this Morning at the Inn looking out at a Window, I saw ride into the Yard Mr. Thomas, the Gentleman to whom I took so strong an Inclination at Lord L's, and for whose Character I have the highest Esteem. He saw me, and springing eagerly from his Horse, sent to know if I would admit him. He came

came, and after expressing some Surprize at seeing me there, on my telling him I had left Lord L's, and waited there a few Days for Letters, he insisted on my spending that Time at his House, in a Manner which it was impossible for me to refuse. As we rode, he apologized for the Entertainment I should meet with, and wished for a larger Share of the Gifts of Fortune, that he might receive his Friends in a Manner more suited to his Desires; but said, if he knew me, the Heart of the Host was all I should care for, and that I should relish the homely Meat of chearful Friendship, as well as the splendid Profusion of Luxury and Pride. We soon arrived at a neat House, with a little romantic Garden behind it, where we were received by Mrs. Thomas with that hospitable Air which is inseparable from real Benevolence of Heart. Her Person was extremely pleasing, and her Dress elegantly plain; and she had a little Boy sitting by her; lovely and playful as a Cupid. Neatness and Propriety presided at our frugal Meal; and, after a little Desert of excellent Fruit, Mr. Thomas took me the Tour of his little Estate, which consists of about an hundred Acres. This he cultivates himself, and has embellished it with every Thing which can make it lovely. Every Thing has the Appearance of Peace and Content, which I observed to him; adding, that his Happiness was infinitely to be envied. He stopped, and looked earnestly at me; I am indeed, said he, happy in many Things, and though my Fortune is far below my Birth and Hopes, I am not in Want. In Time Things may be better, and till then I bear them as well as I can; but my Wife, whose Worth outweighs all Praise, combats our ill Fate with a Spirit I cannot always imitate, and for her I feel with double Keeness the Stings of Adversity. Observing that he was too much affected to pursue the Subject farther, I changed the Discourse, and we returned to the House; but I will not leave him till I am instructed how to draw the Worm of Discontent from one of the worthiest of human Bosoms. I shall continue here till I know when my Father will be in the Country, where you will write to

Your faithful Friend,

WILLIAM SANDERS.

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LETTER XL.

A friendly Epistle from a Lady to a Gentleman.

I Have expected your Answer, my dear Sir, with Impatience, supposing it would bring me Information of an happy Change in the Dispositions of that *worthy* Relation who shews so much Politeness and Obstinacy in his Endeavours to ruin your Sister. Indeed I am very angry with him, for this disagreeable and interesting Business hath already kept you the whole Autumn in Northumberland, and perhaps may detain you all the Winter. You certainly owe your best Advice to your Sister, and your good Offices to your Nephews; this Sacrifice of your Time and Pleasures is truly generous, and I heartily approve of it, though it prevents my seeing you. This I say to myself with Regret, and even Chagrin, having never so eagerly desired your Company; but if you should ask me why, I profess I cannot tell. I have no Business on my Hands, neither am any wise embarrassed, at least that I know; yet I nevertheless perceive that you could be useful to me—when indeed can a true Friend be useless? Lord B. is at length restored to his Acquaintance, who ardently wished his Return; and all his Friends have made Entertainments on his Arrival. I doubt not he is deserving of those Sentiments he inspires. Give my most affectionate Compliments to your amiable Sister, and tell her she ought to be very well satisfied with me. I deny myself the Pleasure of writing to her, because I would not interrupt her present Moments of agreeable Leisure. Adieu.

London, April 4, 1788.

Yours.

LETTER XLI.

On the Necessity of the Soul's being active. From the same.

Dear Sir,

YOU are doubtless in the right. If one is not naturally of a capricious and uneven Temper, one ought to know the Principle of all one's Sentiments; nor ought

ought one to say, I am melancholy, and know not why. But, my Friend, one may become by Habit what one is not by Nature.. I am grown ill humoured, positively ill-humoured; I am tired of Company, frightened at Solitude, and displeased with every Thing. You ask me what it is that can disturb the Calm of my Soul? Really nothing. But then its Calm is as dreadful as a Tempest; at least it so seems to me. The Soul requires either to be agitated with acute Pains or exquisite Pleasures; for if the Sense of the one, or the Charm of the other, press not the Springs of Action, its slow and feeble Emotions leave us in a State of Languor and Inactivity. Destitute of Inclinations and Desires, we barely exist, but do not enjoy our Existence. Every Object becomes indifferent to us, and this Indifference begets that Kind of Anxiety, which of all the Evils of Life is most insupportable. I have been these three Days at Richmond, where my Sister does not help to brighten up my Reflections, because she was born two-and-twenty Years before me. She affects to make me adopt her Opinions; but when she begins to lecture, I fall asleep. Lady D. came to enquire after me yesterday; she writes me Word that Lord B. has disappeared, that nobody sees him, meets with him, or knows where to find him. She talks a deal of Nonsense on this Subject, and has a Mind to inform me and to trust me; not that any Thing has been said, but she guessed it. To be sure then nothing engages her to Silence; however, she has promised to say nothing about it: But to *me*, to hide it from *me*!—and then she protests she will not speak a Word of the Matter. You see the Secret is just ready to come out. Is it true that Lady B. is ugly? so very ugly? Good God! what an odd Match. But you desired our Verses; I have therefore sent them, but take Care what Judgment you pass on them. If you think them wretched, we shall hardly allow you to have common Sense; and if you praise them, Lady D. will say, “ Poor Man! the Country hath already spoiled his Taste.” Adieu.

LETTER XLII.

From Dr. Watts to Mr. Duncombe.

SIR,

YOUR Letter and the Present of Mr. Hughes's Works were joyfully received by me the next Day after I saw you. Methinks I see the very Man, my old Acquaintance there, with his Temper and Softness, his Wit and sprightly Genius, spreading almost over every Page. 'Twas well Telemachus took Mentor with him when he ventured into Calypso's Island, painted by such a Pencil, while the Goddess was dressed by such a Poet, and she and her Nymph Eucharis had Airs and Sonnets given them by such a Master in Music. But my Sorrow freshens and renews upon my Heart, that such a Genius did not live to write more moral and divine Odes in advanced Years, to be a Counterpoise to all the Charms of Pleasure and Youth and Beauty which his younger Poesy indulged. Yet it must be confessed I can find nothing that is an Offence to Virtue and Piety, so far as I have perused, which amounts to more than half. The Christian Scheme has Glories and Beauties in it, which have superior Power to touch the Soul, beyond all the Gods and Heroes of the Heathen Heaven or Elysium. I should have been much pleased to see so fine a Pen employing its Art on such Themes. Mr. Pope's *Messiah* always charms me. I speak not now of Mr. Hughes's Odes *on the Creator of the World*, the *Ecstasy*, &c. because I have read them long ago; these have so much Dignity in them, that I wished for more of the same Kind. Pray tell me, Sir, when I shall be so happy as to see you next, whether Sir R. Blackmore's Preface to his Alfred does not convince you that a Christian Poet has happier Advantages than a Pagan? His *Prefaces* are certainly better in their Kind than his *Poems*, as several Gentlemen of good Taste have acknowledged. And why should not some great Genius seize those Advantages

vantages, and leave old Homer no longer Right to the supreme Laurel? But I forget myself and my Years.

I am, Sir,

Your obliged humble Servant,

Newington,
May 23, 1735.

J. WATTS.

LETTER XLIII.

From a Gentleman to his Nephew at Oxford.

My dear James,

THIS short Letter will probably meet you on your Arrival at Oxford; and as it is the first Time you have been absent from me since your Residence at Upton, I think it my Duty now, as I shall at all Times, to give you such Instructions as may appear to me to be necessary for your Information, and to anticipate that Experience which is not to be gained without great Hazard, or the possessing such a Friend as I hope to prove myself to you. Such indeed has been the Excellence of your Education, that you are better qualified than most young Men to make judicious Remarks upon every Thing you see; and I believe that you are well disposed to employ your Qualifications with Discretion and Propriety. I must therefore desire, when you are at a Distance from me, to be acquainted with the Fruits of your Observations; for though they may perhaps be crude at first, they will improve every Day. Indeed my great Motive in laying this Injunction upon you, is to encourage a continual Exercize of your Judgment, which will often be the one Thing needful in the future Part of your Life. You will use your Leisure to make your Communications to me, though I shall expect to hear from you during your Stay at the University; where you will find ample Room for gratifying your Curiosity, in a Place which contains many Things most worthy of your Attention. You will take your own Time, and consider yourself as your own Master; but whenever

you return, it will be a welcome Event to your most affectionate Uncle,

THOMAS HARPER.

LETTER XLIV.

On the Dangers and Temptations of the World. From a Lady to her Friend.

EMILIA, my dear Friend, will bring you this Letter, which you will find sullied with my Tears. Till she left me I knew not how dear this Child was to me; her Grief at Parting justified my Affection. She is now launched into a Sea infamous for Shipwrecks, without any other Pilot or Guide than a blind Confidence in the Rectitude of her own Heart, but passionately fond of those Pleasures to which she is about to give up herself. I pity her, utterly incapable as she is of seeing the World in its true Light; for Youth can behold nothing but the present Moment, and its Views terminate in the Object it enjoys. You find that I am quite the old Woman, but I am not afraid of being thought tedious. Nature has given to you in the Bloom of Youth the mature Judgment of Age, and your good Sense supplies that Experience which others purchase by their Misfortunes or their Faults. I admire with you the Hand of Providence in the Accomplishment of your Happiness, and acknowledge that human Prudence could not have saved you from the impending Danger. An entire Acquiescence in divine Wisdom is my favourite Virtue; for we know so little what is proper for us, and are by our own Power so little able to effect it, that to repose ourselves thereon is absolutely necessary. This Providence draws me out of my Solitude. My Enemies wish to deprive me of the little Remains of my Fortune; and my Law-Suit in London in Consequence induces me to believe it more for my Interest that these Troubles are better for me than the Tranquillity of this Retirement. I could have wished to put off my Journey till after the Marriage of Charlotte, but am informed that the least Delay will be prejudicial to my Affairs; this

this Place therefore I must leave within two Days. Your Letter I shall receive in London, and I shall find a Relief in it from all the Fatigues and Anxiety of Business. Sometimes I am inclined to give up all that is contested to my Opponents, to dispose of the little they cannot take from me, and shut myself up in some Place of Obscurity, where I may forget the World as that will forget me. The Thought for a short Time was very flattering, and has the Appearance of giving up the Advantages and Conveniences of Life; but more attentive Examination discovered that it was only a convenient Indolence, and implied but little Submission to the Dispensations of Providence. For the same Providence commands me to defend my Property against Injustice, by Means of Proctors and Advocates; so that London is the most proper Place for me, where, notwithstanding my Aversion, I must continue till a tolerable Accommodation or the Loss of my Cause shall determine my future Mode of Life. Continue, my dear Friend, to love me, for the utmost Malice of my Enemies cannot deprive me of that Advantage. Adieu.

LETTER XLV.

On rural Pleasures and the Follies of Fashion. To a young Gentleman.

YOU can have no Idea, my dear Mr. Trueman, how weary I am of being only these few Days in Town. It is inconceivable to me how any one, who is happy enough to have a House or a Cottage in the Country, should continue here at this Season. When Pleasure in her fairest Form courts them, and the sordid God of modern Days, Interest, joins his powerful Voice; when Power, the best Power, that of doing Good, solicits their Presence, it is astonishing that Gentlemen of large Property, and our Nobility, should imprison themselves in this smoaking Furnace, when the whole Land is a blooming Garden and a Wilderness of Sweets. What Nobleman of Spirit can prefer the rude Insults of a li-

centious London Rabble, the Refuse of every Land, to the warm and faithful Attachment of a brave, generous, and loyal Yeomanry in the Country? Interest, as well as Virtue and Humanity, prompt them, by living on their Estates, to imitate the Heavens, which return the Moisture they draw from the Earth in grateful Dews and Showers. When I first came to Empsey, having been some Years abroad, my Tenants were poor and dejected, and scarce able to gain a hard penurious Living. — The neighbouring Gentlemen spent at least eight Months of the Year in London; the next Town, where the Produce of my Estate went to Market, was filled only with People in Trade, who could scarce live by each other. By living altogether in the Country myself, and bringing the whole Neighbourhood to do the same, I promoted every Kind of Diversion; the next Town, which belongs to me, was soon filled with Gentlemen's Families, which raised the Markets, and, in Consequence, the Value of my Estate. My Tenants, at the same Rents which before they were unable to pay, now grew rich; Population increased, my Villages were full of Inhabitants, and all around me was gay and flourishing. True Policy is governed by simple Maxims; and that Machine which has the fewest Wheels is certainly most easy to keep in Order. Have you had my old Men to dine? I admit them to my Table at sixty, where they are always my Guests once a Fortnight. I love to converse with those whom "Age and long Experience render wise;" for it is Time to slacken the Reins of Pride, and to wave all sublunary Distinctions, when they are so near being at an End between us. My own Feelings likewise tell me, that Age wants the Comforts of Life; a plentiful Table, generous Wines, cheerful Conversation, and the Notice of those they have been accustomed to revere, renew in some Degree the Fire of Youth, gives a Spring to declining Nature, and perhaps prolongs as well as enlivens the Evening of their Days. Nor is it a small Addition to my Satisfaction, to see the Respect paid them by the young of their own Rank, from the Observation of their being thus distinguished by me. As an old Man, I have an Interest in making Age an Object of Reverence;

but

but were I ever so young, I would continue a Custom which appears to me not less just than humane. Adieu! my esteemed, my amiable Friend! how I envy you your Larks and Nightingales!

Your faithful

London, June 20, 17—.

HAMPDEN.

LETTER XLVI.

The Advantages of a good Education. From a Father to a Son.

IT gives me the warmest Pleasure, my dear Son, to find you are pleased with the expenive Education I have given you. Indeed your Fortune is thereby reduced more than it might otherwise have been; yet I considered that Wealth, if necessary to Happiness, might be acquired, but that the flying Hours of Youth, the Season of Instruction, are never to be recalled. Your generous Freedom of thinking, and Nobleness of Sentiment, happily reward and justify all my Cares; these might have been cramped, perhaps totally destroyed, by the common Methods of Education. I have always considered, that our Understandings are fettered by Systems, and our Hearts corrupted by Example; and that there needs no more to Minds well disposed than to recover their native Freedom, and to think and act for themselves. With this Idea I have instructed you how, but never what to think; I have pointed out the Road which leads to Truth, but have left you to discover her Abode by your own Strength of Mind. On the most important of all Subjects, I have said no more than that Conviction must be on the Side of that Religion, which teaches the purest and most benevolent Morality; which is most conducive to the general Happiness of Mankind, and gives the most sublime Idea of the Deity. For as the Seeds of Virtue are innate, I have only watched to cherish the rising Shoot, and to prune, but with a careful Hand, the too luxurious Branches; meaning by Virtue that Rectitude of Heart which leads us to fulfil all the Duties of Life, as far as human Frailty will permit,

58 The Complete LETTER-WRITER.

mit, the constant Monitor of all our Faults. My present Situation, except Empsey, is the sweetest Spot I ever beheld; but it is rather beautiful than magnificent. There is a mild Elegance, a refined Simplicity in the Air all around, strongly expressive of the Mind of its amiable Possessor; a poetic Wildness, a luxuriant Glow, like that of primæval Nature, adorned by the Hand of the Graces. But I receive your Letter this Moment. You judge rightly that there is an Activity and Restlessness in the Mind of Man, which makes it impossible for him to be happy in a State of absolute Inactivity; for some favourite Pursuit is necessary to keep the Mind awake. On this Principle only can we account why Avarice and Ambition should be the Vices of Age, and that ardent Pursuit of Men for Riches and Honour at the Time when they have the least Prospect of enjoying them; but the lively Passions of Youth subsiding, some active Principle must be found to replace them, and where that warm Benevolence of Heart is wanting which is a perpetual Source of Delights ever-new, I wonder not that they engage in the Chase of Wealth and Power, though sure so soon to melt from their Grasp. Next to the superior and general Purpose of my Heart, of making myself acceptable to my Creator, my first Object was to render happy your lovely Mother; but Heaven was pleased to disappoint my Hopes by taking her to itself. My second has been to make you the most amiable of Men; in this I have succeeded beyond my most sanguine Wishes. May you, my dear Son, prosper in every Purpose of your Soul as fully as I have done in this, and be as happy as your Virtues have made your Father!

I am, &c.

LETTER XLVII.

From a young Lady of fourteen to her Friend.

OMirth! where is thy Joy? O Pleasure! how far art thou removed from real Happiness? After three Hours Experience I make this Reflection. So long have I

I been laughing immoderately in the Midst of a gay Crowd; and the Moment I quitted it, these sober Thoughts came rushing in upon my Mind with such Violence, that I could not help sitting down to give you an Account of them, especially as I knew it would suit your present philosophical State of Mind, and might, perhaps, help to make my Peace for all I said Yesterday in the Gaiety of my Heart, and much against my Conscience. Yes, indeed, my dear Miss Campbell, 'tis now my Turn to *lever le Masque*; * when I have done so, I must assure you that I do really believe there is more true and unmixed Satisfaction in the Company of a few Friends, a few well-chosen Books. These are what I must place next to Friends, those silent and faithful Friends, who brighten our most gloomy Moments, and to whom we cannot even then be disagreeable. Then Walks and Woods, and quiet and early Hours, quiet Sleep, healthy Looks, high Spirits, chearful Mirth, (and that is a very uncommon Thing, I assure you) then a good Deal of Leisure for Improvement, and a great Deal of good Inclination to make Use of it. "O care silve beate!" There is no real Happiness in any other Way of Life. This is truly living; every Thing else is only giggling and sighing away a short disagreeable Time. Here is a wonderful Inundation of Wisdom; and yet I do not quite renounce all Happiness any where else. For Instance, last Night I enjoyed a great Deal that was very sincere, in seeing our long-wished for Traveller safely arrived. Here is my Lady Duchess come to sup here, and the Bishop of Bristol telling her that she is very perverse. Apropos, she is much obliged to Lady Mary for a very pretty Letter; but as she writes to —— this Night, will at present thank her no otherwise than by bidding me say this.

I am, in Haste,

Your obliged

K. TALBOT.

* To pull off the Mask.

LETTER XLVIII.

On the proper Education and Treatment of young Ladies.

Madam,

THE domestic Education of your Daughters is no indifferent Matter. The Relation of a Mother imposes on you the most important Duties. If you do not take Care to keep the World at a Distance, it will continually interpose between you and your Children; yet not with Austerity which only excites Murmuring, but with that Prudence which gains Confidence. If you perplex and incumber them with Instructions, they will only prove Hypocrites; but they will love Religion, when instigated by your Example, and incited to it by your Gentleness. There is a Treatment and Method of Instruction suited to different Ages as well as to different Conditions of Life; and Girls of twenty must not be treated as if they were but ten. A Taste for good Authors should be encouraged as much as possible; it is an excellent Employment, but should be managed with that Freedom which does not tie them down to the Minute, and with that Spirit of Discernment which knows how to distinguish as Occurrences happen. You should endeavour to establish them according to their Fortunes and Rank, yet without restraining their Inclinations unless they should tend to Dissipation or Folly. For Marriage is the natural Condition of Mankind, though there are some Exceptions to this Rule, when it may be dispensed with. You need neither love the Vanities of the World, nor make yourself ridiculous by opposing the Customs of the Times; when Piety appears to affect Singularity, it becomes a Subject of Raillery, and a prudent Woman should avoid rendering herself remarkable. It is necessary that every Woman should dress suitably to her Rank in Life, though within the Limits of Modesty and Decency. Good Company also is highly necessary; and true Devotion is neither rustic nor austere. It is often better for young People to see well chosen Company than to remain alone; and you should inspire them with Chearfulness, that they may

may not assume a sanctified Air. But above all Things, make yourself beloved ; it is the greatest Pleasure a Mother can aspire to, and the greatest Prerogative she can enjoy, in order to effect the Good she purposes. Your Domestics should be religious and honest, and should neither be treated with Haughtiness or Familiarity, but as People who are of the same Nature, though your Inferiors. Punishment also should be with Regret ; but you should always pardon with Pleasure. But I depend much on your Understanding and Wisdom, which will teach you whatever is necessary ; and you may ever be assured of the respectful Consideration with which I have the Honour to be,

Madam,

Yours.

LETTER XLIX.

From a Lady in London to her Friend, before her Retirement into the Country.

I Am extremely sorry, my dear Friend, to be obliged to set out for Chilhampton, one of my Estates in Devonshire, and to leave you in the Midst of so much Uneasiness. An unforeseen and unavoidable Accident requires my immediate Departure ; nor do I very well know when it will be possible for me to return. The Chagrin your Brother's Affairs must necessarily give you, increases my Regret to leave you. I should have done every Thing in my Power to serve both him and you, could I have continued ; but my Zeal for your Service will not be diminished by my Absence, and perhaps may be more efficacious. It was not in my Power to act in the Affair myself, and Mr. Johnson, to whom I should have been obliged, will do us the same good Offices as if I was present. I shall reside in his Mother's Neighbourhood, who will join her Influence to engage her Son to redouble his Attention to your Brother's Conduct. He has promised to write to me constantly, and I shall send you his Letters when they can be of any Utility.

Adieu,

Adieu, my dear Lady, and the Occasion of my Departure, be assured, gives the extrekest Suffering to
Your very affectionate.

LETTER L.

In Answer to the preceding.

HOW unseasonable, my dear Friend, is the Cause of your Absence ! So necessary is your Company at this Time, though it were only to give me some Consolation. I have heard no more of my Brother since your Departure ; for these four Days past I know not even what is become of him. My Husband has been with the Earl of D. I could not prevent his indulging his own Inclination. Not that I see any ill Consequences which can arise from his Visit, but he will himself give you an Account of the Particulars, as my Mind is not sufficiently at Liberty to enter into a Recital of that Nature. I am, indeed, so much astonished at all these Circumstances, that I fancy myself as it were in another World. Forget me not, my dear Friend, but transmit me some Advice of my Brother, as well as of yourself, as soon as possible. I can write no more. Adieu, then,

Yours ever.

LETTER LI.

A Letter of Introduction from a Lady abroad to her Friend in England.

Dear Madam,

I Have as punctually obeyed your Injunctions of constantly thinking of you, as I have accepted of your Indulgence of not answering your Letter while my Load of Business lasted. When it will decrease I can give no Guess, for I think it increases at present, and I have scarcely Time to recommend the Bearer, Mr. Elliot,
to

to your Friendship and Countenance, as he is a Stranger to our Country and Language. He is that Friend I mentioned who was so good to me in Mr. Harcourt's Illness. His Wife stays with me during his Residence in England, which will be no longer than a Family Affair obliges him. He has great Good-nature, and a good Deal of Humour, and I think will entertain you. To him I refer you for all Questions which may relate to,

Dear Madam,

Yours very faithfully,

E. HAROUR.

LETTER LII.

From a young Lady to her Mother, lamenting her Absence.

ALTHOUGH two Days only have elapsed since your Departure, your Absence, my dear Mamma, has sensibly affected me; but I hope you will keep your Promise, and that nothing will happen to detain you above the Fortnight. Mrs. Horton's is a most charming Situation, and her Acquaintance, I should think, will ever require many Invitations to return her Visits, where Time must glide away insensibly. I shall be obliged to you to send my Guitar. The Baronet has just received a Packet of Novelties, and among them some charming Airs from the new Operas. He is so obliging as to accompany me in singing them, having a fine Voice and admirable Taste; and I shall endeavour to form my Taste from the Instructions he has given me. His Politeness is beyond Description, and his Lessons, which indeed are little Concerts, give great Pleasure to Mrs. Horton, who desires me to assure you of her Friendship. The Baronet presents his Respects to you, and my Brother joins with me in the most affectionate Sentiments. Embracing my Sisters with the most perfect Cordiality,

I am,

My dear Mamma,

Your ever dutiful Daughter.

Hinton,
May 23, 1788.

LET-

LETTER LIII.

*On the Use and Importance of mathematical Knowledge.
To a young Nobleman.*

My Lord,

I Have always been of Opinion that you should not begin the Study of the Mathematics till you are confirmed in the Principles of Religion. I was afraid that by applying yourself to a Science which will admit nothing but what is demonstrative, you would fall into the common Error of Mathematicians, who think of making every Mystery submit to Demonstration. But the Mathematics, though very extensive, are very limited when applied to divine Things; notwithstanding which, they will enable you to think justly. There is a certain Method wanting without them, which is necessary to rectify our Thoughts, to arrange our Ideas, and to determine our Judgments aright. For there is nothing in Nature which is not stamped with Order, and without it there can be no Harmony; and the Mathematics may be called an Universal Science which connects all the rest, and displays them in their happiest Relations. Apply yourself then to this great Branch of Knowledge, so worthy of our Curiosity, and so necessary to the Ules of Life; but never suffer them to throw you into Absence, or to prevent your being collected, whatever are your Studies. At your Age, if I had Leisure, I should wish to acquire a more extensive Knowledge of Geometry; my Turn of Mind made me seek with Avidity every Thing that was methodical, having seldom paid much Respect to Works which are only Exercises of Imagination. Philosophy without Geometry, is like Medicine without Chymistry. Most modern Philosophers reason very inconclusively, only because they are unacquainted with Geometry. They mistake Sophisms for Truths; and though their Principles may be true, the Conclusions they draw from them are false. But Study alone will not make a learned Man, nor a Knowledge of the Sciences a Philosopher. But we live in

in an Age where great Words impose, and where Men think themselves to be eminent Genius, if they can only contrive a Set of singular Opinions. I would advise you, my Lord, to distrust those Writers who employ themselves rather about the Style than the Matter, and who hazard every Thing for the Sake of surprising.

I shall send you, by the first Opportunity, a Work upon Trigonometry; and if it is necessary, I will prove to you geometrically, that is to say, to a Demonstration, that I am always, my Lord,

Your sincere Friend.

LETTER LIV.

On the Utility and Importance of friendly Advice. To a young Gentleman.

Dear Cousin,

THE first Part of Wisdom is to give good Counsel, the second to take it, and the third to follow it. Though you are young, you may be already capable of the two latter Parts of Wisdom, and it is the only Way to attain the first. I would wish you, therefore, to follow the good Counsel of your Uncle Jervyn, for I know him to be a very discreet Gentleman, and of sound Judgment; and I can form some Opinion of Men, for I have studied many. Your steering by this Compass in the great Business you have undertaken, will ensure you from Shipwreck, and consequently becomes the assured Advice of

Your truly affectionate Cousin.

The



The COMPLETE LETTER-WRITER.

P A R T VI.

Entertaining, instructive, and humorous LETTERS, on various Subjects, and on various Occasions.

LETTER I.

*An humorous Letter of Thanks. From the Rev. Mr.
STRAIGHT to Bishop HOADLY.*

My Lord,

I Just now received your Lordship's most surprising, generous, opportune, beatific Letter. I was dead till I received it, but it has given me new Life. I feel myself gay, elated.—I have been Tithe-gathering these three Weeks, and never thought to enquire after any Thing for the future, but the Price of Corn; but now I shall see London again, I shall see Sarum * again, I shall see the Bishop again,

Shall eat his Oysters, drink his Ale,

Loos'ning the Tongue as well as Tail;

I shall be poetical, oratorical, ambitious; I shall write again to the young Divine; nay, I don't know but to the Public. But I must suppress the Extravagance of my Joy, and think of proper Terms to express my Gratitude. I can only wish your Lordship and myself a long Life to shew it. I am,

My Lord,

Your Lordship's most obliged

Humble Servant,

J. STRAIGHT.

* Dr. Hoadly was then (in 1732) Bishop of Sarum, and had given Mr. Straight the Prebend of Warminster in that Cathedral.

LETTER II.

An humorous Epistle to Sir JAMES HONEYWOOD in Town, from his Friend in the Country.

FROM lonely Groves and sequestered Meadows, heart-sprung Complacency and Self-enjoyment, to crowded Streets and riotous Entertainments, fashionable Formality and the Pleasures of Excess.—Be not alarmed, my dear Friend, I do not mean to preach ; I am even merry in remarking the odd Contrast of Character between two Companions so long acquainted and strictly connected as we are. If Fortune should ever throw us into a Train of Adventures, there could not possibly be found two Heroes better adapted to be the Subject of a History. Even now, if I had Dr. Goldsmith's Chinese Habit, and some of his other Requisites, I should be tempted to describe you, in the Eastern Taste, a Cascade tumbling through the Heights of Life, and myself a placid Stream stealing through some solitary Valley. The strong Assurances you gave me at our Parting to keep up a regular Correspondence, make me wonder at your Silence for three Days ; but I expect you to fulfil your Promise, intending to draw all my Intelligence from the great World through your Letters. For you have it in your Power to entertain me very satisfactorily, by writing every Morning *before you go to Bed*, the Manner in which you made the preceding Night all Sunshine and Good-humour. Let me have likewise the newest Patterns of complimentary Phrases and polite cant Terms, such as made poor Harriot protest that Sir James was the best bred Man alive. My Mother's advanced Age and bad State of Health prevent her going much into Life with her Daughter, and therefore I must confide in your Friendship to protect my dear Emily at public Places from the Insults of those who have all your volatile Constitution without one Grain of your Honour. Indeed I fear her solid Notions of Love and Gallantry will be a dead Weight on your airy Conceptions of both ; yet it is necessary for young People to see some fashionable Scenes, as Honey may be extracted out of noxious Flowers, but a Sting is necessary to

to keep off the Drones. Since you and the Family departed, my old Friend the Parson visits me daily, and I find his Conversation grow every Day more agreeable; that clerical Austerity which made you call him Doctor *Craftree*, is wearing off upon nearer Acquaintance, and he has a Soul really worth being intimately acquainted with. He is now below intending to say Grace over a Brace of Partridges and a Hare of my own Manufacture, to which he would allow no other Sauce but plain Butter and a Toast, to be washed down with a good Tankard of home-brewed Ale. If you think it possible for you to settle any where, let me know your fixed Place of Residence, and expect to hear frequently from

Yours,

WILLIAM WALTER.

LETTER III.

From a single Lady to her Nephew at Oxford.

WELL, my dear Nephew, I must suppose you then by this Time fully engaged in the Seats of the Learned, and that the sweet melancholy Face of yours, with which you left us, is drawn into something of a more sagacious Gravity, becoming the Place you are in, and the Objects around you. But if my Friend George did not turn your Gloom into Giddiness in four-and-twenty Hours after you had been with him, I will cast him off from me for ever; he shall no longer be a Godson of mine, and I will withdraw my venerable Blessing from him. Do not you wish to feel some one or other of the many black Gowns you see every Day upon your own Shoulders? Do not you find already the Importance of being surrounded with the learned Lumber of a College? and when you have been busy in examining it, do you not enjoy yourself in being black as a Chimney-Sweeper with the scientific Dust that smothers you? If you do not, I shall be ashamed of you. What Libraries have I seen! some without a Volume, and others full of Books which are never read. And what poring, clumsy

clumsy Pedants have I known! — Well, if I must have to do with stupid People, give me the Dulness of Ignorance, which is quiet at least; for the Dulness of Learning is the most impertinent Thing in the World, and I should be sorry to find myself obliged to scour off any Rust you may contract during your present Visit; for there will be no Body to do it but me; and as you are the Hopes of the Family, we must endeavour to give you to the World as bright as a Suit of Armour vamped up for a Tragedy. My formal Brother, forsooth, thinks the young Man, God bless him, ought not to be laughed at; and poor Lancaster is so at Enmity with the Customs of the World, as to be incapable of doing any Thing, because he cannot leave a sick Wife; so that the whole Business will devolve upon me, and if I should slacken my Endeavours to do you Good, I know not what will become of you. Adieu.

Give my Love to saucy George, and remember to write to your Uncle; I will forgive your troubling yourself about your most affectionate Aunt,

ELIZABETH THOMPSON.

LETTER IV.

In Answer to the preceding.

I Am really, my dear Aunt, much concerned for you, as Matters must go very gravely indeed at home, when you are obliged to have Recourse to so distant an Object as myself to shoot your Wit at. Your Letter, however, came in good Time to increase the Mirth of the Company with whom I was engaged; for after having read it myself, I gave it to George, who immediately proposed the drinking your Health in a Bumper, and Miss Thompson went round with all the Jollity and Glee which can be imagined. Many Questions were asked concerning your Beauty, which we declared to be consummate: Your Fortune also we pronounced to be a *swinging* one, and the Joke, which was well carried on, would have passed off to Admiration, had not George seriously thanked

thanked them for the Honour they had done my Aunt and his Godmother. But Matters took a very different Turn, and it was with no little Difficulty that we could bear up against the Raillery which was levelled at us from all Quarters. However, it is an ill Wind which blows no Body good; and who should be the Gainer in all this Business but my dearest Aunt? She is become the Toast of half the University; and it will be long, I believe, before the Health of George Warner's Godmother will cease to grace the Cups of the Oxford Students. Perhaps you may now think that I am even with you; and though Generosity is my Failing, I advise you to be upon your Guard in future, for this Oxford Air has given a terrible Sharpness to my Wits. When we meet again, you may find, perhaps, a very redoubtable Antagonist in your most dutiful

JAMES THOMPSON.

LETTER V.

From a Gentleman to a Lady who had got the Ague.

YOU are then ill of a tertian Ague; if it turns to a quartan, we shall have a troublesome Guest the whole Winter, for it will be as great a Plague to me as to yourself. Let me know what the Physicians say of it; but how should you hear that I am four or five Days before I know myself? I rely much on my own Strength to bear my great Share in your Sickness; but to judge by the Event, I should have done better to have been upon my Guard the first Time I saw you. Yet it was unlikely that a young Girl should discompose the Mind of an old Batchelor? Who could ever have suspected her of doing me Mischief enough to make me regret being no longer in a Condition to take Revenge? I know you are ill, and am ignorant whether they attend you as they ought, which increases my Vexation. But it is constantly in my Mind to take a Journey to Elford, though in this sharp Weather it is almost Madness. I am disordered more than enough to regret absent Beauties; and

I should have known my Case better, and considered my Infirmities in being maimed and crippled from Head to Foot as fully sufficient, without the additional Distemper of Impatience to see you. It is a tormenting Disease. My Friend B. though he sees you every Day, writes like one in Despair, because he does not see you so often as he wishes; and you are very happy in not having me to deal with, for I should handle you to good Purpose. Perhaps you may laugh at my Menaces, but know that Men of Resolution are not wanting in an Affair the Public are so greatly interested in. They will not suffer their Sex to be killed with Impunity, and therefore I must conclude you to be absolutely a Turk, and that too, I am sensible, of the most malicious Cast; for I have heard that the better Sort of these People are great Alms-givers; but from what I know in your Temper, you would not do a Kindness for Empire, even to them that love you. In Reality then you are good for nothing, though a Composition of many fine Qualities and good Things. You verify better than any Body the Proverb, which says, "All is not Gold that glitters;" and indeed, you are as devilishly mischievous as you are fair. But notwithstanding all this, such is the Power of Beauty, I am, more than any one living,

Yours, &c.

LETTER VI.

Reflections on the Absence of Friends. To a Lady.

INDEED, Madam, one pays so dear for the Pleasure of seeing you by the Pain of your Absence, that I am scarcely obliged to you for your Visit, on Account of the Uneasiness it has left me under. The World appears in you to so great Advantage, that I could have quitted my Solitude and launched out into it again, had I not recollect ed that, among all I have seen in it, there is scarcely one like yourself. This Consideration has made me chearfully return into my Hermitage, with an Intent to make the Freedom of Solitude subservient to thinking often

72. The Complete LETTER-WRITER.

often of you, though without the least Pretence to the same Returns from you. The Court has always too many Persons present for the absent to expect to find a Place there ; but should the Remembrance of me sometimes by Accident come into your Mind, think of me, Madam, as of a Person who honours you more than any one living, and than whom none is more sincerely

Yours, &c.

LETTER VII.

*On the Happiness of a liberal and generous Disposition.
Benevolence and Charity a Duty incumbent on Persons in affluent Circumstances.*

SIR,

I Should be extremely sorry and ashamed to have given the least Cause for an Accusation of Profuseness on any other Score than that you mention. It would be inexcusable even on this, if the Liberalities you condemn so severely were of any Prejudice to those whom I know it is my Duty to have the first in my Thoughts. If any such stand in Need of my Assistance, your generous Information will ensure to them all the Relief which my Reason tells me their Circumstances require, or my Ability can bestow. I am not yet convinced there are any such Wants in my own Family; permit me then, I beseech you, to dispose of my Fortune in my own Way, by searching out those of others. I have a greater Share of the good Things of Life than many others; but am I, like the Miller, to hoard up Wealth, while those who have naturally an equal Title, pine for my Superfluity? The poorest Wretches who beg my Charity, are endued with the same Faculties of tasting and smelling as myself; they are equally susceptible of Cold and Hunger; they are born Citizens of the World, however distressed and abject, and consequently have a Right to find Subsistence in it. Whether I am fond of squandering my Income, as you term it, or not, the Method in which I wish to perform good Actions is different

ferent to that of others ; to wait till your Bounty is petitioned for, is an Encouragement to insolent Laziness, and totally subversive of that which should be a principal Object, to confer Rewards on modest Merit. I wish not to shock any one, and to me it is the utmost Pleasure to unveil the concealed Scenes of Misery ; I wish to soften the hard Fate of the wretched, and to make the unhappy Sufferer less sensible of the Injustice of Fortune. It is the greatest Joy to draw modest Merit out of that Obscurity which Poverty always clouds it with ; the most permanent Satisfaction is to surprise a worthy Person into Happiness, and give a new Life of Gladness to expiring Hope. The Objects of my small Favours are those who not only appear to me in the greatest Necessity, but such as are worthy of my Regard on Account of their good Qualities. Your Apprehension that my Liberality may outstrip my Ability, which I am willing to attribute to your Tenderness, obliges me in Gratitude to assure you, that I have too much Justice in my Nature to rob the Person who may come after me, of any Part of his Birthright. My Steward can inform you that the annual Rents of my Lands content me without mortgaging or selling a single Acre. My House, my Equipage, my Table, and my Apparel, are all suitable to my Fortune ; but being an Economist in these Matters, I have enough, but not too much of any Thing. I am neither imposed upon nor ill served by Tradesmen, because I buy with ready Money. As I never go to Court, I save at least three Birth-Day Suits every Year ; and the Money which others lose, or are cheated of by Gaming, serves to supply the Necessities of many a Person in Distress.

I flatter myself, Sir, this Account will convince you I am no Prodigal, nor have any Way forfeited the Claim my Birthright gives me to your Affection, being desirous of nothing more than to prove myself, with the most dutiful Respect and Reverence,

Your obedient Kinswoman.

LETTER VIII.

On the Seat of the Soul. To a Lady from a Gentleman.

Madam,

IT was very late last Night before I gave up the Scheme of a little Journey to Tunbridge, on this very Saturday; where, though my Stay would have been short, my Satisfaction would have been infinite, as I had delighted myself with a Prospect of waiting on you back again. But this cannot be, for stubborn Business has interposed; and the only Amends I can make myself for the Disappointment is, to dwell on your Idea with a double Sense of its Sweetness, till I am restored to the Blessing of your real and personal Conversation. In the mean Time, I have made a Discovery, that those Philosophers, who have been puzzling themselves and their Readers with Enquiries after the Seat of the Soul, might have been convinced that there is no Part of the Body without it. Indeed they should have been happy enough to meet with some such amiable Composition as yours. Whenever you speak, it is in your Tongue, and when you are silent, it is in your Eyes: You never sit down to write, but it descends into your Fingers. I am certain it was diffused over every Part of your Letter; not a Line which did not carry the Marks of your fine Sense and your Delicacy; and yet with all this Excess of Accomplishments, you are sometimes a little unjust, or you would not have disapproved my Retreat from the Crowd of the World, since it is by such Company as yours that Men are taught to love Solitude. There are Pilgrims among the Turks who, at their Return from the Temple of their Prophet, burn their Eyes with hot Irons, and so shut out, by a voluntary Blindness, all less holy and common Objects. There is a much more provoking Descent from Mrs. L——r's Conversation down to that of the World; and the only Way for a Man to be happy, who has once enjoyed that Blessing, and must not continue to enjoy it for ever, is by declining all other Society, to escape the Mortification of too remote a Comparison; where, with

the Modesty of the Woman, is mixed the Tenderness of the Fiend; where Frugality only limits Generosity, and Wisdom carries Caution dressed in the Air of the most affable Openness; where Experience and Conduct in Life, instead of justifying some Shadow of Vanity, serve only to strengthen Humility, and the Memory suffers nothing to escape but Remembrance of Anger and Injuries; where, to all these endearing Charms of the Mind, a Person is added which looks as if Heaven had made it on Purpose to deserve and become such a Spirit; — *who* that sees, and hears, and thinks, would be absent from such an Union of Loveliness? For my Part, I can never reflect on these enchanting Truths, without finding some new Reason for professing myself, with unchangeable and increasing Respect,

Madam,
Your most faithful
And devoted Servant.

LETTER IX.

From a Lady just recovered from a violent Fit of Sickness.

My dear Friend,

COULD I possibly imagine that my Illness should so much affect your gay and sprightly Temper as to make such a Change in your Disposition! How endearing is that tender Concern, that pleasing Warmth of Affection with which you interest yourself in my Disorder, and endeavour to support my Spirits by soothing Sympathies, the reviving Consolations of Friendship! For though it is now two Months since I was seized with a Fever, I have yet hardly Strength to write to you; but I cannot forbear making an Attempt to remove your Fears, by telling you as soon as possible that at last I am out of Danger. I have lately had a near Prospect of Death; but while I stood upon the Verge of that awful State, that undiscovered Country “from whose Bourn “no Traveller returns,” I felt my Mind calm and serene, as if charmed with the inspiring Harmony of some angelic

gelic Choir. All before me was Extasy, the most transporting Extasy : Raptures unutterable, Delights boundless and eternal ! But my Intervals of Sense were short, and disturbed with Pain ; I was almost continually delirious, and in these Distractions of Mind, incessantly repeated the beloved Name of my dear Frederic. I gave him the tenderest Epithets ; and wrapt in a fond Delusion of Thought, I fancied he walked with me through the most delicious Scenes Imagination could paint, uttering the softest, the most melting Words, and to which I replied in Terms full of the same passionate Tenderness. The whole Family were Witnesses of these wild Rovings of Fancy, which cannot fail of raising some Suspicions of what I have endeavoured, with the utmost Care, to conceal. Amelia only has hitherto taken Notice of it ; but how Frederic conducted himself I am yet altogether unacquainted, nor have I dared to enquire. I find, my dear Friend, that I must break off ; a painful Languor depresses my Spirits, and I am too much fatigued to proceed. If what I write is either unintelligibly obscure, or more than commonly incoherent, a trembling Hand and giddy Head must excuse me ; but however indisposed I am, so long as I can hold a Pen I shall subscribe myself,

Dear Madam,

Yours very sincerely,
HORATIO.

LETTER X.

From a Lady in Town to her Friend in the Country.

My dear Maria,

GAY and giddy as I am, I begin now to feel that Life must have its Sorrows ; and I consider it as doubly unfortunate that the first Shaft should come, though innocently, from you. Perhaps you will think me romantic, and with Justice, when I tell you that so much did I long to engage in an epistolary Correspondence, that it seemed to make Amends for my parting with you.

I

I thought of nothing but the Pleasure of writing every Secret of my Heart to my Friend, and of the delightful Expectation to watch the Coming of the Postman, who is to bring a like Return from her. But, alas ! I am now convinced that I could tell you every Thing much better than I can write it, and that the Postman frequently brings Disappointment along with him. I had also, I believe, a little secret Vanity in imagining that I should turn out an excellent Letter-Writer, and I wished for an Opportunity of exerting my epistolary Talents. These Reflections played upon my Fancy, and enabled me to keep up my Spirits at your Departure ; and such was my Insensibility, that I thought the Coach did not move with sufficient Rapidity, every Moment seeming an Hour till I received a Letter from you ; and my Impatience in opening the Letter was such as occasioned me to tear it in such a Manner, that I was obliged to hold it with great Care and Steadiness to be able to read it. I could not wait for the Servant to open the Door to the Postman, but flew to it myself ; and being too eager to retire into the Parlour with my Treasure, I tore it open in the Vestibule, and just as I had devoured the first Line, a Gust of Wind bore it rapidly from my Hand into the Garden. In its Flight it was divided into three Pieces, and I grew almost distracted ; but at length they were collected together, and this long-expected Letter made me burst into Tears. The Loss of a Friend, who had such an Affection for me, I then felt to be a very great one. In describing your own Feelings and Situation, you give an exact Representation of mine ; and when I read of the Tears which bedewed your Cheeks at separating, I am suddenly prevented from reading any farther by my own. This is an exact and true State of my Feelings at this Moment ; and I can only tell you how much I love you, how sincerely I regret your Absence, how much I wish for your Happiness, and with what real Affection I am,

Yours, &c.

LETTER XI.

From a Lady abroad, describing the Punishment of a vain, impertinent Coxcomb.

Dear Madam,

I Am, in the first Place, to return you Thanks for the Civility you shew to my Friend, for as I supposed his Conversation would please you, and as I find I am not mistaken, can hardly repent the sending him. But he has ill requited the Happiness I procured him of your Acquaintance, by the idle Story he has told you of the Gentleman you were so merry about; I should rather say, so grave, for I could almost think you in earnest, though I would not willingly think so, because it would make me angry. You say "you hope soon to wish me Joy, as you hear the Gentleman has a Title, a Ribbon, a pompous Equipage, and a great Estate." Can you have so mean and contemptible a Thought of me, to imagine these would be of any Weight? To me they have no Charms, where that tender Monitor, the Heart, attends not the Choice of the Person who is to confer the Honour; and if that is reluctant, it must be either a sordid Soul or a very trifling Mind, which can be charmed with what is so often the Decoration of a Fool or Knave. I mean no Reflection on the Person in Question; the Man has great Merit, I believe, but so had my Grandfather, though I should not have thought of marrying him. You may think, perhaps, there is some Truth in this Affair, because I seem to fire a good Deal upon it. I own he has run through all the Nonsense which Men believe to be pleasing to our Sex, and has really taken Pains to convince me he has an Affection. This I should not have expected from one of his Country, as they are not used to Ladies who either expect or desire THAT to be an Ingredient in Matrimony; for when they find an Estate and Title, they go through all that is to follow with great Indifference, and have no Idea what you mean by saying that you would not marry a Man because you could not love him. I am convinced by some grave Lectures on this Occasion, that our own Country

Country produces People who think like them; a Mind well adorned with what is commonly called *worldly*, seems to think all Considerations, but those of Fortune, romantic. I must give you a Specimen of the Delicacy of our northern Beaux and Belles, though your Prudery (I beg Pardon, your Prudence, I should have said) frights me; but I cannot resist, and therefore pop your Fan immediately before your Face, for I am going to begin. A young Fellow of Fashion, who has made the Tour of France, &c. fell in Company, at his Return, with three or four pretty Women at a Friend's House. He there danced, sung, laughed, was very free with the Ladies, and behaved *a-la-mode de Paris*; and as he assured the gazing Audience of his Airs, his next Step was to brag of their Fondness for him, and the Passion with which he had inspired each of them. He repeated this in all Companies, till at last it reached the Ears of their Husbands (for they were all married Women); for some Time they brooded over it in melancholy Silence, and at last in a surly Way expressed the Cause of their Ill-humour in plain Terms. The Ladies desired he might be brought with them before the Husbands; and all these loving Couples agreed that one of the Nymphs should invite him to sup at her House, without saying who was to be there. He flew on the Wings of Love to the Rendezvous, and was received with great Gaiety; but in the Height of his Raptures she reproached him with the Speeches he had made, which he denied. At that Instant all the Ladies and their Husbands came in, Witnesses of his Guilt were produced, and he was fairly convicted. The Husbands pronounced Sentence, which was, that the Ladies should whip him, to teach him Truth and better Manners; and some say, they actually did so, whilst others assert that they ordered their Maids to do it, but it is certain that the Punishment was inflicted with so much Rigour, as to oblige him to keep his Bed for some Days. By this Specimen you may judge of the State of Gallantry in this northern Climate. Adieu.

Yours.

LETTER XII.

From a Gentleman in Town to his Friend, ridiculing his Method of spending Time.

I Called yesterday, my dear Ashton, at your Sister's, in Expectation of seeing you ; but I found you had stolen a March upon us, and are gone to the Waters. From the Countess of L's Description, you are highly pleased with your present Situation ; she was in Raptures when she related it. And so you can submit to play at Questions and Commands with a Company of raw Girls ! Upon my Honour, a most manly Amusement ! I could not help laughing at the Solemnity with which they were treated by your Sister, who certainly thinks you are in the Land of Wonders. And to act Plays too with these Country Wenchies ! This is keeping up the Frolic, indeed ! But I offer no Dissuasives. If we can but please ourselves, the Object which pleases us is of little Consequence. Among Children we must play like Children, and in the Country as they do in the Country ; for I do not see what other Amusements you can find where you are now, and it is best to be satisfied with what we can get. I should be excessively pleased with a Description of some of these original Characters you have an Opportunity of observing ; their Persons would divert me more than their Amusements ; but I do not think I should bury myself in this Manner, when there is generally such agreeable Company at the Rooms. They were honoured last Season with the Presence of the Duchess of D. and the Countess of B. but if you prefer Mrs. Horton's Company, pray continue there. I acknowledge she is a Woman of Sense, yet she wants that Politeness, that Elegance of Manner, without which, at her Age, I cannot think she can be agreeable. If these must be the Conditions, may I ever be banished from public Places ! What is a Woman without personal Accomplishments ? Some Women begin to talk gravely about Reason, when they can no longer talk of their Beauty. These female Reasoners, these Daughters of Age and Ugliness, may be tolerated for a Time, but we cannot always be diverted

verted with what is ridiculous ; and if we can raise a Smile at first, we are disgusted afterwards. Lady L. has told me a great Deal about these Miss Truemans, whom I can exactly figure to myself as unpolished, reserved, queer Animals. But however, if they are pretty, you may pass two or three Months away in their Company. Adieu, my dear Ashton, I am glad to hear of your Recovery.

LETTER XIII.

In Answer to the preceding.

I pity you, Temple, for knowing no Pleasures but those of Art, and for your Insensibility to those I now enjoy. My Sister has not deceived you. I never was more happy than at present, situated as I am in so respectable, so delightful a Society ; yes, I repeat it, 'so delightful a Society. If it is to you insipid, you must be very unhappy ; but in Spite of yourself you could not but esteem it. With what Indifference do you speak of the Miss Truemans ? You must surely be ignorant of their Rank, and still more of their excellent Qualities. The eldest, in particular, is worthy the Regard and Attachment of every Man who has an adequate Sense of her Merit. She has Wit without making Pretensions to it ; she has the finest Features, which discover the finest Soul ; and she has Talents which astonish me. When she sings, it is with a Grace that Nature alone could have given her ; she is a great Proficient in Music, and plays excellently on the Harpsichord. I have so good an Opinion of your Taste, at least, that if you had seen her in the Character of Zara, I am certain you could not have restrained from Tears, and Tears are the truest Applause. Her Goodness of Heart is the more adorable, as it is uncommon ; and she appears likewise to have had the Advantage of acquired Accomplishments. She makes no Parade of her Knowledge, nor does she affectedly conceal it. In short, I never beheld a more amiable Person. Rectify then the false Ideas you have conceived

of this young Lady and her Sisters, whose Birth, Education, Beauty, and Virtue, merit every Encomium which can be conferred. Adieu,

Yours.

LETTER XIV.

From a Country Girl in Distress, to a Lady, requesting a Favour.

Honoured Madam,

FORGIVE this Interruption from a poor Girl in Despair, who being ignorant what to do, has taken the Liberty of addressing herself to your Benevolence; for you, Madam, are never weary of comforting the afflicted, and I am so unfortunate that I have tired all but God Almighty and you with my Complaints. I am very sorry I was obliged to leave the Mistress you had been so kind to put me Apprentice to, but on my Mother's Death (which happened this Winter) I was obliged to return Home to my poor Father, who is confined to his Bed by the Palsy. I have never forgotten the Advice you gave my Mother, to try to settle me with some honest Man, who might be of Use to the Family. James Edwards (formerly in your Father's Service) is a very sober, discreet Person, Master of a good Trade, and has taken a Liking to me; and having been already so much indebted to your Bounty, I did not dare to apply to you for any farther Assistance, so that he has been our whole Support during the Winter. He was to have married me this Spring, and indeed set his Heart upon it; but I have been so teased for three Years Rent due last Easter, that not knowing where to get so much Money, the young Man enlisted at once in Mr. Molyneux's Company, and brought me all the Money he had received for enlisting. Mr. Molyneux stays at Andover about a Week longer, and James Edwards is to set out in three or four Days with the rest of the Recruits. We have therefore neither Time nor Money to marry, and he is going to leave me without any Help. If through your Interest

Interest or my Lord's, five or six Weeks longer might be given us, we would endeavour in that Time either to get married, or repay the young Man his Money ; but I am sure he can never be prevailed upon to take the Money again. This Morning I received some great Offers from a very rich Gentleman, but, thank God, I have refused them. He told me he would come again To-morrow to know my Mind, but I desired him not to give himself so much Trouble, and that he knew it already. By God's Assistance, he shall have the same Answer To-morrow. I might indeed apply to the Parish ; but one is so much despised after that, and my Misfortunes are better than such a Relief. James Edwards also has too much Pride to think of me after this. Forgive the Liberty I have taken ; for you are the only Person I could think of, and I feel myself so much distressed that I can write no more about it.

I am,
Your humble Servant to command,
ALICE CONYERS.

LETTER XV.

From the Lady, in Answer.

I Have been wanting in Point of Memory, and you, Alice, have been deficient in your Confidence in me. Indeed we have both been to blame, but I am the most inexcusable. However, I shall now endeavour to repair the Injury which my Neglect may have occasioned. Bab, the Bearer of this, has Orders to satisfy your more immediate Wants, and will be with you again To-morrow, for fear the Gentleman should return. My Cousin and I propose calling on you in the Evening, for I know you cannot leave your poor Father alone, and indeed I shall be glad of this Opportunity to inspect your Economy a little. You need not be uneasy on Account of James Edwards ; my Father is from Home, but we shall do all we can towards his immediate Release. Be assured that I will neither forget you nor your

generous Lover. Adieu, Alice, and may God ever bless you. I think you much in the right for not having Recourse to public Charity ; such Steps as these are never to be taken, while the Hearts and Purses of Individuals are open and accessible.

LETTER XVI.

On the State of Life and Manners in different Ages.

My Lord,

THE different Reflections which your Lordship has made upon the different Ages which have passed from the Beginning of the World, are worthy of your Genius. I think I see Reason weighing all these Ages, some like Ingots, others like Leaves of Tinsel ; there are some so sordid, and some so light, that they make the most astonishing Contrast. The present, without Contradiction, is more marked than any other by its Lightness ; but it seduces and it pleases, and we find it agreeable in Spite of ourselves. Indeed our Ancestors would have murmured, and with Reason ; but if they had lived in our Times, they would have been as well amused with our trifling Discourse and airy Writers as we are. The French have more or less tinctured the several Nations of Europe with their Conversation and their Manners ; but their *Prettiness*, though it might have offended the superior Taste of ancient Manners, is now considered at least with a forgiving Eye. There is no Evil but may be found collectively in all Ages ; there are Sparks and Flames, Lilies and Blue-bottles, Rains and Dews, Stars and Meteors, Rivers and Rivulets, which is a perfect Picture of Nature ; and to judge of the World and of Times, you must unite the different Views, and make but one Piece of the whole. It is the Variety of Ages which helps us to judge, without which there would be no comparing. We may prefer living in an Age which presents nothing to View but what is great ; but we must take the Times as they come, and not continually tie

tie ourselves to the Chariot-wheels of the Ancients. We should endeavour to preserve their Taste, and we shall have nothing to fear from our own Futility. We cannot look without a Degree of Horror upon the Gulph from whence the Ages issue, and into which they are precipitating. What a Number of Years, Months, Days, Hours, Minutes, and Seconds, are absorbed by Eternity, which is always the same, and remains immovable in the Midst of Changes and Revolutions ! It is a Rock in the Midst of the Sea, against which the Waves beat in vain. We are but like Grains of Sand with which the Wind sporteth, if we do not attach ourselves immovably to that Point of Support. It is there your Lordship hath cast Anchor ; it is that which has made you undertake so many learned Writings, which all Europe admires and Religion applauds. I read your Account of your Travels as much as I can, that I may make my Thoughts range, though my Body is sedentary ; for nothing opens the Mind so much. I beg Leave only to add that I am,

My Lord,

With the most profound Respect,

Your Lordship's very humble Servant.

LETTER XVII.

From a Lady at Bath to her Friend in Town.

YOU must remember, my dear Emily, an Observation which I used continually to repeat when we were together, of the Truth of which I am now equally sensible, that between us both a Character might be formed of uncommon Merit. It would be Affectation in me to pretend to be insensible to the few Qualifications I possess ; and if the little Good there is in me were added to the great Good there is in you, with your Figure and Beauty, the Man, I believe, must travel far who would find such another. You want nothing but a little of my Indisposition to what is called Pleasure ; and if I could receive a small Communication of your Gaiety of Spirit, it

it might be better for me. But this I know, that the little Good I have is exactly what you want, and perhaps a smart Disappointment or two will teach it you. Though my Recital of the various Means of Pleasure gives such a wild Activity to your Imagination, it has not inspired me with a single Idea of Satisfaction. A few Concerts will be all I shall indulge myself with ; and perhaps one Ball may be added on a particular Occasion, just to see how the gay and fine World appears, what are the new Whims of Fashion, and to prevent my being ridiculous from the Want of knowing them. And so you have been twice at Ranelagh, with a Crowd of Admirers into the Bargain, and I not forgotten ! A steady Friendship, how amiable it is ? But I did not send you the *Bath Guide* to study, but to save myself the Trouble of translating my Expressions whenever they might allude to the Customs and Amusements of the Place, or the Place itself. I desire you never more to look into it, but when any Part of my Letters may refer to what is unintelligible to you ; or I shall be obliged to counteract the Intemperance of your Satisfaction in reading it, by some little Histories and Observations which the Book does not mention. I will venture to say, that before you had been here a Week, you would experience some Mortifications that would bring down your Spirits, unless Mamma took great Care of her dear Child. You will exclaim, I know, What can all this be ? Alas ! my dear Emily, I am but a very few Years older than you, and yet I could give you an Answer to the Question which would make you look grave. But I shall only tell you at present, that we have taken a charming little House, in a very pleasant Situation, and I have already fixed upon an Apartment for you, if you should continue in the same Desire of visiting Bath. I know who is a spoiled Girl, that has got a Mamma who cannot deny her any Thing ; so that before the next Winter is past, I may embrace you here, which will be a Pleasure not to be expressed by your affectionate

HARRIOT WILLIAMS.

L E T-

LETTER XVIII.

On rural Diversions. From a Gentleman to a Lady.

YOUR elegant Epistle, my dear Madam, finds me in that Health its Writer so kindly wishes me, but not quite in that State of Happiness which would satisfy her Benevolence. The Jollity of the Place, however suitable to the Persons engaged in it, is rather too boisterous for me, though it is neither polluted with Indecency, nor disgraced by Intemperance. If my Visit had not interrupted my Bath Satisfactions, it would have been a very pleasant one; I must therefore wish myself back again, in Spite of the Kindness, Attention, and Respect, which is lavished upon me by every Body. But why are you not to be in Hampshire this Summer? that I might pay you a Visit in your Village, and see your Lamb at your Feet, and lay myself down by the Side of it. What a Picture! but did it not die when you left it behind? and thus preserve itself from the sacrilegious Knife of the Butcher. By the Bye, I saved a young Hare from the Jaws of Destruction, and having been its Preserver, I took it into my Head or my Heart, which you please, to be also its Protector. The little Creature is become tame, and feeds out of my Hand, as if it were sensible of my Services. Should you be fond of such an Animal? Tell me so, and it shall accompany me to Bath to call you Mistress. By such an Act, I shall make full Amends for having assisted in destroying so many of its Species. But Hunting is a very animating Exercise, which I pursue with no small Pleasure. The Delirium of it is charming, and the returning Home to blazing Fires, a plentiful Board, and chearful Company, adds not a little to the Delights of it. You and your Harpsichord would be an inexpressible Addition to our Evenings, and I believe would supersede all the rest. But I must have done! The Hounds and Horns call me away. This is a strange Adieu, and with this Letter my Interval of Reason concludes. In another Hour I shall be animated by the Tumults and Cry of the Dogs and the Hunters. But whether I skirt the Hill, or sink the Vale, I shall ever think of you. Again adieu!

Yours.

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LETTER XIX.

A familiar Epistle from a Lady abroad to her Friend in ENGLAND.

Dear Madam,

I thank you for the Chairs. They are very pretty, I and I am hard at Work; but since you command, I shall continue my long Letters to you, though I wonder you should desire more than two Lines after you have had so many tedious Epistles. I fancy them to be like Gabriel John, that has a Preface and a Postscript, and a little something between, wherein the principal Part of the Book comes in by the Bye. You ask me, How I spend my Time? I'll give you a Journal of one Day, and so few Incidents happen to make any Variation, that you may guess by that what I have been doing ever since I left the neighbourly Society. I rise at six, so ungenteel I am grown, and have done looking about and giving Orders in the Family to come to Breakfast by eight. When that is over, I spend an Hour with my Instructor in French, then retire to my Room, and either work or read till twelve, when I dress for Dinner at one; after Dinner we chat a little, and then I work or read again till six, when we either go out to take the Air in the Coach, or walk till eight. At this Hour we always sup, and go to Bed at ten. The Country about this City is fine; Woods, Water, and Corn-Fields compose a sweet Landscape. But as the Gentlemen have much more Conversation than Women, they are often engaged; so that I frequently drive out by myself to Appearance, but then, Madam, you are my constant Companion. In one of these Rambles we (that is, yourself and I) found out a House, now uninhabited, formerly the Residence of a favourite Nobleman; it stands in a fine Lawn, with a large Pond before, and another behind it, and the Lawn surrounded with thick Woods, through which there is no regular Walk. You pop into it through several Windings, quite natural. Here we often alight and walk; but I have one Alloy to that Pleasure, a vast many Frogs. You cry, "What Affectation! to be afraid of a poor Frog!" but consider that

that I can no more conquer my Aversion to them, than you can yours to an importunate Lover, though I really believe neither of them design to hurt us. I expect in Return a Description of the sweet Habitation, where I suppose this will find you, as I was so often disappointed of seeing it, though so civilly invited by the generous Owner, to whom I am, as well as to you, Madam,

Yours ever.

L E T T E R XX.

A facetious Expostulation from a Lady to her Friend, occasioned by her not receiving a Letter.

My dear Amelia,

I Have just now found out that human Nature is extremely partial and selfish, if not gently corrected by Reason. I have sadly lamented not having heard from you in three successive Posts, and to my Shame must own, that at first I wished rather to attribute your Silence to any Thing than Want of Friendship. But on reflecting more deliberately, I retracted the narrow and interested Ambition, and blushed to think of how little Consequence my Peace of Mind was in Competition with a thousand Accidents which might happen to yourself; these might oblige you to forget a Person no other Way worthy of the Favours you have honoured me with, than by the sincere and grateful Sense I have of them. I am grown so very humble, that one Line assuring me you are in Health, and that nothing has fallen out of Ill to you, will *now* make me perfectly easy; whereas a Month ago I should have complained to see your Name subscribed at the Bottom of a Folio Sheet. But so unpleasant a Thing it is to be starved, that the quarter Part of a Duodecimo would content me. I rioted in the Plenitude of your Wit and Good-Nature, but being so long deprived of any Part, will make me thankful for the smallest Crumbs which fall from that Abundance you pour forth to others. But I still flatter myself you will not take me at my Word, and that when you

you do write, your Letter will be copious enough to make Atonement for all past Omissions, which, as I have calculated, cannot be less than three whole Sheets of the largest imperial Paper you can procure. I have no News to acquaint you with, but that I shall shortly be obliged to leave this Place. I am sinking again into my own selfish Views; but though I know it highly unreasonable to desire you should devote so much of your Time in a Place where you may employ it in much more agreeable Amusements, yet I know that nothing is so pleasing to yourself as to please others. In this Confidence I depend on my Request being granted, as I am certain you also know that the continual Assurances of your Friendship make the greatest Happiness of, my dear Amelia,

Yours, &c.

HORATIA.

LETTER XXI.

An Apology for the preceding Letter, acknowledging the Receipt of some Letters after it was sent.

My dear Amelia,

YOU will receive from me both an Accusation and Recantation at the same Time. I thought I had Reason to make the former; but the latter I am sure I have. I did not consider that the Ocean was between us, nor that the Quarrels of Princes interfered with our Friendship. Mine was just sent to the Post when yours was brought me, and by their Dates I perceived my Error. I could not bear you should see the rash Judgment I had passed, without seeing at the same Time my Conviction and Shame; but I shall leave my Transgression to be excused by the Motive. I shall therefore rest satisfied till your next takes away all Room for Doubt. The agreeable Account you give me I thank you for; the Story is very entertaining; but your happy Talent renders every Thing so you treat upon. I have no Time to expatiate on its Beauties, nor to consider them

as

as I ought; but as I fear being too late for the Post, I can only tell you that I am, with the most unfeigned Regard, my dear Amelia,

Yours, &c.

HORATIA.

LETTER XXII.

On the disagreeable Consequences false Breeding is frequently productive of.

My dear Sir,

WE frequently meet with People in the World who, by awkwardly imitating Manners which they have not been accustomed to, render themselves extremely ridiculous, but equally troublesome to others. The Affectation of Good-breeding without the Reality produces a thousand Impertinences, to which I know not if a downright Abruptness of Behaviour is not preferable. Parents mistake but too generally in this Matter. The Accomplishments which Persons of Condition usually give their Children, do not constitute the whole of Good-breeding, though they very much contribute towards it. True Politeness is not a Science to be learned in Schools; for Nature must bestow a Genius, and that Genius must be improved by reading Works of Delicacy and Spirit, and heightened by Freedom of Conversation with Persons of Taste. It is an Enemy to all kind of Constraint, does every Thing with Ease, and though it is sure never to offend, it is never at the Expence of Flattery to oblige. Form and Ceremony, Things which many People study, and take so much Pains to be well versed in all their Punctilioes, spoil the best Education, and make every Person who practises them disagreeable and tiresome. The other Day I had a Visit from one of these fine-bred Women, the Lady of our Friend Sir James Long. I received her in a Manner suitable to the Character I had heard of her, but found myself at a Loss either to look or speak before her. She so pestered me with Compliments and Assurances of the great Sense of the high Honour I had done her, in permitting her to wait upon me, that I had

had scarce a Word to answer in Return. In Hopes of gaining a Moment's Truce, I offered her a Pinch of Snuff, but she must draw on her right Hand Glove, as she could not be so *rude* to touch it with her naked Fingers. At Tea, which I called for sooner than was intended, hoping to shorten her Visit, I had unfortunately put Sugar in her Cup, without asking whether she liked it or not ; but Sir James had not observed this, and remarking his Lady's Right of Judgment of the Flavour of the Tee, which she had praised as the most excellent she had ever tasted, because she drank it without Sugar ; the Indecorum I had been guilty of in not consulting her Palate immediately occurred to me, and I asked her Pardon. She was terribly confused, and blamed Sir James for mentioning it ; to which he honestly replied, that he was quite ignorant of it, but that he had indeed more Reason to be surprised at her drinking what she was averse to, when it might be prevented by a single Word. She apologized for her Husband's Abruptness, as she called it, and attributed her own Conduct to Good-breeding : Though I differed from her, I was not desirous of continuing the Dispute. When they took Leave, I waited on them to the Head of the Staircase ; but the good Lady so often turned back to prevent me, and dropped me so many Curtfies, that my Knees ached for an Hour after by returning them. My Object is to warn your youngest Sister, just come from the Boarding School, not to mistake this overstrained Complaisance for true Politeness. Under the Tuition of a formal Governess, she may possibly have acquired a Stiffness of Behaviour ; this must be softened by Time into a more easy Habit, or her other Accomplishments will be rendered less valuable in the Eyes of the discerning.

I am, my dear Sir,

Yours, &c.

MARIANA.

L E T-

LETTER XXIII.

From a little Lady of six Years old to her Mother. In the Stile of true and artless Simplicity.

WHERE are you then, Mamma. They say at Paris, which is such a long, long Way off, that one must ride two Days, all Day long, to reach you. Surely, Mamma, you don't intend to go round the World? my little Papa is set out this Morning for Somersetshire; my little Grand-papa is gone a hunting; and my little Mamma is gone into her Closet to write, so that here is no Body with me but Jenny and the Frenchwoman. Indeed, Mamma, I don't know how it is, but since our good Friend has left us, we are all scattered about strangely. You began first, Mamma; you soon began to be tired, when you had no Body left to tease; but what is worse, since you are gone, is, that my little Mamma is not so good-humoured as when you were here. My little Boy is very well; but he does not love you, because you did not dance him yesterday as you used to do. As for me, I believe I should love you a little Bit still, if you would return quickly that one might not be so dull. But if you would make it up with me quite, you must bring my little Boy something that would please him. To quiet him indeed would not be very easy; you would be puzzled to know what to do with him. O that our good Friend was but here now! for it is as he said, my fine Fan is broke to Pieces, my blue Skirt is torn all to Bits, my white Frock is in Tatters; my Mittens are not worth a Farthing. Fare you well, Mamma, I must here end my Letter; for my little Mamma has finished hers, and is coming out of her Closet. I think her Eyes are red, but I durst not say so; in reading this, however, she will see I observed it. My good Mamma, you are certainly very naughty to make my little Mamma cry.

P. S. Give my Love to my Grand-papa, to my Uncles, to my new Aunt and her Mamma, and to every Body; tell them I would kiss them all, and you too, Mamma, but that you are all so far off I cannot reach you.

L E T-

LETTER XXIV.

On the requisite Qualifications of an Historian.

PARDON me, my dear Sir, if I cannot join in your Opinion of that History which you so much admire. I think it is written with too much Warmth, and there is every Reason for supposing that the Writer has given himself up to the Transports of his Imagination, when he expresses himself so zealously. Moderation is highly necessary in an Author, particularly an Historian, who should see Things with Temperance, and weigh them with Justice. For History is not a Poem ; there ought to be some Flowers, a few Reflections, a Number of Portraits, but above all a noble Simplicity. An Historian who is not possessed of good Sense, Wit, Fire, and Genius, will make but an indifferent Writer. Good Sense is wanted to make a proper Selection of Facts, Wit to display them, Fire to animate them, and Genius to produce Information and Instruction. For most Histories are more or less accurate, according to the Complexion of the Historian. The Man who is all Fire relates an Event very differently from him who is cold as Ice, and their Accounts of the same Thing bear no Resemblance ; hence we daily read and hear Things exaggerated without the Narrator having any Intention to mislead, but, hurried on by an impetuous Imagination, he magnifies his Story so as to disfigure it altogether. There are not two People who see the same Object in the same Light, and express themselves exactly alike in their Descriptions. The Soul is equally wonderful in its Variety as in its Conceptions. The Soul, simple and immaterial as it is, multiplies itself as if it really could be divided. When I reflect that all these Works with which our Libraries are filled, issue from the Soul, I cannot help wondering at myself, and being pleased with the Thought of my possessing within me the Seeds of so much Knowledge and such extensive Ideas ; and this Sentiment becomes more enlivened, when I reflect that it is the same Soul which procures me the Happiness of knowing and esteeming you, and to be able to assure you how much I am,

Dear Sir,

Yours.

LETTER XXV.

An Application in Behalf of a poor Soldier.

YOU will allow me, my dear Sir, to inform you, that James Elton is in the greatest Misery. I do not acquaint you with his being one of Lord B's Soldiers, for that would be a poor Title of Recommendation to an Irish Officer; but I remind you of his having six Children, that he has kept his Bed these nine Months, and farther, that he is your God-son. You have here an Opportunity of gratifying that Generosity, which chiefly marks your Character, and only seeks for Opportunities. If you were one of those ordinary Souls who never oblige but with Reluctance, I should not think of importuning you. I am not fond of extorting Benefits; I wish them to flow freely from their Source, and to have their Principle in Magnanimity. But I think I see you smile at the different Complexions of this Letter from those daily written to you by the Gentlemen of your own Profession. Such a Signature as mine can have no Merit in your Eyes, except that of shewing with what profound Respect I have the Honour to be,

Dear Sir,

Yours.

LETTER XXVI.

An entertaining Epistle from Bishop Herring to Mr. Duncomb.

Dear Sir,

I Met your Letter here on my Return from Wales. I bless God for it, I am come Home quite well, after a very romantic, and, upon looking back, I think a most perilous Journey. It was the Year of my primary Visitation, and I determined to see every Part of my Diocese. To this Purpose I mounted my Horse, and rode intrepidly, but slowly, through North Wales to Shrewsbury.

bury. If I should be particular in my Description, I am a little afraid you would think I am playing the Traveller upon you; but indeed I will stick religiously to Truth: And because a little Journal of my Expedition may be some Minutes Amusement, I will take the Liberty to give it you. I remeinder, on my last Year's Picture of North Wales, you complimented me with somewhat of a poetical Fancy; that I am confident you will not now, for a Man may as well expect poetical Fire at Copenhagen, as amidst the dreary Rocks of Merionethshire. You find by this Intimation that my Landscapes are like to be something different from what they were before; for I talk somewhat in the Style of Othello,

—“ Of Antres vast, and Deserts idle,
“ Rough Quarries, Rocks, and Hills, whose Heads touch
“ Heaven.”

I set out upon this adventurous Journey on a Monday Morning, accompanied, as Bishops usually are, by my Chancellor, my Chaplain, Secretary, two or three Friends, and our Servants. The first Part of our Road lay cross the Foot of a long Ridge of Rocks, and was over a dreary Morass, with here and there a small dark Cottage, a few Sheep, and more Goats in View, but not a Bird to be seen, save now and then a solitary Hern watching for Frogs. At the End of four of their Miles we got to a small Village, where the View of Things mended a little, and the Road and Time were beguiled by travelling for three Miles along the Side of a fine Lake full of Fish, and transparent as Glass. That Pleasure over, our Work became very arduous, for we were to mount a Rock, and in many Places over natural Stairs of Stone. I submitted to this, which they told me was but a Taste of the Country; and to prepare me for worse Things to come: However, worse Things did not come that Morning, for we dined soon after out of our own Wallet; and though our Inn stood in a Place of most frightful Solitude, and the best formed for the Habitation of Monks (who once possessed it) in the World, yet we made a chearful Meal. The Novelty of the Thing gave me Spirits, and the Air gave me Appetite much keener than the Knife I ate with. We had our Music too,

too, for there came in a Harper, who soon drew about us a Groupe of Figures that Hogarth would give any Price for. The Harper was in his true Place and Attitude—a Man and Woman stood before him, singing to his Instrument wildly, but not disagreeably; a little dirty Child was playing with the Bottom of the Harp; a Woman, in a sick Night Cap, hanging over the Stairs; a Boy with Crutches, fixed in a staring Attention; and a Girl carding Wool in the Chimney, and rocking a Cradle with her naked Feet, interrupted in her Busines by the Charms of the Music;—all ragged and dirty, and all silently attentive. These Figures gave us a most entertaining Picture, and would please you or any Man of Observation; and one Reflection gave me particular Comfort, That the Assembly before us demonstrated, that even here the influential Sun warmed poor Mortals, and inspired them with Love and Music. When we had dispatched our Meal, and had taken a View of an old Church, very large for that Country, we remounted; and my Guide pointed to a narrow Pass between two Rocks, through which he said our Road lay. It did so, and in a little Time we came to it. The Inhabitants call it, in their Language, “the Road of Kindness;” which was made by the Romans for their Passage to Carnarvon. It is just broad enough for an Horse, paved with large flat Stones, and is not level, but rises and falls with the Rock, at whose Foot it lies. It is half a Mile long. On the right Hand, a vast Rock hangs almost over you; on the left, close to the Path, is a Precipice, at the Bottom of which rolls an impetuous Torrent, bounded on the other Side not by a Shore, but by a Rock, as bare, though not so smooth, as a Whetstone, which rises half a Mile in perpendicular Height. Here we all dismounted, not only from Reasons to just Fear, but that I might be at Leisure to contemplate in Pleasure, mixed with Horror, this stupendous Mark of the Creator’s Power. Having passed over a noble Bridge of Stone, we found ourselves upon a fine Sand then left by the Sea, which here indents upon the Country; and arrived in the Evening, passing over more rough Country, at our destined Inn. The Accommodations there were better than expected, for we had good Beds and a

F friendly

friendly Hostess, and I slept well ; though, by the Number of Beds in the Room, I could have fancied myself in an Hospital. The next Morning I confirmed at the Church, and after Dinner set out for the Metropolis of the Country, called Dolgelle. There I staid and did Busines the next Day, and the Scene was much mended. The Country I had hitherto passed through was like one not made by the FATHER of the Creation, but in the Wrath of Power ; but here were Inhabitants, a Town and Church, a River, and fine Meadows. However, on the Thursday, I had one more Iron Mountain of two Miles to pass, and then was entertained with the green Hills of Montgomeryshire, high indeed, but turfed up to the Top, and productive of the finest Sheep ; and from this Time the Country and the Prospects gradually mended, and indeed the whole Œconomy of Nature, as we approached the Sun ; and you cannot conceive what an Air of Chearfulness it gave us to compare the Desolations of North Wales with the fine Valleys and Hills of Montgomeryshire, and the fruitful green Fields of fair Warwickshire. For I made myself Amends in the following Part of my Journey, directing my Course through Shrewsbury, Wolverhampton, Birmingham, Warwick, and Oxford, some of the finest Towns and Counties in the Island. But I must stop, and not use you so unmercifully.

I am, dear Sir,
Your obliged and affectionate

Humble Servant,

Kensington, Sept. 11, 1739.

Tho. BANGOR.

LETTER XXVII.

An humorous Letter from a Gentleman on his Travels to his Friend in England.

My dear Tom,

WHEN I first came to this Place, I found, amongst many other Objects of Contentment, a Letter of yours ; it was of the Female Sex, because two more were

were contained in its Womb. Of these Twins she was easily delivered; but she was also pregnant with divers sweet Pledges of your own Love towards me, whereof I am as fond as any Mother can be of her Child. I shall endeavour to cherish and foster it with all the Tenderness possible, and warm it with the Fuel of my best Affections, to make it grow stronger and stronger every Day, till it comes to Perfection. But I hope this Indulgence of your Love will induce you to prevent mine from starving; my Love to you needs not much Attention, being lusty and strong, and not easily liable to miscarry. When you write next, I beg you will send me a dozen Pair of the best white Kid Gloves you can procure, with two Pair of the purest white Worsted Stockings you can get of Women's Size, and half a Dozen Pair of Knives. I pray you to send your Man with them to Farineau, the French Post, upon Tower Hill, who will bring me them safely. When I go to Paris, I shall send you some Curiosities equivalent to these. I have inclosed an Answer to the two which came in yours, and I have to beg you will see them safely delivered. My kind Respects to your Brother at Court, to all at Richmond, or anywhere else that you think my Commendations may be duly placed. I have only to recommend you to the never-failing Providence of God, desiring you to go on in nourishing still between us that Love which on my Part neither Time nor Change can exhaust.

I am,

My dear Friend,

Yours.

LETTER XXVIII.

To a Lady, on selfish Shrewdness and Suspicion.

My dear Madam,

I Have often given you my Opinion, that Persons who have mean and little Views themselves, suspect every one who obliges them of having some sinister End. Our new Neighbour, Talbot, has that Kind of selfish Shrewdness

ness, which leads him to suspect every Body and every Thing he sees and hears. To use the Words of an ingenious Author, “ he lives in a Kind of Fortification of his own making, and is in continual Fear of an Ambuscade from every Quarter.” If he receives a small Present of Game from one of his Tenants, he cries, “ Aye—this Fellow hopes I shall place his Son in a Farm.”—A poor Woman, the other Day, brought him a Basket of Cherries, the whole Produce of her little Garden, and the pure Effect of Gratitude for Favours she had received; but this narrow-minded Man instantly exclaimed, “ This good Woman’s Cottage wants repairing, I suppose.”—To a Farmer’s Wife who presented him with a Pot of Honey, he replied, “ Good Woman, I can provide for no more of your Children,” when she assured him she never had a Child in her Life. But I must confess I was never better pleased than yesterday, when a very agreeable young Widow sent to borrow his Newspaper, “ Aye,” says he, before a Roomful of Company, “ so I thought; she is always borrowing something since my Son Tom came of Age. But it spells pretty plain, that the Widow has a Drift;” which last Observation really provoked me to reply, that “ for once his Sagacity had deceived him, and that his Suspicions were as groundless as unjust, for that the deserving Woman, to my Knowledge, was to be married the next Morning.”—An open Frankness of Behaviour is not only a certain Token of an honest Heart, but is one of the most winning Graces of Conversation. But how many, instead of this amiable Quality, value themselves on a kind of selfish Shrewdness, which is, of all Characters, most odious. Of this Class is the solemn Deering, from whom no Man could ever get a direct Answer; who deals in a few cold and general Phrases, such as, “ I love not many Words,—least said is soonest mended,—I chuse to keep my own Thoughts to myself,—I say nothing,” &c. &c. And if he thinks you have got his Opinion, he at once damps you, by saying, “ No—I don’t say so, neither.” But let us avoid this shrewd Man, who looks upon all around him as if they were so many Pickpockets. Adieu.

Believe me ever,
Yours affectionately.

LETTER XXIX.

To a Gentleman, on the Folly of complaining of the present Times.

My dear Sir,

I Lately made a Visit to our Friend at Hampton, where the Conversation chiefly turned on the Badness of the Times. One complained against this wicked, degenerate Age, whilst another, in the most moving Accents, complained, "that Vice never was so triumphant as it is at this melancholy Period; that Merit, as well as the Arts and Sciences, was now very much neglected; and that in good Queen Elizabeth's Days Things were widely different." But I soon discovered, that one of this disconcerted Party was a neglected Politician, and the other a disregarded Author; who are always the first to cry out on the Profligacy and Corruption of the present Times. Yet such general Satire is absurd to the last Degree, as the Author is just as much the Object of his own Satire as another Person. Every worthless, conceited Fellow, who is soured by the just Contempt of the World, has nothing to do but to sit down and write a Satire upon these sad Times, and upon the Degeneracy of human Nature. This, no Doubt, has ever been invariably the same; however Climate and Education may change their Modes, the same Passions, the same Affections and Appetites, may be seen in every Nation upon Earth, with a few Virtues and a great many Vices. One would have imagined, by their Estimation of the Matter, that a human Being must by this Time have been sunk much lower than the brute or even vegetable Species. It is a great Mercy, if this be the Case, and if we have been for above six thousand Years getting from bad to worse, that Things are no worse than they are; for by this Rule we should by this Time be dwindled into a Race of Atoms. It seems astonishing that the Measure of Iniquity is not yet filled up, if it has been thus constantly increasing from the Flood. In short, we may lay all these Repinings at the Degeneracy of the present Age, and the Commendations of the former, to the Pride, the Envy, and the Malignity of the

102 The Complete LETTER-WRITER.

human Heart; for this can more easily forgive and even commend antiquated and remote, than bear cotemporary or equal Merit. Adieu.

Yours ever,

LETTER XXX.

On the Value of Time. To a noble Lord, on being disappointed of seeing him.

I Believe, my Lord, that in order to render it possible for us to meet, it is necessary to make an Appointment. I beg of you to fix the Hour, and most certainly I will not fail to attend you. There is no Time I regret the Loss of so much, as that which is spent in Anti-chambers. Time is the most precious Gift which God has given us, and Man dissipates it with a Profusion equally extravagant and unaccountable. Alas ! Time is a Property exposed to be pillaged, and every one robs us of a Part; for in spite of all my Care to preserve it, I see it slip through my Hands, and I can scarcely say that it flies before it is already gone. I wait your Orders to attend you, and to tell you, if there are any Moments in which you are to be seen, that there are none in which I am not with equal Attachment and Respect,

My Lord,

Your most humble Servant.

LETTER XXXI.

A friendly Apology for not answering Letters.

THE three Letters which you did me the Pleasure of writing to me during the Course of last Month, all came to Hand as you desired. I delayed answering your two first, till I should take Measures to give you certain News of T——, concerning whom you enquired. At the Instant of receiving your third Letter I

was

was going to write to you; your Expressions of the greatest Friendship, with Wishes for my Preservation, demand all my Gratitude. You will not receive all my Thanks, for these would be too many; but all those I can write here. Be firmly persuaded, that the Friendship I have vowed to you knows no Bounds, and that I should esteem myself the happiest of Mankind, could I give you Proofs of it. Come to London, then, that I may have the Satisfaction of embracing you, and repeating to you again and again with what Sincerity I am

Your affectionate Servant.

LETTER XXXII.

An humorous Rebuke to a Friend for his Neglect to write.

My dear Dick,

IF you are as well when you read this, as I am now that I am writing it, we are both well. I am certain of the one, but your long Silence makes me a little anxious about the other. At the Return of this Post I beg you will let your Pen pull out this Thorn which has got into my Thoughts, and let me have often Room in yours, for you know I am your perfect Friend.

LETTER XXXIII.

On the Importance of following good Advice.

Dear Cousin,

THE first Part of Wisdom is to give good Counsel, the second to take it, and the third to follow it. Though you be young, you may be already capable of the two latter Parts of Wisdom, and it is the only Way to attain the first. I wish you therefore to follow the good Counsel of your Uncle, for I know him to be a very discreet, intelligent Gentleman, and I can judge something of Men, for I have studied many. Therefore

if you steer by his Compass in this great Business you have undertaken, you need not fear Shipwreck. This is the Advice of

Your truly affectionate Cousin.

LETTER XXXIV.

On the imprudent Conduct of a Lady after her Marriage.

My dear Friend,

AS you deserve every Instance of Gratitude on my Part, the leaſt Return I can make is an Attention to inform you of every Thing. My Brother continues much the ſame, and is almost constantly with me; but I find he has need of Amufements and Pleaſures which I cannot procure him. Yesterday I prevailed on him, with great Difficulty, to accompany Mr. Trenton; he came to introduce him to a Lady, who keeps the moſt agreeable Company, but he returned as melancholy as he went out. He paſſes his whole Time in solitary Walks, in Sighs, in Silence, or in distracting Dreams. His Health is far from being re-eſtablished, and a Diſorder at his Stomach gives me much Uneaſineſſ. Are not our own Paſſions the greateſt Tyrants? But I am very glad he did not follow my Advice in one Respect, —a Marriage with Miſſ Colton. Could you have thought that a Lady of ſo mild a Dispoſition, ſo well educated, and ſo reserved, ſhould ever give Uneaſineſſ to her Husband; I thought I had diſcovered in her a Fund of Virtue, but I am told ſhe is no longer the ſame Person ſhe was, that her Caprice and Obſtinacy are inſupportable, and that ſhe is an absolute Tyrant in her Family. She quickly diſmiffed all the old Servants from Lord L's Family; and particularly a poor Valet de Chambre, who had faithfully ſerved both Father and Son for half a Century, who is now deſtitute of the Means of Subſiſtence. After this ſhe quaſelled with her Brother-in-Law, and a female Relation of her Husband's, who, after living in the Family above thirty Years, is now obliged to retire into the Country with a very scanty Pittance indeed, ſcarcely ſufficient for common Necessaries. This was done

done in my Lord's Absence, and he burst into the utmost Rage at his Return ; he wrote to excuse his Wife's Behaviour, inviting her to return, but her former Mortifications have been too aggravated to expose herself any more to them, and the lowest Indigence is to be preferred. She has told me that nothing can exceed her Obstinacy and Cruelty ; that she is perpetually at Variance with all her Husband's Friends, and that the House is a continued Scene of Confusion and Disorder. But the Expences are excessively increased on her Account, though she neither plays nor frequents public Places ; hence she imagines herself a Woman of the most sublime Virtue, and the Parade of her Devotions makes her think no one can be put in Competition with her. The Description I have had of her makes me tremble, and I return Thanks to Heaven that the Execution of my Designs was prevented. I am now sensible how much you were in the right ; the greatest Pleasure would be to receive a Sister from your Hands, but at present I must not venture to think of it. Be assured of my Esteem and Regard, and remember me, I entreat you, to Mrs. Compton and her Daughters. I congratulate you on the Enjoyment of such good Company ; for I shall never forget the Obligations I owe to that Family. Adieu.

Yours.

LETTER XXXV.

In Answer, with some Reflections on the Effects of improper Education.

My dear Lady,

I Can easily perceive your great Uneasiness at your Brother's pitiable Situation. His Disorder probably may be of some Continuance, but I have great Hopes he will at last recover. He most requires Liberty, and therefore avoid even the Appearance of Restraint. His Aversion to Amusements must not be opposed ; Inclination must lead him at present, and Experience will in Time ripen his Judgment, and prevent future Acts of

Folly. His Health gives me the greatest Concern; but if he was in the Country, where the most natural Recreations are to be found, the Air would contribute greatly to his Amendment. My Lord L. is to be pitied, and the more as being a Man of Merit; but I am glad you have been undeceived with Respect to his Lady. From the Education she received, what could well be expected otherwise. That Dissimulation which is inculcated into Youth is the Source of every Vice; while a puerile, superficial Devotion contracts the Mind, and their Idea of Self-superiority generally renders their Company disagreeable. They indulge Slander under the Pretext of Charity, and Pride under an Appearance of Humility; Prodigality to themselves, Avarice to others, Affectation, Bitterness, Ignorance, Stubbornness, and Cruelty, sum up their Character in a few Words. For such an Education as Lady L. has received, would spoil the best Foundation; as I am certain that no Idea has ever been given her of rational and sublime Piety, the Source and Perfection of every Virtue. She has been instructed betimes to conceal her Faults, but no Pains have been taken to eradicate them. With a Mind uncultivated, Superstition has taken the Place of Religion, and Pride that of Greatness of Soul. Her Attention has been confined to Music and her Toilette, and the strictest Attention to all the Externals of what she has been taught to consider as Devotion. She has been told, that to assume an Air of Reserve in the Presence of the Men, to hold her Tongue, to sit always upright, to be attentive to the Decorums of Dress, would render her an accomplished Woman; and, taking these Things upon Trust, she married in order to become her own Mistress, and to indulge her Revenge for her long Restraint. Marriage, she had often been informed, was to precede Love, and therefore she gave her Hand without Anxiety; and do you wonder at the Consequences of such an Education? If you desire your Brother to be happy, never wish him to have a Wife thus educated, for such austere Precepts are not to be relied on. He is amiable himself, and therefore find him some Woman who is amiable also. Fortune seems rather jealous of Nature, as she seldom dispenses her Favours

vours to those who possess Merit and Accomplishments ; but what a Happiness would it be for him to find all those Accomplishments united, of which, I am certain, he will not be found unworthy. Adieu, my dear Lady.

Yours.

L E T T E R XXXVI.

On improper Conduct towards Dependents. To a young Lady.

My dear Friend,

IT was a just Observation you made Yesterday, that there is something sacred in Misery to Minds which are truly great and good. Your Attention and Tenderness to Persons in Distress, must be a perpetual Source of the most refined Delight. How contrasted to the Behaviour of Eleonora, when she invites the unfriended Harriet to her Table ; whose cruel Insults, to a Mind of Sensibility, must be more severe than the sharpest Stings of Poverty ! One Instance out of many may suffice. Eleonora had one Day engaged some Company to Dinner, when, during a previous Conversation, a very amiable young Lady entered. Her Air was that of a modest Humility, and her Dress perfectly neat ; but her Manner betrayed a Dejection of Mind, which convinced me of her being in a dependent Situation. An humiliating Nod from Eleonora, with a half Whisper of " Sit down, Child," which she did at the lower End of the Room, made me particularly attentive to what passed. Two fine Ladies, as they thought themselves, with the most rude Effrontery, stared her full in the Face for five Minutes ; I will not say whether they were struck with Envy or Admiration at her beautiful Figure, but they fell into a long Whisper, and I plainly heard the Words, " Rather gawky—red and white of a Milk-maid,—Dependant—out of the Country," &c. The Confusion of the poor young Lady was great ; but Eleonora soon joined the Whisper, and I caught a few Words, such as —" Poor Curate's Daughter,—Companion,—never saw the World,—knows nothing." A Shrug from both the

Ladies, with “I thought so,” put an End to the Whisper; and, after another Stare, Dinner being announced, put an End to the Conversation. Instead of Venison, which she humbly desired, Mutton was sent to her; and for Sallad, a cold Potatoe was flung on her Plate. The Servants also, copying their Mistress, brought her Beer instead of Bread; and when she called for Water, they brought her Vinegar. Wine she must not taste after Dinner, as it would give her a Flushing in the Face, and Fruit would bring on a Pain in the Stomach. Thus was this poor worthy young Woman starving in the Midst of Plenty. That Passage of the inimitable Cervantes, in which honest Sancho describes the Miseries of dining at the Table of the proud and rich, immediately occurred to me. “Let there be no Difference,” says Don Quixote, in desiring his trusty Squire to sit by him at Dinner, “between thee, Sancho, and me, thy Lord and Master; thou, Sancho, shalt eat out of the same Dish, and drink out of the same Cup.” To which the honest Squire, whose pure Nature can never be too much applauded, replies, “I thank your Worship,—I thank you heartily; but to say the Truth, had I a good Dish of roast Meat before me, I should eat it better standing, and by myself, than to sit by the Side of an Emperor. And, to deal freely and plainly with you, I had rather munch a dry Crust of brown Bread and an Onion in a Corner, without any more ado or Ceremony, than to feed upon Turkey at another Man’s Table; where one is fain to sit mincing and chewing one’s Meat for an Hour together, drink little, be always wiping one’s Fingers, and never daring to cough or sneeze, though one had never such a Mind to it:—Therefore, good your Worship, change these Tokens of your Kindness for me into something that may do me real Good.” I shall only observe, that Sancho uttered more plain good Sense in this Speech, than may probably be imagined by the Generality of the World; and that I am,

My dear Friend,

Yours faithfully.

L E T.

LETTER XXXVII.

From a Lady to her Son-in-Law, the Year after his Marriage.

WELL! is it not true that I have given you the prettiest Wife in the World? Can any one be more prudent, more regular in her Conduct? Can any one love you with greater Affection, or have more Christian Sentiments? Can any one desire more ardently to be with you, or more strictly attend to the Duties of their Station? It is ridiculous enough to say all this of my own Daughter; but I admire her, as other People do, and perhaps rather more, as I am more an Eye-witness of her Behaviour. But every Body does her Justice, and she loses none of those Praises which are so much her Due. It is an old Maxim of mine, which may one Day or another pull an old House about my Ears, that the Public is neither foolish nor unjust; and Lady D. has too much Reason to be contented with it to dispute the Point at present. She is every Day making Complaints about being kept here, and declares very seriously that it was a great Piece of Cruelty to separate her from you. I desire you will endeavour in your next to let her know the Pleasure you have in the Thoughts of her Lying-in so agreeably where she is. Both her Health and Reputation make this necessary for her, in a Place where the best Assistance can be had, and where her Conduct has been so very much admired. But if after all this she will become a Fool and a giddy Creature, it will be twelve Months at least before it will be credited; such is the good Opinion every one has of her Prudence. I shall tell you no News, which would be infringing upon my Daughter's Rights; and only beg you to be assured, that no one can interest themselves more affectionately in every Thing which concerns you, than does

Yours, &c.

L E T.

LETTER XXXVIII.

An humorous Description of the Nature of familiar Correspondence. To a Lady from an elderly Gentlewoman.

Dear Madam,

WHENEVER I write you a long Letter, you are alarmed for my Health, thinking that Application may prove prejudicial to me; and when I write you short ones, you think I am sick in good Earnest. How do you think then I design to do? why, just as I have done all along. When I sit down to write, I seldom know how I shall end. I don't know whether my Letter will be concise or prolix, but write as long as my Pen can move; this being my only Rule for Composition, I am inclined to think it a just one, because it suits my natural Indolence. I beg you will not entertain Apprehensions concerning my Health, as you would not have me solicitous with Regard to yours. My own Inclination would make me cease drinking the Waters of Buxton, as you have left off drinking Milk; but as you are of Opinion this Regimen may be of Service to me, I am resolved to take a Trip there, because I am sure it can do me no Harm. Indeed I have fixed the Day of my Departure, and should think it ominous not to go. I hope Providence will not permit me to be disappointed this Time; though I have been so long used to Disappointments, that I always tremble when I speak of future Events. Besides, the sceptical Style pleases me highly; their Doubts discover a great Deal of Prudence, at least they screen them from Reproach. Should I be addressed in this Manner, "Are you going to Buxton?" I should answer in their Style, "It is possible." Should they ask again, "Do you take a House near the Wells for a Year?" I should tell them, "I don't know." In this doubtful Manner we should always speak. I thought I should return to Epsom this Morning; for the grand Affair is at last concluded, and my Law-suit is ended, though not quite so well as I thought it would. So then I might have gone Home quietly; but a Wager of two Guineas between two of our Friends here being decided

decided by this, we are all to go to the new Comedy, which has so long been a Favourite with the Town. I cannot refuse the pressing Entreaties of our kind Neighbour, so that I must defer till To-morrow what I should have done To-day. Whether you are aware of the Nature of these Foibles, I don't know; but I have many such, though I must make an Effort to reform as I grow old, and that I may not tire you with this nonsensical Stuff, by assuring you that I shall never forget to subscribe myself,

Dear Madam,

London, July 10, 1788.

Yours affectionately.

LETTER XXXIX.

Remarks on the Nature of Conversation. To a young Gentleman.

YOU asked me, my dear Friend, in a late Discourse why I thought Lord B. and his Sister to be Persons of uncommon good Understanding and Accomplishments; for in Company they are certainly very disagreeable. My Surprise on this Occasion has frequently been excited as much as yours, and I have often been puzzled to assign the Cause. But, after much Reflection, I perceive that being too positive, and rather desirous of pleasing themselves than other People, may be the Reason why they do not please in Conversation. A Warmth and Peremptoriness, too frequently used on the most common Subjects, is destructive of the mutual Inter-course necessary in Company. The principal Abuse of this noble Privilege of Reason, which sets Mankind above the brute Creation, is in our Mistake of its End. Instead of mutual Instruction and Entertainment, by a friendly Communication of Sentiments, we seem to consider Conversation only as it affords us Opportunities of shewing our Eloquence, or Wit, or some other Accomplishment. We seem desirous of procuring Admiration rather than Improvement; and instead of receiving Instruction from the Company, are more intent upon

upon shining ourselves. Our own Affairs are too frequently brought on the Carpet. How absurd was my Lady D.? what was it to the Company whether her Hair-dresser was a Swiss or a Frenchman? or if her Maid was a Thief or a Slattern? The admirable Author of the *Guardian* says, “We should talk extremely little of ourselves; indeed what can we say? for it would be as imprudent to discover our Faults, as ridiculous to count over our fancied Virtues. What does it concern the Company how many Horses you keep in your Stable? Nothing is more silly than the Pleasure some People take in what they call, Speaking their Minds. A Man of this Cast will say a rude Thing for the mere Pleasure of saying it; when an opposite Behaviour, full as innocent, might have preserved his Friend, or made his Fortune.” But a modern Disputant is as combustible as Touch-wood; who has not only different Opinions to combat, but his own violent Passions to suppress. Indeed we seem to think, in this *enlightened* Age, that Conversation is intended merely as a Relaxation from every Thing serious, moral, or useful; and what is more to be lamented, is, that the Ladies are almost excluded from Conversations of Men of Learning and Genius. There are some Pedants who imagine we can talk of nothing but Fans and Ribbons; but the present Age has produced Instances of very extraordinary Talents amongst the Fair-Sex, which would not discredit a masculine Pen. I am, with the greatest Respect,

Dear Sir,

Yours very faithfully.

LETTER XL.

On the common Notions of Friendship. To a young Gentleman.

THERE is nothing, my dear Sir, in which we should be more steady or affectionate than in our Friendships; as there is no Character in Life more provoking than that of a variable and inconstant Person. Such a one will make you the warmest Professions of Affection

Affection imaginable To-day ; that “ they would die “ to serve you,” and that “ they wish for nothing so “ much as for an Opportunity to convince you of their “ warm and ardent Attachment.” But when the Day of Trial comes, their Insincerity is manifest. If you ask but the most trivial Favour, even a common Civility, they will assume a Look of Surprize and Coldness, as if astonished at your Weakness in imagining they meant to do as they said ; or that the Tongue had any Thing to do with the Heart. But you must judge of a Man’s Character from Actions, and not from Words ; and I have often thought, that the most effectual Way to get rid of one of these worthless Friends would be, to request some Act of Friendship. I would lay my Life you would hear no more of them from that Day forward. There are some who style themselves your Well-wishers ; but as that Term is often abused, I would wish to guard your open Heart from being deceived by it. There are some of the most bitter Enemies imaginable, who will subscribe themselves your Well-wishers ; and whenever I see a Letter from a Person who has long professed a strong Friendship, subscribed with, “ Your very “ humble Servant and Well-wisher,” I much suspect the Friend begins to cool. But you will believe me, I trust, when I subscribe myself

Unalterably yours.

LETTER XLI.

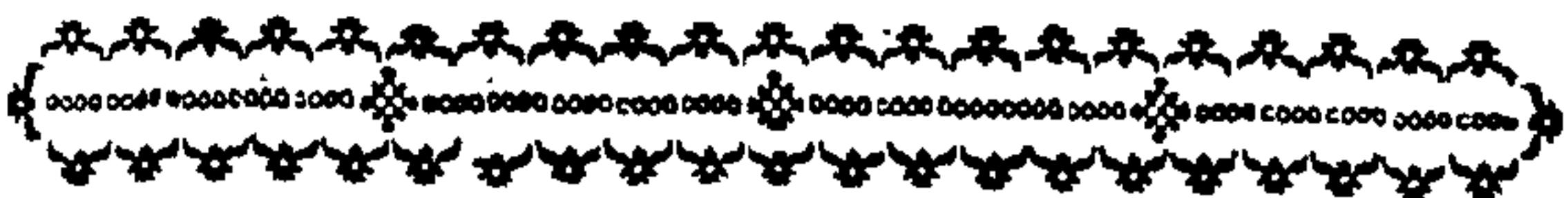
An humorous Letter to a Friend, on the Report of a very extraordinary and unexpected Incident.

I Am going, my dear Friend, to tell you a Thing which is the most astonishing, the most surprising, the most marvellous, the most miraculous, the most supreme, the most confounding, the most unheard, the most singular, the most incredible, the greatest, the least, the rarest, the most common, the most public, and the most private, till this Day ; a Thing, the most brilliant, and the most to be envied ; a Thing, in which there has scarce been any Example for Ages past ; a Thing that we cannot

cannot believe at London, and how then will it gain Credit at York? And yet this extraordinary and unaccountable Thing makes every Body cry out, Lord have Mercy upon us! it causes the greatest Joy to a few, but produces the most pungent Sorrow to most. The Newspapers, no Doubt, for they are certain Vehicles of Intelligence, whether impossible, improbable, unbecoming, unlikely, or scandalous; whether true or false, founded or unfounded; have informed you of the Rumour respecting a young Gentleman's being connected with a certain Lady. This has for some Days been the universal Topic of Conversation, though with Respect to the Suspence it created the first Day, it maintains its Ground without advancing one Step farther towards a positive Proof. But you must allow that here is glorious Matter for Talk. Should you cry out, on giving your Voice for the negative Scale, you are besides yourselves, and that the Apartments of Moorfields ought to be enlarged to admit a few thousands of the distracted Londoners; if you should affirm that we have told you a downright Lye, that 'tis all false, that we are making a Jest of you! if you should assert that the Invention is dull and flat; if indeed you should abuse us, we shall think you are quite in the right, because we have done just the same ourselves. You will find, however, from the Letters you receive this Post, whether we tell you Truth or not.

Your affectionate Friend.

The



The COMPLETE LETTER-WRITER.

P A R T VII.

Letters to and from Persons of different Sexes
or their Friends, on the interesting Subjects
of Love and Marriage.

L E T T E R I.

*From a Gentleman to a Lady, an Approbation of her
Conduct.*

HOW delightful to me are your kind and tender Complaints, while I am convinced that you cannot believe there is the least Occasion for them on the Subject of my Love. You know I love you, and will for ever love you above all human Creatures. Continue in that Belief. Every Day, every Hour, which is added to my Life, brings me fresh Occasion to adore you ; and so dear are you to all the Faculties of my Soul, that I could no longer exist or bear them with Patience than I retained the Sense of your Kindness. That Kindness it is which alone can increase, and does increase my Affection. Far above all Coquetry or playing with the Passions of a Man with whom you are so dearly and inseparably connected, how very amiable do you appear in my Eyes ! Your Frankness of Heart, your free and ingenuous Acknowledgment of your Affection binds you to me above all other Means of Endearment ; and frequently do I flatter myself that a Life spent in this mutual Intercourse of undisguised Sentiments will be the greatest Happiness which a human Being can enjoy upon Earth. I am,

My dear Madam,

Ever yours.

LETTER II.

*Reflections on the epistolary Correspondence of Lovers.
To a Lady.*

IN what better Manner, my dear Madam, can I dispose of this vacant Hour, than by holding an ideal Conversation with the best-beloved of my Soul? with my ever lovely Henrietta, the Thought of whom alone can alleviate these Hours of unvaried Solitude! That I can thus find a heart-felt Happiness in the very Contemplation of my Love, is indeed the most comfortable Reflection of my Life; it is natural for me to say, if the Thought of her, when absent, can cheer me in the Gloom of Solitude, what Pleasure and Happiness must her continual Presence inspire? How agreeably must the few Days of this Life glide away in reciprocal Instances of tender Affection, where Heart meets Heart with unbounded Confidence! And if these flattering Ideas of Felicity are superior, even in Imagination, to all other real Enjoyments, what must they be in Possession? Can it be possible, that we should ever feel the Languor or the Weariness of Solitude, while we can always find Resources in ourselves? Let those dread the Hours of Leisure who look for Happiness from the Dissipation of Thought, and depend on external Circumstances for filling up the painful Vacuity of an unfurnished Mind. That can never be the Case with my Henrietta, to whom an Absence of Sentiment can no more happen than an Absence of Tenderness, Honour, or Virtue. Divided between Conversation, Reading, Music, and many other Amusements which Love, Fancy, or Occasion may suggest, Life, were it allotted to the remotest Solitude, would seem to fly too fast; but if ever my Henrietta beholds her Lover languish under the Influence of Weariness or Insensibility, let her shew him this Letter, and tell him that he was no Prophet. My best Love will easily apprehend the Reason of my turning my Thoughts on the future Happiness of our Lives, when she remembers that no longer ago than yesterday she afflicted me with some tender Tears, arising perhaps from an occasional Lowness of Spirits, but affectingly bewailing the Possibility of that Misery which I am persuaded

suaded can have no Existenee. But you say that the Quiet of your Heart depends not on yourself, but on others ; let it then repose on me alone, and make me the Guardian of your Peace, as my Heart shall be its Sanctuary. Adieu.

Yours.

LETTER III.

The following Letter from a Lady in the Country to her Husband in Town, describes a happy Mixture of the Operations of the human Passions, and of the rational Faculties.

My dear Herbert,

WHERE shall I find Words to express the Agitation your last Letter occasioned ? You know I am a Coward in every Thing which concerns you, and could not but suppose I should be terribly alarmed at seeing under your Signet a Hand Writing so different. How could you be so regardless of my tender Heart or my Condition, not to tell your Amanuensis to describe the Cause at once, without prefacing it by those ambiguous Words, “ I am obliged to employ another Hand to write to you.” Good God ! how dreadful were my Interpretations ! Every Thing shocking to Imagination at once came into my Head.—Wounded,—sick,—dying perhaps, cried I,—and had not Courage to proceed, but invoked my better Angel to explain what it was so easy for me to have told myself. At last I ventured, though trembling with Suspence and Terror, to cast my Eyes a second Time upon the Paper, and, Thanks to Heaven ! immediately found that all these terrible Apprehensions had been occasioned only by a Felon or *Whitloe* on your Fore-finger. This new Instance of my Simplicity will doubtless make you laugh ; but though I am no Hero, I wish to check your Mirth by telling you that I am grown a Piece of a Philosopher. I have learned the Art of bringing Pleasure out of Pain, and converting the worst of Ills into Good. Now, you will say, I am even with you ; but your Suspence will soon terminate, when I assure you

118 The Complete LETTER-WRITER.

that I never suffer myself to think how unfortunate I am in your Absence, but how happy I shall be in your Return. I shall then entertain you with every little Event which has happened since your going; and now please myself with the Expectations of hearing from you many agreeable Narratives of the Occurrences which the great World has presented to you in Abundance. Thus do I anticipate, in Idea, the Blessing I hope soon to enjoy in Reality; thus do I obey the strict Injunction you laid upon me of not afflicting myself at our enforced Separation. So good an Effect has this had upon me, that I have lost nothing of my Complexion, nor has my usual Vivacity forsaken me. Secure in your Affection, which makes all my Happiness; I can only add that it is the sole Ambition of my dear Herbert's

Faithful Wife,
DOROTHEA.

LETTER IV.

From a Gentleman to a Lady, an Excuse for not waiting on her for some Days.

Madam,

MY Destiny of late has been so extremely cruel, that I have been compelled to do what I would not, and unable to do what I most desire. It is an Age, nay seven Ages, seven long tedious Days, since I saw you; and if your future Displeasure depended on my giving a good Account for this Remissness, I fear I must be miserable. Busines I have had none; Pleasure I could not have out of your Company. I have been detained by some of those Creatures, who, for no other Reason than because they go upon two Legs, imagine themselves Men; but these being mere Animals, and having no Ideas of their own, are continually disturbing those of other People. When Wretches of this Cast happen to be so circumstanced as neither to be shunned with Decency, nor reprehended with Safety; that Person, and such has been my Case, whom they take it into their Heads to

haunt, is in a very perplexed Situation. A Crowd of Country Relations are in Town, one or other of whom are every Moment breaking in upon me, and putting my Mind out of that Temper I would always wish to preserve when I have the Honour of waiting upon you. But be assured, that although I cannot presume to approach you till I am a little more my former Self, my Heart is still the same, and a constant Attendant at your *Ruelle* both Night and Day. I toast your Health in Bumpers of Champaigne and Burgundy just landed; this indeed is the only Satisfaction I can taste in the Company I keep at present. Thank Heaven, however, for the Hope I have of being shortly rid of this Impediment to a Happiness more sublime and substantial. In the mean Time I beg you will be assured, that never young Senator longed more to appear the Man of Consequence in the Chair of a Committee, nor Officer for a War to return to Plunder and full Pay, nor Judge for Store of Plots, Felonies, and Murders, to refine upon Law, or rather to refine it all away, than I do to testify how very much I am the charming *Cælia's*

Most devoted humble Servant,
HONORIUS.

LETTER V.

To a Lady from a Gentleman, whose Company she had solicited for a musical Party; with a polite Apology for his being deprived of that Pleasure.

I Feel it to be an Impertinence in me to make a Proposal even of changing the Afternoon you did me the Honour to command me to bring my Violoncello to your House; but it will, I fear, turn out to be the last Evening of a Friend's Visit, who was so good as to accompany me from the Country. If I receive no Answer, I shall consider the Engagement to be deferred till the following Day, which I shall look to with great Impatience. You will excuse, I hope, the Liberty I am taking; but I cannot fold up the Paper till I have thanked

thanked you for your Goodness, in suffering such an Hum-drum as I am to approach such a perfect Musician as yourself. I wanted nothing but to hear your Performance, to render me a musical Enthusiast. With my respectful Compliments to Mrs. E. I have the Honour of being your most obliged humble Servant,

THOMAS FREEMAN.

LETTER VI.

The following is an Instance of Delicacy highly commendable in a Gentleman previous to an open Declaration of his Sentiments.

THE Ceremony of a formal Adieu I could not bear, and the Effects of it I dare not risk; and therefore I waved taking Leave of you till I had arrived at the first Stage of my Journey. Though it bends towards the Metropolis, which I have never seen, and has long been the Object of my warmest Curiosity, it is painful to me beyond Expression; and I think I could be well content to pass the rest of my Life within a few Paces of you, and not far from my Friend, Mr. Longden, without one restless or discontented Moment. I feel a great Satisfaction in being honoured with your Commissions, which shall be most faithfully executed. Permit me to present my most grateful Acknowledgments to Mrs. Warner for her Goodness to me. In every Part of my Life I shall consider the Hours I have passed under her Roof as very happy ones. If I flatter you, my Heart deceives me; but however fallacious it may prove in the other Concerns of Life, it must be true to the great Object and Mistress of it. If I have said too much, forgive me; but my Feelings tell me that I have not said enough, and were I to write for two Hours to come, I can scarce tell whether they would be satisfied. I am,

Yours, &c.

WILLIAM TRACEY.

LET.

LETTER VII.

On Personal Attentions in mixed Companies.

Dear Madam,

I Delay not one Moment to assure you, with the utmost Sincerity, that the Honour of your Visit was in the highest Degree welcome and agreeable. I flatter myself it was not unserviceable to the Cause it was designed to promote. My Delay in writing was only till I should hear from you again, hoping you would give me a new Subject; and that you would spare me the Necessity of again entreating your Pardon for declining the Favour of your particular Notice. You acknowledged on Wednesday, that my Objections to a personal Inter-course were not ill-founded; but I need not embarrass myself with Arguments. I know you will have the Goodness to acquiesce, and therefore I subscribe myself, with Pride and Pleasure,

Your Friend.

LETTER VIII.

A congratulatory Letter from a Gentleman to his young Friend, with Directions for his Choice of a Wife.

Dear Sir,

I Owe you many Acknowledgments for the pleasing Entertainment which your Pacquers have afforded me, exclusive of the Satisfaction I have received from the Intelligence they brought relative to your own Concerns. I congratulate you both upon your Victory and your Defeat; but your Captivity is voluntary, and I rejoice that you are so nobly enslaved. The Lady, I hope, will rivet your Chains for the Remainder of your Life.—The first Time the Heart is subdued is commonly the Crisis of our Lives, and the following Part frequently takes its Character from this Event. It is therefore of the greatest Consequence that the Object should be
G worthy

worthy of our Homage ; for if young Men were aware of the Consequences of a first Attachment, they would seldom suffer themselves to be enslaved by unworthy Objects. The Depravity of the Heart as certainly originates in Vice, as a Rectitude of Manners proceeds from and is the natural Offspring of Virtue. An early Attachment to a virtuous and amiable Woman cultivates and ripens every great and noble Quality ; an Attachment to a bad Woman leads to a Life of Folly, Vice, and Misery. But I would not wish any young Man to marry so early as at your Age, though you have passed the prescribed Bounds which terminate your Guardianship ; yet I would wish him to be engaged in a Courtship and Correspondence with some Woman who is qualified to become in proper Time an amiable Wife and a tender Mother. It would be very advantageous for him to meet with some Difficulties, which would exercise his Patience and Fortitude ; and I would have him subdue them by his Virtue and Activity, and at Length receive the Reward of his Courage and Fidelity. You are indeed a most fortunate Man, to fall into the Acquaintance and obtain the Friendship of such a Family ; and to meet with an Object, worthy of your best Affections, without going in Search of her. For it is not a very easy Thing to a good young Man to choose a Wife which is worthy of him. The young Women of the present Times are very agreeable Companions for an Hour, an Afternoon's Conversation, or an Evening's Entertainment ; but for Wives !—look at the Wives of the great World !—look at the Husbands too, and, when you have considered the Matter dispassionately, thank God that you have escaped the Danger of a fashionable Wife. The Pupils of Foppery and of Folly are terrible Companions for Life ; and if you chuse a Town-bred Girl, the Odds are too many that you will meet with one of them. The Remains of ancient and virtuous Manners are only to be found in the Country—the farther from the Capital the better. You may meet with the Pupils of Fashion even there, but the Chances are greatly in your Favour ; and I would certainly send those young Men I love into the Country for a Wife, and advise them not to make her too much acquainted

with

with a Town Life afterwards. Perhaps the latter Part of my Lesson may be yet in Time for you, and it is not certain that you may not want the former; for you have much Ground to travel over before you are sure of Miss Melcombe. But let me recommend to you to study Agriculture and Cœconomy; for both are necessary, and both will be beneficial to you when settled for Life. I sincerely respect all your friendly Circle, and must advise my young Friend to endeavour to cultivate their Friendship and Esteem; only take Care to deserve their Affection, and you need not doubt of obtaining it. Whatever you may think interesting to yourself, be assured that it will at all Times be welcome and acceptable to,

Dear Sir,

Your very affectionate Friend,

THOMAS EDWARDS.

LETTER IX.

From a Gentleman to a Lady, who had hinted his Propensity to deep Contemplation.

I Agree with you, my dear Madam, that Study has taken deep and serious Hold of my Mind, but it has not in the least affected my Sensibility; for indeed I love you with as much Ardour, as much Tenderness as ever. But I am far from being happy. I look upon myself as condemned to a Life of consuming Hopes, and I see no Period to which these Hopes can be referred. Engaged to the dearest of Women, and at the same Time the most amiable, the Sense of her Perfections only enhances my Anxiety, when I consider that Death may possibly make more hasty Steps than Fortune, and snatch me from her before she falls into my Arms. Pardon me, my Dear, these gloomy Influences; they are the Effects of the truest Tenderness, of those continual Longings that snatch my Soul towards you, and tell me that, without you, there is no Happiness for me upon Earth. Yet let me be at Peace; the Time may come when, suf-

sufficiently wearied of that World which I have despised ever since I knew it, my Eleonora may be contented to seek her Repose in my Bosom. That is my only Consolation, and soothes the Languor of many a weary Day, and many a wakeful Night. Adieu, you best and the only Hope of my Life, Adieu.

Affectionately yours.

LETTER X.

To a Gentleman, on the Necessity of restraining his Affections.

Dear James,

FORGIVE me if, in the Midst of your Sun-shine of Pleasure, I should overshadow it with a friendly Caution. It will be needless to assure you that I receive great Satisfaction from every Thing which gives you Happiness; wonder not, therefore, that I now so fully interest myself in what I fear may bring you Uneasiness. I allow that the Attractions of Beauty are great, and that very few are able to withstand the alluring Temptation; Self-denial also is but too much out of Fashion, and though you are not a Slave to that domineering Tyrant, it may concern you to reflect upon the Consequence of indulging your Affections, or suffering them to be ensnared by the powerful Attractions of the amiable Charlotte. Your Letters discover so much of the enthusiastic Lover, that I cannot be longer blind, though it seems at present a Secret to yourself. Examine your Heart well, and if you cannot acquit yourself of the Charge, remain not the Dupe of an hopeless Passion, but fly the Place before it is too firmly rooted. When the Shaft of Love has once pierced the Breast, it is not in the Power of any Thing but Absence to eradicate it. For though I cannot indulge a Thought that you have ever entertained an Idea of such Alliance, which would alarm your Sensibility and that Delicacy of Sentiment you are possessed of; I ought not tamely to see my Friend wafting on the Tide of Pleasure, without pointing out the Rock on which his future Happiness may be wrecked. Let me

me conjure you to reflect in Time, and not permit that Fortune, which has hitherto been, a Blessing, to prove at length a Curse. Perhaps I may have been too precipitate in my Conjectures, but you will attribute it to my Regard. But your Heart is always expanded to the Calls of Friendship, and must be too susceptible to counteract the guileful Arts of Love. I shall wait for your Answer with the greatest Impatience, and, hoping for your usual Frankness, I must entreat you to be cautious of deceiving yourself. You must examine your most secret Thoughts, and probe them to the Bottom; and if it shall then prove that there is no Foundation for what I have charged you with, I shall solicit, with the greatest Pleasure, for your Pardon.

I am,

Yours sincerely,

A. B.

LETTER XI.

From a Lady, in Answer to a Gentleman who had sent her a Basket of Flowers.

THE China Vases and myself are much beholden to you; the former for their Ornaments, and the latter for a great Heap of Beauty and Fragrance. I have added, you must perceive, another Emblem of female Fragility, and have already, I fear, trespassed beyond the short moralising Term which you allow me. But I have made some Amends, by turning my Back upon the Looking-glass, though for a more solid Reason than you assign. But, alas! like the Pleasures of the World, of which they are too lively Emblems, your Flowers brought their Mortifications along with them; for you must know, Sir, that by my Mother's Command I have been engaged for some Days in making and embroidering a small Pocket Book, which she intends to have the Honour of presenting to you. Now I had just finished it, and vainly thought the Flowers which my Needle had laboured to form, were done to Perfection; when,

alas, your beautiful Present made its Appearance, put an End at once to my vain Contemplation, and made my Flowers die away upon the Silk! However, if your Room should not be so gaily adorned as mine, they may appear to some little Advantage. Such as it is, you are to do my Mamma the Honour of accepting it from her; and I shall take the Liberty to accompany it with another moral Observation, that although my poor silken Flowers cannot equal the Beauty of those produced by Nature, they may excel them in Duration.

E. WARNER.

LETTER XII.

In Answer to the preceding.

ACCEPT, thou charming Moralist, all the Thanks that I can offer for those sweet Morsels of elegant Reflection which I have just received, and read with little less than Rapture! The Present which accompanied them I shall most truly value for the Sake of the Hand which presented, and that which formed it. In the Delirium of my Pleasure I had thought to do it Honour, by making it a Repository for the few Bank Bills I have in my Possession; but a little Reflection brought me to my Senses, and I could have scourged myself for having thought of profaning your Gift with the dirty Trash of the World. It deserves something better, said I to myself; and when I began to consider to what Purpose of holy Sentiment I should apply it, nothing appeared worthy to be protected by its Covers, but those Papers which have been rendered valuable by the same Hand that made and adorned them. Happy in the Thought, I placed them there; and when I beheld the Flowers on the Outside Covering, which are formed with Justness, arranged in Taste, and true to Nature, I consider them as Pictures of the Treasure they contain, which in a superior Class are equally just, elegant, and natural. How is it, and by what happy Art, that you give the same genuine Excellence to every Action of your Life? so that

that whether you speak or write; whether you design with your Pencil or your Needle; whether you sing, dance, or play, there appears to be the same Degree of Perfection! Communicate your Magic to a Friend; it would be too valuable a Gift for the World at large; and like the Panacea of the Physician, when made publick, might fail of its usual Effects. But it would be doing no more than Justice to a few kindred Spirits to bleis them with the Secret; and if it were not too great a Presumption, I should aspire to be of that Number. Will you do me the Favour to take the Commission of my Thanks to Mrs. W——, that they may receive a Grace which I could not give them; and find a Reception which in my vainest Moments I could not expect. She is too good to me, and I thank her for more than I deserve. Her Present shall be preserved with the most attentive Regard; the natural Duration of its Colours shall be prolonged by my Care; and I trust when many a Year is past and gone, should I have the Happiness of meeting you, it will be shewn to you, unhurt by Use, undecayed by Time, with all its Decorations vivid as at this Moment. I must follow your Example (indeed I know not where to find a better) and moralize in my Turn. The Flowers of Nature die, but they revive again with fresh Beauty; while those of your Art last, it is true, till their Materials decay, but then they are gone for ever. Alas! I know as yet but little of the World; yet I greatly fear that Constancy, though it is always a Virtue, may be sometimes a Misfortune.

Adieu.

Yours.

LETTER XIII.

A Lesson to Parents, respecting the Disposal of their Children in Marriage.

IT was with an Astonishment equal to the Concern I feel in every Thing relating to your Family, that I heard, in spite of all the Vices LIBERTINUS is known to be guilty of, you are determined to give your Daughter

to him. It is certain he has your Promise, but his Character was then such as to justify your Choice; you neither knew at that Time, nor did the World imagine, he would return from his Travels the abandoned Wretch he is. Must then the young, the fair, the innocent *Henrietta*, fall the Victim to false and mistaken Honour? must she be condemned to lasting Misery by the very Person whom the Laws of Heaven and of Nature have bound to do every Thing for her Protection? must she be the Prey of Vice and Folly, only to save your Word? Is this to be a Father? Is it not rather the Effect of Tyranny than paternal Affection? Pardon, Sir, the Freedom which our long Friendship emboldens me to take, and believe that I speak only what all think who know what you are about to do; but if you carry your Purposes into Effect, you will assuredly draw upon yourself that very Censure you seem so much afraid of incurring. It is certainly a commendable Quality to be tenacious of one's Word; but many Instances might be produced to prove, that there may be Promises which it is a less Fault to break than to keep. Of this Nature certainly is yours to *Libertinus*. Besides the Propriety of chusing the least Evil, the Man to whom it was made is no longer the same; and to sacrifice a deserving Child to certain Wretchedness, will never be esteemed any Honour in you, but a sullen Obstinacy. Her Resignation to your Will demands the greater Care in you to require nothing which affords not a Probability of turning to her Advantage; I therefore conjure you not to enjoin her to any Action which must entirely destroy her Peace, and may also drive her to a Despair fatal to her Morals, and make her curse the Obedience which has undone her. I need not enumerate the many Mischiefs of such an Union; your own Observation and good Sense will supply them. But I beg you will seriously reflect upon the Consequences which may ensue, before that Knot is irrecoverably tied, which Death, or some Thing worse than Death, only can dissolve. I am, Sir, with the most unfeigned Respect,

Your very obedient Servant,

LUCIUS.

L E T.

LETTER XIV.

On the disagreeable Consequences frequently produced by second Marriages.

Dear Madam,

WHILE all my Acquaintance are pretending to assign Reasons for my quitting a Father who has tenderly loved me; perhaps my Conduct may seem to need a Justification. You will indeed, of all my Friends, be least at a Loss to guess the true Reasons. Your Intimacy with my dear Mother gives you a perfect Idea of the Manner I was bred in; and the few Visits you have made at our House since her Death, and my Father's second Marriage, are sufficient to convince you of the wide Difference between my Company then and those I have since been obliged to converse with. To retire to my Chamber, or shut myself in my Closet, was ineffectual; thither would my new Mother's Guests pursue me, and even beat an Alarm at my Door, so that I must either come out, or hear the Creator of the World affronted by their impious Ridicule on the long Prayers they pretended I was making to him. A Repetition of any of the profane Absurdities my Ears were perpetually shocked with, from the hoydenly Rout of her Ladyship's Drawing-Room, would wound your Sensibility; but some of these newly created Nobility really seem to be of a different Species from those whose Parents bear a more ancient Date. Their Behaviour is such as if they thought Virtue, Decency, and even Reason, were Things beneath their Attention and Regard. I need not enlarge on this Subject to you, my dear Madam, who, by your Endeavours to avoid such Conversation, sufficiently testify your Disapprobation of it; you will absolve me from all Blame for what I have done, without being farther tedious. My Departure was not unknown to my Father, though the World in general is ignorant of this Circumstance; he was for some Time very averse to it, as it would appear like an unjust Antipathy often imbibed by the Children of former Marriages against a Parent merely nominal. His Permission being at last obtained, I am now, with my Maid and one Footman,

to him. It is certain he has your Promise, but his Character was then such as to justify your Choice; you neither knew at that Time, nor did the World imagine, he would return from his Travels the abandoned Wretch he is. Must then the young, the fair, the innocent *Henrietta*, fall the Victim to false and mistaken Honour? must she be condemned to lasting Misery by the very Person whom the Laws of Heaven and of Nature have bound to do every Thing for her Protection? must she be the Prey of Vice and Folly, only to save your Word? Is this to be a Father? Is it not rather the Effect of Tyranny than paternal Affection? Pardon, Sir, the Freedom which our long Friendship emboldens me to take, and believe that I speak only what all think who know what you are about to do; but if you carry your Purposes into Effect, you will assuredly draw upon yourself that very Censure you seem so much afraid of incurring. It is certainly a commendable Quality to be tenacious of one's Word; but many Instances might be produced to prove, that there may be Promises which it is a less Fault to break than to keep. Of this Nature certainly is yours to *Libertinus*. Besides the Propriety of chusing the least Evil, the Man to whom it was made is no longer the same; and to sacrifice a deserving Child to certain Wretchedness, will never be esteemed any Honour in you, but a sullen Obstinacy. Her Resignation to your Will demands the greater Care in you to require nothing which affords not a Probability of turning to her Advantage; I therefore conjure you not to enjoin her to any Action which must entirely destroy her Peace, and may also drive her to a Despair fatal to her Morals, and make her curse the Obedience which has undone her. I need not enumerate the many Mischiefs of such an Union; your own Observation and good Sense will supply them. But I beg you will seriously reflect upon the Consequences which may ensue, before that Knot is irrecoverably tied, which Death, or some Thing worse than Death, only can dissolve. I am, Sir, with the most unfeigned Respect,

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in the House of a Clergyman, who does Honour to his Profession by the most pious and exemplary Life. His Sister, who manages his Family, is a very conversable Woman, with whom I spend many agreeable Hours. I feel myself so happy in being once more got among reasonable Creatures, that I do not cast a Look on the Grandeur I have left behind. I am as well contented with two plain Dishes, as with ten crowded with the most expensive Exotics ; and breathe the Air as freely and as sweetly in a good clean Hack, as in a Spring Chariot and Six. Nothing is wanting to complete my Satisfaction but your Return to Town, the News of which I expect with Impatience. I am,

My dear Madam,

Your very humble Servant,

ELEONORA.

LETTER XV.

A Sea-Officer's Letter on the Subject of his approaching Marriage.

My dear MANNERS,

IT is the Pride and Glory of my Life to have so generous a Friend and Kinsman as yourself. I accept your Kindness with all my Heart. I thank you for your Counsel, and I will fail under your Command, till you think me able to manage my own Ship on the Ocean of Life. My little Frigate has led me a brisk Chase ; she is a Girl of Spirit, and wants a good Deal of Firing to make her bring to, but she lowers her Flag, my Boy, and surrenders to me. Huzza, Friends ! the Victory is mine. Huzza ! — I propos'd going full Sail to Scotland ; but Mrs. Barclay, who is in all our Secrets, and who is as clever a Woman as ever you knew, gave us better Advice, as you shall hear. Why should you go so long a Journey, when you can get married just as well here, and as privately too ? Let the Banns be published in my Parish Church ; no Body there knows who

Samuel

Samuel Elliot, single Man, and Jane Treville, single Woman, are. It will be much less Trouble and Expence, and very little Time will be lost. You both reside in the Parish, and every Thing may be done in the snug Way, without any Suspicion till all is over. Mr. Hopkins is my Friend, and will be my Bondsman; who has offered me his Purse, though he suffers me to be at no Kind of Expences. I am one of the luckiest Fellows this Day in England, and am almost wild with Joy, Love, and Friendship. I only wish that I may deserve them all; for I am resolved to do nothing to make either of them repent their Kindness to me. Your Observations respecting Frugality have not escaped me. I would not injure my Wife and her Children, by spending their Money upon my own Pleasures, for the Empire of the Sea! I will be her Guard, her Protector, and her Steward; but never could I bear the Thought of wasting her Property. I have too much Spirit even to be maintained at her Expence; and as my Country needs the Services of all her Children, I will not turn my Back upon my Profession, especially in a Time of Danger, which to Seamen is the Time of Glory. My Treville is a noble Girl, who does not even require it of me; and as I stand as fair to command a British Ship of War as another Man, such a Captain is a Match for any Woman, whatever may be her Birth or Fortune. My Girl shall never have Reason to be ashamed of her Choice; for I will ever shew myself worthy of the Honour she has done me. But every Thing is settled, and Mrs. Barclay has sent a Bill to be published in the Church on Sunday; and on Monday Mr. Hopkins will have the Goodness to give me his Company to my God-father's at Peckham, and he will speak in my Favour to him, which will support my Application. He sends his Respects to you, and says he will redeem your good Opinion, and at least spend some Time in your Neighbourhood, as soon as we have finished our Business. Both he and Miss Jarvis will be present at our Marriage, and I see no Reason why their own might not be celebrated at the same Time, though I think he is not half so brisk in his Courtship as I am. My best Love and Gratitude attend upon you and your Family, and my

respectful Compliments wait upon Mr. and Mrs. Johnson, and Mr. and Mrs. Parsons.

I am, my dear Manners,
Your very obliged
And affectionate Kinsman,
SAMUEL ELLIOT.

The Receipt of your kind Note was most welcome to me, as it is necessary that I should be new-rigged before I venture upon this new Expedition.

LETTER XVI.

From a Young Woman, a Letter of Gratitude to her Preserver.

Dear Sir,

AS you were my Deliverer from a State of Vice and Folly, you have a Right to be informed what Use I make of my Liberty. I am happy in the Situation which I mentioned to you, in Partnership with my Friend, Mrs. James, in Tooley-street, in the Borough; and if you should ever come that Way, I hope you will so far honour me as to call on me there. Your Lawyer was so kind to advance me two hundred Pounds upon my Bond, and takes upon him to negotiate mine with Lord Archibald; and this Obligation I am likewise indebted to your Goodness for. Mrs. James has very good Business, and she has many Friends in the Navy; and as I pass for a Widow, all her Friends are mine also. Of Consequence I feel myself much happier than ever I was before, since constant Employment is an excellent Means for dispersing disagreeable Thoughts and Reflections; and I hope to obtain that Peace and Tranquillity which attends those who are engaged in commendable Pursuits. My Benefactor shall at all Times be remembered in my Prayers and Praises, whenever I return Thanks to my Creator's infinite Mercy in rescuing me from a State of Sin and Folly; at all Times I will implore every Blessing which Heaven can bestow, on him who

who has been the Instrument of giving me comfortable Hopes of Peace here and of Happiness hereafter. I am,

Dear Sir,

Your very obliged and

Grateful humble Servant,

LUCY THOMAS.

LETTER XVII.

To a Lady, after her Recovery from a dangerous Sickness.

Dearest Madam,

If you knew with what an Excess of Grief I have lamented your Illness, while I considered you on the Borders of the Grave, you might perhaps form some Idea of that sweet and transporting Joy with which I find you returning to Life, and all the Satisfaction of Health and Ease. I cannot help regarding your Physician as my dearest Friend; I could hug him to my Bosom for contributing to your Recovery, at the Time that I bless the unseen Hand of Providence, and pour out my grateful Heart to that most gracious Being who has heard my Prayers, and has beheld with Compassion my incessant Tears. Henrietta's Friendship for my Sister, and the Concern which both have in all that relates to you, have procured me an Opportunity of learning every Day the State of your Disorder, without my running the Hazard of discovering my Passion to your Aunt by a Solicitude which would doubtless render me suspected. But this Correspondence has occasioned a Multitude of Hopes and Fears. They have raised my Soul in quick Succession to sudden Raptures, and then sunk me down into the most dreadful Despair! Sad Vicissitude! All my Happiness seemed to depend upon your Life, and while that was at Stake, a Prospect of inevitable Misery lay before me. While all Joy seemed departing, a solitary Sadness, and a dreary Gloom hung upon my Spirits, and hovered round the various Beauties of Nature, which had no Charms for me; neither Wealth or Titles, with all

all their Splendor, could have calmed the Anguish occasioned by your Loss. While I thought that the most lovely Form and the fairest Mind were near a Separation, my Heart Strings were ready to burst, as if the very Seat of Life and vital Heat was going to be torn from my Bosom. Religion only had Power to moderate my Grief, and by its reviving Consolations disperse the darkening Clouds which hung about my Soul. But how shall I be able to describe the sudden Extasy, the transporting Rapture which filled my Breast, when I heard that you were out of Danger? I tickled with a sweet Excess of Delight. But alas! to what Purpose are these involuntary Transports? Why do I place all my Happiness in seeing and hearing you, since no sacred Ties will ever bind us together, and secure the Continuance of these innocent Enjoyments? Accept however of my warmest Congratulations, and while my Happiness depends entirely upon yours, believe me to be the sincerest and most affectionate of your Servants,

THEODOSIUS.

LETTER XVIII.

From the same to the same.

My dear Lucy,

DELIGHTFUL is the Reflection of your Goodness while I indulge the transporting Remembrance of that charming Air with which you frankly expressed your constant and tender Regard for my Happiness. That you love, that you return my Passion, is an extatic Thought; but it cannot enable me to support the tedious Delay, the painful Suspence, and the pleasing yet dreadful Mixture of Hope and Fear with which I wait to know your Father's Sentence. This must confirm me blest beyond Expression, or throw the thickest Gloom over all my Joys. My Friend Mellifont came Yesterday to see me, with an Air more thoughtful than seemed consistent with his sprightly volatile Temper. Our ancient and renewed Friendship authorized my pressing

pressing him to communicate the Cause of his Discontent. We retired into my Study to prevent Interruption, when he began a Story which filled my Mind with every wild Agitation. It is with Shame, said he, I confess my Weakness, I love Lucy. Nothing but the Certainty of his Ignorance that I was his Rival could have restrained me from the Effects of Jealousy; but this alone armed me with Patience, while he enumerated your several Perfections, and dwelt upon your Charms. Every Commendation increased my Disquiet; but if I gave Way to unjust Fears, they were short-liv'd and transient, and a healing Joy soon succeeded, which composed the impetuous Tumult of my Soul. I heard him add with the utmost Delight, you would admire, my Friend, to see how cold and insensible she is of all my Endeavours to please her; had she but half the winning Softness and the tender Graces of Almira, who I think is nearly as beautiful. The Temper of Lucy is indeed much more agreeable; but it would probably pique her Pride to see me change the Object of my Addresses, and pay that assiduous Homage to her Cousin which she rejects. On his requesting my Opinion, I replied with the utmost Calmness, that they were both Ladies of extraordinary Merit; but that Lucy's Dislike might not be occasioned by any Want of natural Goodness. I am inclined to think she might approve of you as a Friend, though not as a Lover; and that so far from being offended at your transferring your Affections to her Cousin, she will use her utmost Endeavours to promote your mutual Felicity. He answered that he had found something very engaging in Almira's Behaviour, when he paid his Addresses to her Cousin, and had long regarded her with the highest Esteem; that she pleases without Design, and performs the most trifling Actions with such a Grace, that they forcibly infinuate themselves into the Heart. I am certain it is in her Power to make me happy; and as I endeavoured to fix this Resolution, after several other Observations on the same Subject, he took Leave, with a firm Intention of transferring all his tender Sentiments to Almira. This Behaviour of mine will not, I hope, offend your Judgment; but I am very desirous of seeing you, and with the most affectionate Ardour of entreating

you to give me an Opportunity to express my Gratitude, and to tell you how much I am, my dearest Lucy,

Your obliged and affectionate Servant,

THEODOSIUS.

LETTER XIX.

To a Friend, on the Subject of hopeless Love.

Dear Friend,

IT will be impossible for me to remain much longer here, as I grow worse and worse every Hour. Those only who have experienced the corroding Pangs of despairing Love can have the least Idea of what I feel. The Consolation of your friendly Breast, into which my Distress could be poured out, and by whose generous Sympathy and Advice my extreme Anguish might be partially alleviated, is most anxiously desired. It is the highest Ingratitude in me to think of staying here; as it only renders those unhappy who are ever solicitous to contribute every Thing to give me Pleasure. Though they do not enquire directly into the Cause of my Uneasiness, I can imagine that their Looks upbraid me for endeavouring to keep it to myself. For the first Time, my dear Friend, I begin to repine at being deprived of the Enjoyment of that Fortune to which I was the undoubted Heir. I might have indulged a glimmering Hope of attaining the adorable Charlotte, were I possessed of that Fortune I had a Right to expect from my Family; but I am now bound down by Gratitude to stifle every favourable or flattering Thought, being only a Dependant on the Family, and raised by the Generosity of her Brother from a State of Servility. How must I now regret the Severity of my Fate, which has placed me in so humble a State! how ought I rather to repine that my Heart is so susceptible as not to be Proof against her Charms! But dreadful and severe as the Alternative is, my only Remedy seems to be that of her being destined to one more suitable to her Condition; as the Ardour of my Affection might perhaps then abate, and the solid Happiness

piness which my Youth enjoyed might once more return. Yet while I am thus continually in her Presence, it cannot possibly be better ; and Absence must be tried, whatever Exertions of Resolution it may require, to accomplish and bring about this Alteration. How arduous is the Task which is thus necessary ! how difficult must it be to fly from the Object we adore, to smother the Flame which Beauty has inspired, and to resign all Hopes of what we are most desirous of attaining ! I sincerely hope that this will never be your Case, and that your Affections may never be placed but where they can justly expect a Return. With the greatest Respect, I am, my dear Friend,

Yours most sincerely,

T. E.

LETTER XX.

From the same to the same, on the same Subject, after Sickness.

Dear Friend,

THE Tribute of Friendship obliges me to dedicate these first Moments, after ten Days Intermission, to the Continuation of our Correspondence. So long as I can hold my Pen, and remain at any Distance, this Pleasure shall never be interrupted. I have been so extremely ill, that my Life was despaired of ; but do not alarm yourself, as it has pleased the Almighty once more to bless me with the Prospect of Health. With this Blessing, the most flattering Hopes are now entertained that a few Days will perfectly complete my Recovery. When I tell you that my last Letter to you was scarce sealed, before I was seized with an oppressive Dizziness, accompanied with an amazing Palpitation and Trembling, you will cease to wonder at my Silence. A raging Fever immediately succeeding, alarmed me with Fears and Apprehensions for my Senses ; fortunately I was not deprived of these, and the Thoughts, upon Recovery, of what

what might then have escaped my Lips would have rendered my Life miserable. To make any Compensation for the Tenderness I have experienced can never be in my Power; more Care or Attendance could not possibly have been shewn to the nearest Relation or even an only Child. For Mr. Johnson was scarcely from my Bed-side during the whole Time; scarce would he be prevailed upon to leave me to take that Repose which was necessary to preserve his Health. Both Lord and Lady Bulmer constantly came to me once or twice every Day, and expressed the greatest Concern at my sudden Indisposition, and the Danger I was thought to be in; even the amiable Charlotte did not withhold her kind Enquiries, but sent frequent Messengers while it was supposed there remained any Danger, and this Morning she came with her Brother to see me, on being informed that I was able to sit up. But how was I surprized to see the Change in her Features! There was no longer to be seen that sparkling Vivacity in her Eyes, nor any Traces of her lovely Bloom; the Roses had fled from her Cheeks, and her fine open Countenance, which had gladdened the Heart of every Beholder, had entirely lost its natural Hue. Her Congratulations on my Recovery were expressed with all the Tenderness of a Sister, nor can Words convey an Idea of my Feelings at her Condescension. I felt myself, as it were, restored to new Life, and the Enjoyment of perfect Bliss; but self-intruding Reflection arose, as soon as she had taken Leave, and pictured, in its true Colours, the transitory Illusion. Heaven alone can tell for what I am reserved, though I shall never be more resigned, or relinquish with less Regret the transient Pleasures of this mortal Life for the gloomy Abode in the silent Grave. Whatever may be the Fate of my future Life, I am resolved, the very first Minute I can travel with Safety, to be removed to Town. Till this Period, Impatience will render the Hours tedious, as I once more wish freely to enjoy your friendly Conversation; a little Time will enable me to experience that Felicity, and in the Interval I have every possible Satisfaction in subscribing myself as ever,

My dear Friend,
Yours most affectionately,

T. E.

L E T T E R XXI.

An open Declaration of a Gentleman to a Lady, with whom he had been for some Time acquainted.

I have been returned to this Place but a few Days, and I seize the first Moment of Repose from the Civility of my Country Friends, to enter upon a Business which has pressed for some Time upon my Heart, and is the great and indeed the only Object of it. It cannot have been possible, I presume, for you to have shut your Eyes against my Sensibility to your Charms and Virtues, however your good Sense might turn them from it. My Looks, my Words, my Pen, all told the same Tale; or they could not be faithful to their Source, which has long been wholly yours. I thought it, however, expedient to try myself, and to discover what Absence and a Variety of new Objects and Occupations would do, before I should venture to make the Declaration which now swells my Heart. These have only strengthened my Affliction, and more firmly rivetted your Image in my Breast. I am now conscious, that I merit you in some Degree, not from a Comparison of myself to you, but from a Belief that I am capable of loving you as you ought to be loved. On this Idea I am emboldened to ask your Permission to propose you to my Uncle as his future Niece. I shall add no more. For some Time past I have laboured with an extreme Agitation; at this Moment it increases, and I fear will suffer no Remission till I receive that Answer from you, which will give Sunshine or Shade to the future Life of your ever faithful and most sincere

JAMES MORTIMER.

L E T T E R XXII.

To a Young Lady from a Gentleman to whom she was engaged.

BE not alarmed, my dearest Harriot, when I tell you that I have seen your Apparition. I have seen it indeed, and you never stood forth in truer Colours, not even

even in this dear striking Miniature before me, than in your last most characteristic Letter. I see you, I hear you, I embrace you in every Sentence, but particularly in the poor Widow's Cottage. There I behold you in the most amiable Light! How much greater than if blazing in Jewels at a Birth-Night Ball! Believe me, when I beheld you in that Scene, so peculiarly dear to me, I shed Tears of irresistible Pleasure. I felt all that, I am sure, you felt, when with the benevolent Spirit of the Prophet you told her that "her Barrel and her Cruse should not fail." By all the Powers of Munificence! I see you at this Moment in the Attitude in which you spoke it; a Smile upon your lovely Countenance, half restrained for Fear the Object should not think you in Earnest in your Promise, and your sweet Eye visibly apprehensive lest the poor Woman should be too humiliating in her Expressions of Gratitude, or lest her Heart should be too full of the Favour. When she turns her Praises on her former Benefactor, then,—but I cannot behold you in that Part of the Scene without too much Emotion to continue my Pen; let it suffice that the Reflection has already more than once banished Sleep from my Eyes, and filled them with Tears. But the Tenderness of the Subject affects me so much, that I find I have already lost that Spirit of Cheerfulness with which I sat down to write; yet it has its peculiar Pleasure, and I look forward, with the happiest Complacency, to that Felicity which must attend the Union of two Hearts so sympathetically allied. May that Union soon take Place! may the good Spirit which has been so gracious to me in every Period of my Life, crown my Happiness with that interesting Event! You have much to answer for, my dearest Friend; for though you have reformed me from Foibles, you have planted Vices in their Stead. In short, you have made me both covetous and ambitious.

I am,
Yours.

L E T.

LETTER XXIII.

To a Gentleman from his Friend, on a young Lady who had made him an Overture.

I Have just received a Letter, my dear James, which makes me the most unhappy of Mankind. 'Tis from a Lady whose Fortune is greatly above my most sanguine Hopes, and whose Merit and Tenderness deserve that Heart which I feel it is not in my Power to give her. The general Complacency of my Behaviour to the lovely Sex, and my having been accidentally her Partner at two or three Balls, has deceived her into an Opinion that she is beloved by me; and she imagines she is only returning a Passion which her Superiority of Fortune has prevented my declaring. How much is she to be pitied! my Heart knows too well the Pangs of disappointed Love, not to feel most tenderly for the Sufferings of another, without the additional Motive to Compassion of being the undesigned Cause of those Sufferings, the severest of which human Nature is capable. I am embarrassed to the greatest Degree, not what Resolution to take, which required not a Moment's Deliberation, but how to soften the Stroke; and in what Manner, without wounding her Delicacy, to decline an Offer which she has not the least Doubt of my accepting with all the eager Transport of timid Love, surprized by unexpected Success. I have wrote to her, and I think I shall send the Answer of which a Copy is inclosed. Her Letter is already destroyed, but her Name I conceal; for the Honour of a Lady is too sacred to be trusted, even to the faithful Breast of a Friend. I am,

Yours.

LETTER XXIV.

To a Lady, alluded to in the preceding.

NO Words, Madam, can express the Warmth of my Gratitude for your generous Intentions in my Favour, though my Ideas of Probity will not suffer me to

to take Advantage of them. To rob a Gentleman, by whom I have been treated with the utmost Hospitality, not only of his whole Fortune, but of what is infinitely more valuable, a beloved and amiable Daughter, is an Action utterly inconsistent with those Sentiments of Honour which I have always cultivated. Even your Perfections, so strongly are they rooted, cannot tempt me to be guilty of breaking them. I must therefore absolutely decline the Happiness you have had the Goodness to permit me to hope for, and beg Leave to subscribe myself, with the utmost Gratitude and the most lively Esteem,

Madam,

Your most obliged.

humble Servant,

J. THORPE.

LETTER XXV.

To a Lady, from a Gentleman, complaining of her Delay to reward his Passion.

HOW much longer, my dear Miss Harriet, am I to suffer the Torment of Suspence? how much longer do you wish me to live the Slave of Uncertainty? Had Love once touched that Breast of yours, as my flattering Hopes taught me to believe, I should certainly have been blessed before this Time with the Possession of her my Soul doats upon, and you would have become mine from a Motive of Pity and Compassion to my Anxiety. For I cannot be induced to imagine that you wish to withdraw those Hopes you once condescended to give, —but if you do, at least acquaint me with it, that for your Tranquillity I may forego all Pretensions, though it should hurry me to the Grave. If you really prefer any other happy Youth, favour me with the Knowledge of it, that with my latest Breath I might recommend you to his Love. But if, my dearest Life, you ever meant to bless the Man who loves you with the purest Flame which ever warmed the Breast of Mortal, why am I

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condemned to this Life of Perplexity? Consent, my Charmer—my amiable Girl, consent, and let me call you mine. I know my Lord would intercede with Sir William, when this was once effected, to forgive his Child. Should he remain implacable, my Fortune is sufficient; and possessed of you, I would ask of Heaven no other Blessing. Yet if you should still remain inflexible, and insist upon having his Consent; you cannot be averse from his coming to London, and obtaining Sir William's final Determination, if you have one Spark of Esteem for the almost despairing Freeman. To live in such a State of Doubt is worse than Death; nor should I have delayed this so long, had not your Prohibition and my Sister's Intreaties prevailed over my Impatience. Either consent to my writing to Sir William, or kindly yield to become the Partner of my future Life; for if you refuse me in all, I cannot answer for my next Resolution, though I never more may trouble you with my unwelcome Solicitations. My Heart you are sole Mistress of, which will ever beat with the most affectionate Wishes for your Welfare and Happiness, whatever may befall

Your undissembled Admirer,
JAMES FREEMAN.

LETTER XXVI.

From the Lady, in Answer to the preceding.

UNKIND, ungenerous Freeman! In what Manner have I ever given you Cause to doubt my Affections! Have I not granted you every Assurance that was in my Power, and consistent with my Situation? Are you so far a Stranger to the Obedience of a Child, to expect I can be persuaded to act in direct Opposition to a Parent's Commands, and even to rush precipitately on without even waiting for the Result of his Determination? What Respect can you hope to receive from that Wife who was regardless of her Duty to an indulgent Father! Therefore let me intreat you to examine more minutely the Rashness of such a Step. Only suppose,

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for Instance, that your Sister was prepossessed in Favour of a Person who might pay his Court to her, and that, without waiting for the Consent of her Family, she was to elope; would you consider her Excuse for committing such an extravagant Act as sufficient, because she apprehended their Objections to her Choice? would you not condemn her, how worthy soever the Object might prove, for having drawn Disgrace upon her Family? The Proposal you have made to me, should I consent to it, would expose me equally to Censure; these will be your Sentiments upon cool Reflection, when that has resumed its Station, whatever may be your present Opinion. The most favourable Construction which such a Step could admit of, would be to attribute it to the Weakness of my Mind and Frailty of Disposition; but in the Eyes of the World, how truly despicable would it make me appear! With Respect to Fortune, I am certain you have more than sufficient for my Happiness, nor have I the smallest Doubt of your Affection; but without Sir William's Consent I can never take the Name of Freeman. I will not suppose you meant to alarm me into the Consent for your coming to London; but your ambiguous Observation, "I cannot answer for my next Resolution, though I never more may trouble you with my unwelcome Solicitations," abounds with Uncertainty. But if it is to disband and leave me for ever;—if that is the mighty Resolve, then farewell all my fond Hopes of Truth in Man.

It is ungenerous to suppose either that I wish you to live in this State of Uncertainty, or that I am of so changeable a Disposition as to desire to fly from your Esteem to catch at that of another's. What Part of my Conduct have you the least Occasion to accuse of being tainted with Coquetry? I have been bred in the rural Paths of Content, and Truth and Candour are ever my Guides; nor was I ever Mistress of Deceit enough to disguise my Sentiments from the Man which my Heart had chose, and who I fear knows it but too well. But I could wish you would wait with Patience, at least till our Return into the Country; though if any Judgment is to be formed from the Contents of your Letter, there is but little Hopes of your doing so. I cannot perceive that

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my Concurrence is asked, but demanded; but if you should meet with a Denial from Sir William, which I would not wish you to hazard at present, you may perhaps be left at Leisure to condemn your own Rashness. If you have not thought better of it before you receive this, come, and I dare confess, without a Blush, that I wish you may have more Success than is expected at this Time by

HARRIET CHAMBERS.

LETTER XXVII.

From a Lady to her Friend. A pleasing Description of a Family.

OUR Patient, my dear Countess, is recovering apace, and I assure you is not much dejected. We went out yesterday, and he was very cheerful; and, sitting down on a Grass Plat, for Amusement went to Cards. Miss Trueman had deposited several Pledges of her Losings, and a Song was the Price of their Redemption. She has a most charming Voice, and her Graces in singing are so natural, that it is impossible not to be in Raptures with them. Our Invalid was really so, and sung a Duet with her. In the Evening he engaged her to sing again, and a little Concert was formed by her, the younger Sisters, and Mr. Trueman. The Earl, who little expected to find such Talents amidst Rocks and Precipices, was in fresh Extasies. He was to have gone to the Baths to Day, but has ordered the Waters to be brought hither. As I take them myself, and the Ladies have the Complaisance to rise early to go out with him, he said he would endeavour to imitate me; and that, every Thing considered, he rather chose to continue here than to go by himself to the Baths. This Resolution has given me great Pleasure. Your Brother's Taste for Gaiety and Liberty is well known; but his unhappy Adventure has altered his Character, though he may yet return to his natural Disposition. Our young Ladies have Gaiety, accompanied with Wit and Decorum,

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which are always agreeable to a Man of Merit; and I confess that my Wishes would reach their Summit, if my Lord should be happy enough to approve of and to be approved by Miss Trueman. These two amiable Persons have been brought together by an Adventure, and to this happy Adventure I shall leave them; the least Interposition would spoil all. Miss Trueman possesses a cultivated Mind, a Sensibility of Soul, and an Honesty of Heart; and though I shall see without appearing to see, you must acknowledge that I rely much on your Greatness of Mind in venturing to communicate such an Idea. Her Merit, her Virtue, and her Beauty, are the greatest Part of her Portion; all the little Fortune she can hope for bears no Comparison to that of the Earl. The World would charge him with committing an Act of Folly; but I regard Happiness only as the true Good, and as the Opulence of your Brother places him above those Considerations, I will venture to maintain that this Union would render his Situation the Envy of every Person of Sense and Sensibility. Her œconomical Conduct and Moderation, as to herself, might be reckoned a sufficient Counter-balance to a Fortune. For two Years past she has entirely managed her Mother's House, with an Ease that is astonishing; her Attention to Business is scarce perceptible. The Servants adore her, and she finds Means to afford great Assistance to several neighbouring Families at a small Expence. I have been informed of a thousand Instances of her Beneficence, very important in their Motives and Effects. It is no great Effort to open our Purse to the unhappy, when Riches have put it in our Power; but to supply the Want of Riches by our natural Abilities alone, in the Relief of them, appears to me a double Generosity. -But my Hopes may vanish, because perhaps they are founded only on my Wishes. Yet, supposing otherwise, pleasing Proposals always cause Time to pass agreeably. I can never regret that which is employed in the Foresight or Desire of good Actions, and still less when employed in a Correspondence with you. Adieu, my dear Countess.

Yours.

L E T T E R XXVIII.

*An Answer to the preceding, with some Reflections on the
Choice of a Wife.*

IT would, indeed, my dear Friend, have been a Mortification to me, if you had judged of my Sentiments in any other Manner than from your own. Your Wishes coincide with mine. As my Brother's Circumstances have placed him above all pecuniary Considerations with Respect to Marriage, his only Motive in such a Case must be Happiness. If his Fortune were less, I should applaud the Choice. The Shackles, unhappily imposed upon us by prevailing Modes, oblige us to pay a Regard to Fortune. Luxury has placed every Thing as Necessaries, and its Expences are with Difficulty defrayed. Two Persons, without any Fortune at all, in Love with each other, are in a Situation extremely pitiable, as it would be imprudent to marry, and unhappy to remain single; but my Brother is not in these Circumstances. He is rich, and I should think him more than happy if he could insure his own Felicity by uniting it with that of a well-bred, virtuous, and amiable Woman. Though you think it best not to interpose in the Affair, your Advice may be of great Weight; but you know best what Steps are most proper to be taken. Assure my Brother of my sincerest Love and Friendship, and Mrs. Trueman of that just Regard I entertain for her. It is not the Talent of every one to give such an Education to her Children as she hath done. To them likewise I would beg to be remembered.

Adieu, my dear Friend,
Yours.

L E T T E R XXIX.

To a Friend, on his Wife's Want of Oeconomy.

AM grieved, my dear Friend, that your domestic Affairs are still in so bad a Situation, and that your Wife, by her excessive Expences, labours continually to make

make them worse. There is nothing but Patience and Mildness which can affect her; gain her Confidence, and you will afterwards gain what you please. Whatever Faults a Wife may have committed, never molest her, but find some Means capable of opening her Eyes. Reason with her, and seem to enter into her Views so as not to have the Appearance of contradicting her; and insensibly, by candid Representations, by good Treatment, by sensible Reasonings, by the Effusions of the Heart, she may be brought to relish the Morals you preach to her. But never complain of her before your Children, and still less before your Servants; for they will acquire the Habit of respecting her no longer, and perhaps they may despise her. Women deserve Attention; and their Peevishness is often owing to the Temper of their Husbands. Their tender Forms, as well as their Situation, require Respect; their Cares are not so easily diverted as ours are, whose Lives are divided between Business and Study, and their domestic Vexations harass them. The Husband may be abroad on Business or Pleasure, but the Wife is employed at Home in minute Attentions, which are consequently teasing.— Those who love Reading have a Resource, but they cannot always be reading; and almost every Woman who reads much is infected with Vanity. If her Creditors could be advised to persecute her frequently, she would soon be tired of their Visits; and then you might take Occasion to shew her the Misfortune of being in Debt. You might also urge the Necessity of saving something for her Children; for as she loves them tenderly, that Motive will be the best Lesson which can be given her. I formerly knew an old Officer, who had suffered much by the passionate Freaks of his Wife; he had learned the Art of remaining immovable, and not speaking one Word, when she fell into a Rage, and this Silence very soon cooled her Passion. The passionate can only be disarmed by Mildness. I am glad that your eldest Son has such uncommon Sagacity; and as the Temper of the youngest is more reserved, you must try it in order to make him shew himself. A Father's Talent is to multiply himself, and to appear to his Children under different Forms; to one, as a Master,—to another, as a Friend.

Friend. Love me always as your best Friend, the Friend of your Family, and as one who most sincerely wishes to see you happy. My Compliments to your dear Wife, whom I wish to see as reasonable in her Ex-pences as you are. That Time will come; and till it does, consider that the Happiness of this Life consists in always hoping.

I am, my dear Friend,
Yours affectionately.

LETTER XXX.

To a Lady, whose Coquetry had hurried her into an indiscreet Marriage. On the Duties of a married State.

WHAT shall I say to my beloved, my unfortunate Friend, under her present Circumstances? How convey Consolation clear of Reflection, or convince her that my Pity, my Sympathy, are hers, without adding fresh Stings to her Affliction? Alas, my Dear, it was but too necessary for you to learn the Lesson of Mortification; for the Path which is strewed with Flowers is very slippery. A greater Evil might have befallen you; your Honour and Fortune are secure, though your Task, I grant, is rather hard to perform. But whatever were your Motives for entering into so sacred an Engagement, nothing can excuse your fulfilling it. You must accustom yourself, at all Times, to turn your Thoughts on the most favourable Side of your Husband's Character; and by compassionating his Infirmities and concealing them, cultivate and do Justice to his real Perfections. The World will soon forget the Step you have taken; for your Fortune, your Title, and a Coach and six, will secure you from Censure, if you give not fresh Cause for the Tongues and Pens of Slander to exercise upon. You have not forfeited the Friendship of any one, and you have it more than ever in your Power to obtain an Approbation you have hitherto been a Stranger to, the Approbation of your own Heart. My Father conjures you to be mindful of the Character you have thought

proper to assume; for you must expect hereafter to stand or fall in his Affection, by that Test of your Prudence and Resolution. He knows you are capable of many great and good Actions, and he has too much Candour to conclude that one false Step can never be retrieved. Your own Understanding, assisted by cool Reflection, will enable you to form a very different Judgment of Life, its Pleasures and Disappointments, than you have hitherto entertained. You will be convinced that Misfortunes depend in great Measure upon ourselves, as our Imagination may constitute, or our Reason diminish, more than half the Grievance. You will find likewise that every Person you have Connexion with (however seemingly happy) have their secret Anxieties; and that yours, perhaps, notwithstanding their being at present so very acute, are infinitely inferior to many. The Hand of Death has probably robbed one of all he held dear; some severe chronical Disease deprives another of all Possibility of Enjoyment; a third labours under those Mortifications derived from the Perverseness and Undutifulness of an only Child; a fourth is sunk down by the Compunction of an evil Conscience, whose Hand had violently deprived him of Life; a fifth—but it is Madness to attempt enumerating the Evils Mankind are subject to,—and you will be satisfied, that devoting your Attention to one Man, agreeable to your Duty, and reducing your Approbation for another into the sober Sentiments of Friendship, is by no Means so formidable a Difficulty in Practice as in Prospect. I am very far from being clear with Respect to the Propriety of your writing to the Person, whose Welfare you have so much at Heart; but I will bestow upon it all suitable Consideration, on Condition that you promise me never to enquire either into the Effects or Certainty of my Compliance. The Subject is abundantly too tender even to be touched upon at present; a Year or two hence perhaps may make you equal to it. Yet my best Services shall be yours on every proper Occasion; and if I cannot mitigate, I shall ever sympathize in your Misfortunes. Adieu, my dear Friend, for the present.

Yours sincerely,

L E T.

LETTER XXXI.

To a Lady from a Gentleman, describing the State of his Mind.

HOW much, how tenderly do I sympathize with you in those anxious Languors of which you complain ! Surely our Hearts have some hidden Intercourse, by which they partake at the same Time of each other's Feelings. That languid and unenjoying State which you describe is truly the Picture of my own Mind. I fly from Society to Shades and Retirement, where you are the only Object near me. I indulge myself with recalling those precious Moments I spent with you, and enjoy those glowing and impassioned Embraces. It is too much for me ; my Heart faints under the sweet Oppression. From the dear Reverie do I awake, and start with Frenzy to find myself alone. Then Languor succeeds to ideal Pleasure, and all the Pains and Anxieties of Absence renew their Attacks. Yet this joyless Solitude seems to be the only State suited to my Inclinations. About five Miles from this Place there is the most beautiful Grove I ever saw ; and I so frequently visit it, that my very Horse knows where to stop. How often in that sweet Shade have you been in my Arms, and I have pressed you to my glowing Bosom with visionary Extasy ! But I sink under these cruel Thoughts, and must rest.—At last I find, that to live long without you will not be in my Power. I have no Soul, no Heart but what is with you. My Faculties are fled and gone ; and I am not the same Creature. My Fate is in your Hands, and you must either take me soon to your Bosom, or I shall not be worth your taking. But I leave every Thing to your Determination, and will urge you to nothing ; yet I owe you this Information, that by partaking with me early of some Retirement, you may possibly prolong that Life which I find to be scarce supportable with you.

Yours as ever.

LETTER XXXII.

To a young Lady from a Gentleman, in Answer to her Account of some slanderous Reports of him.

WHAT shall I say to sooth, to comfort, to confirm the Heart of my adorable Honoria? How shall I fortify her under the Influence of that timorous and delicate Sensibility, which, like the Sensitive Plant, shrinks under the rude Touch of every impertinent Approacher? Yet it is my Happiness, that the Heart which is thus timorous and sensible, has for its Companion a Mind naturally great, fortified by Wisdom that must hold cheap the Attacks of idle and ill-grounded Opinions, and directed by Honour that will invariably adhere to Truth and Justice. These Considerations prevent my being absolutely miserable; and the low and illiberal Abuse contained in your Quotation from the infamous Letter, I am persuaded, you will look upon with the Contempt it deserves. That your poor Friend enjoys your Friendship, will be sufficient to move every Engine of Malicity against him; it no other Way concerns me than as it may give your tender Heart a temporary Pain; as for my own Part, I despise the Attacks of impotent Malice, and have Pride enough to be satisfied with my own Integrity. But I am nevertheless interested to defend my Cause in your Heart against some who call themselves your Friends; and while you suffer the Persecution of their good Advice, let me recommend to your Remembrance, that I too am your Friend, who, by Virtue of the strongest and best Affection, have an indisputable Right to your Heart. This Right you have yourself confirmed by the dearest Acknowledgments of the same mutual Affection. But how cruel must be that Wretch who could intimate, without knowing me, that you would find a tyrannous Husband in your Friend! Is it possible! Can the Heart of the truest and tenderest Love harbour Tyranny? Will you find in your Theodosius the Insensibility of a Fox-hunting Squire, the unfeeling Soul of Avarice, or the heart-breaking Negligence of the Debauchee? You will find a Heart which can embrace his Honoria with exclusive Fondness, and alone wrapped

wrapped up in the dear Enjoyment of her Virtues and her Love, will make her Happiness its unwearied Study. Very many Thanks are due to my lovely Friend for her kind Wishes with Regard to my Health; for while she thinks it of Value, I shall think it worth preserving. The like Concern for her Health will ever be fully returned from her

Faithful Friend.

LETTER XXXIII.

From a Mother to her Daughter, congratulating her on the Birth of a Son.

I Am overjoyed, my dear Child, to hear of your being safely delivered, and of a Boy. I told you that we were apt to represent to ourselves Ills greater than they are; and that on this Occasion a Woman's Tenderness for her Child lessens them by one half, whilst her Love to her Husband gives her Strength to bear the other. Thank God for his Favours. A good Husband, a Son, Health! what other Blessings can you wish for? No one can have your Welfare at Heart more than myself. You will always deserve my Friendship, and you shall always have it. Take Care of yourself. 'Tis one of our Duties to mind our Health. Whatever People may say, don't make yourself uneasy; for as you may depend upon me, it shall in Time appear that you are the Favourite of a Favourite. Adieu, my dear Eliza.

Yours.

LETTER XXXIV.

The Duties of married Ladies, in a Letter to a Daughter.

YOU have now, my dear Daughter, two Things only to do; serve God, and please your Husband. Be prodigal of your Complaisance to him; enter into all his Fancies; suffer all his Oddities, but never let him have any of yours to suffer. If he is jealous, see no Body; and if he has a Mind you should appear in the

great World, appear there, but always with that Moderation which Virtue requires. As your Husband will soon be the Governor of J——, inform yourself what Good may be done by the first Woman of a Town, and do it. Never be without Women of Character in your Company ; for you are too young to launch into the World without an irreproachable Witness of your Conduct. Your Husband, let him be what he will, will like you the better for it. But be circumspect in forming your Connexions with Women ; it is better to be seen at the Play or Opera with some Men, than at a Sermon with some Women. You should love the Presence of your Husband and his Company ; and never make a Mystery of any Thing to him. To obey him is the first Duty of the Marriage State ; to bring up your Children, the second. Take Care of them before they are born, and do not expose their Health and Salvation by any Indiscretion. Render to them the Education you have received yourself ; and I hope they will prove to be worthy of you. The Misfortunes with which a Passion for Play is generally attended, should caution you against all Excess. Reflections which serve to make us know ourselves and correct our Failings, should be encouraged. Decency may require that you should follow the Fashions, but Modesty requires that you should follow them at a Distance. Though you have been educated in the purest Doctrine, and understand your Religion very well ; yet Novelties in Opinion should be guarded against, and, if treated at all, touched with great Reserve. If, my dear Daughter, you are a good Christian, a good Wife, and a good Mother ; you will fulfil your Duty, establish your Reputation, and ensure your Salvation. Adieu.

LETTER XXXV.

On the Affectation of Wit in young Ladies. To a Female Friend.

MANY Women imagine, my dear Harriot, that whatever Nonsense they may talk, if they have but a pretty Face, it will all pass for Wit ; and that the Men

Men will admire what they hear for the Sake of what they see. There is indeed some Truth in this, as I have more than once observed a handsome Woman, whose Wit was surprising; and her Raillery was so severe and yet so just, that she was a perfect Prodigy. But, alas! having unfortunately caught the Small-pox, she was extremely pitted. I will not pretend to account for the Consequence, but the universal Observation of the Men then was, "Good Heavens! is this the Woman we made such a Rout about? I really see nothing so extraordinary in what she says, and I cannot help considering it as mere troublesome Chit-chat." The Women too, now they can envy her no longer, pity her having had such a cruel and malicious Distemper; and even say that they think her, if possible, more witty than ever, and her Conversation more brilliant than even it was before her Misfortune.

I am,

My dear Harriot's

Affectionate Friend.

LETTER XXXVI.

From a Gentleman to his Friend, on returning from abroad.

My dear Friend,

I Had no sooner returned to the sweet Bosom of England, and breathed the Smoke of the City, than my Memory ran suddenly upon you. Almost ever since hath your Idea filled up and engrossed my Imagination, so that I can think of nothing else; with such a Pregnancy does your Love swell, both in my Breast and Brain, that nothing can deliver me of this violent high Passion but the Sight of you. I pray you make Haste to save my Longing, and tantalize me no longer, for the Sight of you will be more precious to me than any one Object I have seen in all my three Years Travel. If you take this for a Compliment, because I am newly come from France, I shall only add that you are much mistaken in

Yours, &c.

LETTER XXXVII.

From a young Lady's Friend to her Mother. An Overture of Marriage on Behalf of a young Gentleman.

THAT Esteem and Friendship, Madam, which I shall ever entertain for you, have prevailed upon me to accept, with the greatest Pleasure, a Commission with which the Earl of B. has entrusted me. Sensible of Miss Horton's Merit and Accomplishments, he has requested me to acquaint you “ how great a Happiness it would be, if he could obtain the Esteem of this adorable Girl, and the Honour of calling you by the Name of Mother.” I have faithfully noted his Words, which imply every Thing that can be said. His Welfare is in your Hands. Nothing remains to be settled with Respect to Fortune; his own is sufficient, and he is no Stranger to the Value of a virtuous Mind. Could he have ventured so far, before he had asked her Hand from you, he would have demanded of herself a Heart whose Flame was mutual to his own; but his Respect, which is only equalled by his Love, induced him to forbear. They know each other, and no Cause exists to retard their Union. Thus, Madam, if this Proposal should meet with your Approbation, as I hope it will, it may be consummated without Delay, and the Earl's utmost Wishes, as well as my own, be accomplished. I am certain this Event, as it will complete his Happiness, will not leave that of Miss Horton imperfect. Adieu, my dear Madam. I wait your Answer with an Impatience scarcely inferior to that of his Lordship.

*Grove, near Matlock,
May 7th, 1788.*

LETTER XXXVIII.

A Reply in Favour of the Proposal, with some useful Reflections.

WITH the utmost Gratitude, Madam, I return you Thanks for interesting yourself so greatly in my Daughter's Welfare. I could almost venture, from this Regard

Regard alone, to rest her whole Happiness in that Union which you have proposed. But a Mother's Fears tell her that such an Alliance is far above what I could ever hope. Most Parents in my Place would be transported with Joy ; but I never sought for my Daughter an Establishment valuable only for Rank or Interest, which do not imply Happiness. A Woman may not be happy, even with the best of Qualities, accompanied with Love and Fortune ; for there have been Marriages where, though Esteem was mutual, Misery was mutual also. The Earl has Understanding, Accomplishments, and, what is more valuable, Honesty of Heart, and he is amiable, and was born to please ; but has he that solid Virtue, those sure Principles, without which he cannot be a good Husband ? is the unhappy Passion he once conceived effaced from his Heart ? If he has offered his Hand to my Daughter merely from Chagrin or Anger, how great would be the Misfortune of such a Marriage ? With Reluctance extreme should I give him my Daughter, if he carries his Hatred to Charlotte to Extremity ; but if he despises her Conduct in cooler Moments, and his Mind is so detached from her that he can see her without Emotion, I shall have better Expectations. But perhaps he has been captivated by Beauty alone, without any Regard to the inward Qualities of the Heart. To such a Sensibility and Delicacy as my Daughter possesses, a greater Calamity could scarcely happen, than to be united to a Husband who is unable to distinguish intellectual Accomplishments. It is to be feared that the Earl, after so many Irregularities, is only attached to the exterior Attractions. I wish to obtain for her a Husband, tender, virtuous, prudent, and sensible of her Merit ; one with whom she might enjoy the Pleasures of Confidence and Friendship as well as Love. But I will confide in your Ability and Discretion, and in your Affection to her ; and if, upon your discovering his real Sentiments, your Report shall be favourable, with the greatest Joy shall I accept the Honour you intend us. Till I have a satisfactory Answer from you, I shall not mention the Affair to my Daughter, nor at present would it be proper for me to wait on you at your own House ; but we are returning to Horton, and I should regard it

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as the greatest Obligation to receive a Visit from you there on Monday. I would mean to excuse the Company of the Earl and my Son ; for then we may treat more explicitly of this Matter, and come to such a Resolution as shall appear most prudent.

This Moment my Son is arrived here, and the Earl, I find, has mentioned his Intention to him ; but I have strictly forbidden him to say a Syllable of it to his Sister, though I tremble lest he should, as he seems in such Transports of Joy, and cannot, as he says, conceive any Reasons for my Hesitation. However, I shall send him back to you as soon as possible, that he may not betray the Secret, and I am going to my Daughter to prevent any Opportunity of a private Conversation. Adieu, Madam. My Gratitude wants Words to be expressed.

Thorp, May 9th, 1788.

LETTER XXXIX.

From a young Gentleman to his Friends, on his Prospect of successful Love.

YOU complain of Neglect, and indeed with some Shew of Reason ; but I must beg your Pardon, Tom, for my Hours at present are so agreeably taken up, that I have scarce one to throw away upon any Occasion. But don't let that affect you, my Boy ; for in every other Respect I am as much yours as ever. I am above half inclined to flatter myself that my Difficulties are at an End, so very propitious is this amiable Woman in every Particular. With free Leave to pursue the Dictates of my Heart, and to prattle Love without Interruption or Restraint, I have the fairest Prospect of prevailing upon her to be mine before she can receive any farther Contamination. Indeed her Vivacity is so far recovered, that I could not answer for the Consequence if she was to get loose in her single State ; she is not certainly accountable to any one for her Actions, and she is not of a Disposition to submit to impertinent Controul. But if once her Fate was united to mine, I am

am convinced that the gentlest Persuasions would be sufficient to preserve her from Irregularities. I cannot be surprized at the Lengths her Vivacity transports her, when even my Sedateness is but a poor Security for me, when exalted by her Approbation. At present she is exempt from every Care ; no Demands upon her Tenderness, her Prudence, or her Condescension. But she would find full Exertion for them all, when once initiated into the amiable Characters of the Wife and Mother. Can you, Tom, have forgot the Description I gave you of her when at the Play ? How did her lovely Sensibility, and the Tears she so judiciously bestowed, bear Testimony of the Goodness of her Disposition ? The innocent Distress of the Children—the heart-rending Sorrow of the Parent—did they not all suitably affect her ? She felt it, and by hiding her Face to conceal the beautiful Effect of her Humanity, made me wholly hers. Mrs. Parnell and I have formed a Plot upon her excellent Niece ; her Sentiments and mine perfectly correspond. She will see but little Company ; she will associate with but few Parties, until I have obtained the Present of her Hand. The Bustle of Preparations, it is hoped, will be sufficiently amusing ; and I will afterwards venture to trust her with her own Conduct. As to you, Mr. Thomas, I shall expect your Presence upon the Occasion, with every Essential to do your Friend Honour. No Excuses you can offer will be accepted ; for your Mistress's Constancy cannot be suspected, and your Separation for a short Period will but tend to augment the Happiness of your future Interviews. Adieu.

Yours.

LETTER XL.

The Folly and Cruelty of unmeaning Compliments exemplified. To a fashionable young Gentleman.

IT were well, my young Friend, if some of our ingenious Authors, who have explained many difficult Terms in the English Language, would give us their Opinion of what is called, *Words of Course*. A Man will

will offer you the most solemn Protestations of Friendship, even with the most soothing Assurances, "that if you employ another to serve you in any certain Affair, it will really be doing his Friendship Injustice;" but he dreads nothing so much as your expecting a Performance of his Offers. He stares at you, if you should claim them; and is extremely astonished that you should take in a serious Light what were only meant as Words of Course. Perhaps also you are ridiculed into the Bargain, that you should know so little of Life, as to be ignorant that the Tongue has nothing to do with the Heart. How many Persons of Genius and Learning have been deceived by this wicked and infamous Conduct! This fashionable Mode of Proceeding is often the Cause also of very serious Consequences to the fair Sex. A Gentleman of Rank and Fortune addresses the young and amiable Louisa; on whose Account she refuses many advantageous Offers, and prefers his Morality and good Sense, with a Character unexceptionable, to every other Consideration. Every Part of his Conduct seemed to testify a sincere Affection. The Consent of Friends was obtained, Wedding Cloaths were talked of, and the Settlements were to be made on his Return from visiting a Relation at some Distance. He seemed to leave Louisa with the utmost Regret, and promised to write by every Post; but more than two Months elapsed without hearing a single Syllable of him. Her Partiality for him projected every Excuse for his Silence; and her own Sentiments were too generous to entertain the least Suspicion of his, nor would she suffer her Regard to be lessened by the most unfavourable Circumstances, till Conjecture should be plainly lost in Certainty. But how was she astonished to find on his Return that he made no Apology for his Neglect, nor even renewed the Subject of their former Conversations. He only sat down for a few Minutes, talked of the Weather, of an epidemical Disorder then reigning in the North of England; and then, with all the Formality of a Stranger, wished her a good Night, and she has neither seen or heard from him since. On such an Occasion, no wonder that Louisa's Sensibility made her suffer severely. A lingering Illness succeeded, which preyed upon her Spirits,

and

and her Friends were in the utmost Anxiety for her Life ; and when her affecting State was mentioned to this contemptible Wretch, with some Hints of their Engagement, he affected Surprise, and declared, upon his Honour, that nothing had ever passed on his Side but mere Words of Course. It were well if those Gentlemen who have no serious Designs on the Heart of a Woman, would avoid Words of Course, or that some Expedient could be found to guard against the evil Consequences ; this would prevent many a silent Tear and heart-rending Pang, and probably the Death of many a worthy young Person, from a broken Heart. It has been observed, that “ in Cases of Seduction, a Woman is “ made miserable from listening to her Passions, not her “ Reason ; but that here she is made wretched for ever, “ by a laudable Wish of being made virtuously happy.” The Sufferings of the innocent Louisa demand the pitying and compassionate Sigh of every feeling Heart, as I hope you will sincerely lament her unfortunate and unmerited Fate. Believe me

Yours faithfully.

The



The COMPLETE LETTER-WRITER.

P A R T VIII.

Exemplary, descriptive, and pathetic Letters,
wrote by Persons of Eminence and Abilities.

L E T T E R I.

On Learning, and a proper Acquaintance with the World.

S I R,

NOTHING has given such a Reproach to Letters, or made the Man of Learning appear so ridiculous, as that Ostentation and Pride which so frequently accompany it. But if the Matter be examined minutely, we shall most commonly perceive, that what is considered as Learning consists merely in his Memory, and the Power of the retentive Faculty. For a Man of the World, who has never read so much as one Classic Author in the original Language, may prove a very entertaining and agreeable Companion. The mere Parade of Letters, or a Readiness in quoting a Passage from Virgil or Horace, or dragging in Head and Shoulders an Epigram from Martial, is very little calculated to give Life to Conversation, or improve the Mirth of the Festive Board. A regular Argument, which is formed into precise syllogistic Rules, is by no Means engaging to any but the Logician; the very Idea of Argument, as it implies Controversy, destroys the Beauty and Pleasure of Conversation, the Charms of which consist in their Tendency to please and captivate. Want of Wit or Learning, or even of common Sense, beyond a certain necessary Degree, have a less baneful Influence on the social Inter-course

course of the World, than an Eagerness and Avidity of displaying them at the Expence of others ; which is in Reality a Gratification of our own Vanity, instead of an assiduous Endeavour to amuse the Company. A Pedant, whose Society has only been with Books in his Closet, will make a very awkward Figure when he first comes into the World ; so would a mere Rustic, who has never learned his Letters, in the Bodleian Library. In Conversation as well as in Address, neither the Scholar or Dancing Master make the most agreeable Appearance ; a mere Scholar is never an entertaining Companion, and you will scarcely see the professed Dancing Master come into a Room with Ease and Elegance. The first must divest himself of all his Pedantry, as the latter must of all the Stiffness of his Art, before he can be moulded, I will not say, into the fine Gentleman, but before his Conversation and Conduct can be supportable. Nor can any Thing, except an early Intercourse with the polite World, ingrafted upon good Sense, with a tolerable Education, give to any Man that Ease of Behaviour, which so peculiarly distinguishes the Courtier from the Clown ; this throws an Ease into every Motion, and makes even the most awkward Positions appear genteel. For external Appearance and Sentiment have a nearer Alliance than is generally imagined. He who has an entire Command of himself, and is conscious of the Propriety of his own Behaviour, derives a Confidence from it, which enables him to express himself without Confusion in the most critical and embarrassing Circumstances. The brow-beating Council will be disconcerted by it, and the impertinent Scholiast will be silenced ; and the least Opposition is most commonly sufficient to vanquish both.

When a certain Law Lord, remarkable for his domineering and overbearing Spirit, was examining an Evidence, and questioning him in the usual Style of "What are you, Sir," and the Evidence had replied that he was "a Gentleman," he was more than half startled with this unexpected Reply. But he recovered from this Confusion, by observing, that he supposed "his Estate was like Dr. Rock's, neither here nor there ;" when he was answered, that it "lay contiguous to his."

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This was more surprising, as he recollect'd nothing of the Features of the Witness; but he could not help enquiring where it lay, to which the other as quickly replied, that it was directly opposite to his Brass Line, which, after having produced him so much already, seemed still inexhaustible." This was sufficient to close the Examination, and to dismiss the Evidence. In like Manner a young Gentleman of the Navy was lately accosted at a Coffee-House in the City, by a pedantic Genius, with a Desire of defining the Word *Lexodromics*; when the young Tar telling him, with great Composure, that he had got into a very oblique Course of Sailing, and was quite out of his Latitude,—the Bookworm turned upon his Heel, and discharged his Reckoning at the Bar, where he has never since appeared. I am, Sir,

Yours, &c.

L. M.

LETTER II.

To the Author of Clarissa, on that celebrated Performance.

TO what Increase of more than human Power to mould the Soul have you inflamed this closing Scene of your angelic Prodigy! It is not to be borne! why does your Postscript waste a Word about poetic Justice? you move through every Enchantment not to be described of this amiably killing Progress more forcibly, than all the Tragedies of all the Nations in the World, from Athens down to Otway. I buried the dear Girl by three o'Clock this Morning, and I now can hardly see the Pen wherewith I tell you that you put out my Eyes; and you do it in so many Places, and by such successive, unaccountably astonishing, and irresistible Strokes of Nature, that I really think, in this one single Night, your heavenly sweet *Clarissa* and her Fate have cost me Tears enough to swim the Volumes which excited them. Good God! how did your hardly to be pardoned Modesty find Power so long, so cruel, so contumeliously long, to hold in all the conscious Mastery of such a Genius as

was

was never equalled! I despise myself and all dramatic Strainers at the *pathetic*. In almost every Period of this comprehensive Model of Mankind, and in all Paths of their Passion, I am taught that he who made us all has given to you alone a Key more powerful than St. Peter's; with impressive Sovereignty you beatify and torture, and with a single Turn of Hand unlock the Heart's Recesses, lead Surveyors into what has been supposed inscrutable, and lay Man open to his own Discovery, even where he shocks his Pride and mortifies his Vanity the most by such compelled Inspection. As soon as you allow these three last Volumes to break out upon the Public, I shall force Affection for my Country to let me blame very justly her present Race, if your Clarissa does not shine in every Eye, and dwell upon almost as many thousand Tongues as she has Faculties of charming. Dear, dear, transporting Friend! how little have I said or can say of what I glow with an inspiring Sense of! well may you suffer under Tremors, who fill all you reach with Tremblings! Be tenderer of such Nerves as Nature never gave before! What Immensity of Pangs must you have suffered under yourself in producing this divine Capacity of paining others into Pity, Grief, and Wonder. But this is all short, very short, of what is felt and meant by,

Dearest Sir,

Your charmed Admirer.

LETTER III.

AARON HILL, Esq. to Lord TYRCONNEL.

My Lord,

IT is impossible for Men who can think at all not to think nobly of your Spirit, when they examine it by that Bravery of Goodness you have shewn in Behalf of the Fatherless, Motherless, and, but for you, the lifeless Mr. Savage. Great Men usually begin their Notice of a Man of Worth at the Establishment of his Fame, or the Enlargement of his Prosperity; but your Lordship's more generous Regard for this unhappy Kinsman commenced

menced from his Misery. You first avowed his Blood, and asserted his good Qualities, when all the meaner World would have begun to desert even Distinction itself, and been afraid to defend good Fortune. But it is too little to say you have been generous, for you have been wise in what your Pity has done for him; since you are, in a nobler Sense, a Gainer upon all the Charge you have been at in comforting the Life you have saved him. By that Humanity the whole Amount of his future Virtues stands transferred to your Lordship. Whatever Good he does, or whatever Love he merits, must be yours; nothing will be left to him which the World will call his own, unless he should have Follies, which I hope he has not, because those they will confess to be his only. My present Purpose was no more than to beg your Lordship's Acceptance of a Trifle I am about to publish, but I would not lose the Opportunity of adding with what Justice I discern and admire the generous Firmness of your Heart, and uncommon Beauty of your Compassion. Permit me, therefore, to subscribe myself with a disinterested and sincere Respect,

My Lord,

Your most obedient

Humble Servant,

A. HILL.

LETTER IV.

On the Prejudices of the World, with Respect to Learning and learned Men. From a Gentleman in Town to his Father in the Country.

Honoured Sir,

I Now sit down to give you some Account of the Pupil who is entrusted to my Care. He is a young Man of Rank, and his Fortune is not inconsiderable. As to literary Attainments, though he cannot be placed in a conspicuous View, he possesses Talents which class him at least in a Degree not below Mediocrity. He has been for

for a short Time at Westminster School; but, which is too frequently the Case, has been too much taken off by the Diversions of the Town. That Love of Dissipation which the young Man had imbibed in the early Part of the Week, could not, without extreme Difficulty, be removed in the latter Part; and sometimes the strictest Discipline of the Masters could scarcely effect it. Before I came to him, he could indeed construe some of the easier Classics with tolerable Correctness, and his natural Abilities are by no Means deficient. He is now committed to the Care of an Uncle by the Death of his Mother; and his Uncle has in Consequence placed him under my Direction for about three Years. What this Confidence reposed in me may be productive of, must be left to Time, nor shall any Attention on my Part be omitted to impress him with a due Notion of Men and Things. However, I have a Father who is ever as willing as he is able to supply all my Deficiencies. At present I am endeavouring to improve his Taste, instilling into his Mind the best Criticisms on ancient Literature. Warburton's Observations on the sixth Book of Virgil, and Hurd's on the Art of Poetry, have had a surprizing Influence on his Mind.

His Remark that the Fame of the Commentators ought nearly to equal the Glory of their respective Authors, is as sagacious as it is just. From hence you will collect that he has Feeling; and certainly, notwithstanding any other Considerations, such a Principle or Affection ought to be cultivated and improved. He has just asked my Opinion of the Ramblers, at the same Time observing, that they are generally considered as pompous and pedantic. I have told him that the Ramblers are my Manuals, and that I can more properly apply the Words of Bishop Burnet to them than to any other modern Production, "that they are the Storehouse of all moral Virtues." His frequent Replies, that the World speaks quite otherwise, seem to indicate that he has strong Prejudices; though in Answer I tell him, that there are very few who are capable of judging rightly, and of those that are there are fewer who, through Envy or other malignant Passions, will do Justice to living Authors. Johnson would be more read, were his Matter as thinly spread as

as in other periodical Publications ; but his writing upon Party Disputes is a Business which his vanquished Opponents will never forgive. Warburton is equally obnoxious on the same Account. But it must be acknowledged, that the one, by long dealing in Words, has too much increased the Vocabulary ; and the other, by dealing too much with Mankind, has at length exceeded the decent Limits of all sober Satire. Yet Truth and Virtue were the Guides of both ; and whilst these remain in the World, such Authors will ever be considered as their brightest Ornaments. An old Gentleman who happened to be present at this Conversation, at once astonished and surprized, hastily exclaimed, “ Good God, Sir, I never heard a Syllable of all this, in Regard to either of them, “ and I have resided the greatest Part of my Life at Bath, “ to which City Prior Park is so near, except two Months “ that I lived with my Brother in Fleet-street.” You know that the Author of the Ramblers resided in Bolt-Court, Fleet-street. I am,

Honoured Sir,

Your ever dutiful and

Affectionate Son,

Air-street, June 11th, 1778.

M. L.

LETTER V.

Reflections upon undue Compliance with the Customs of the World. From a Clergyman in the Country to his Son in Town.

Dear Matthew,

MY Time has been much taken up of late in assisting the Executors to settle Mr. King's Affairs. From the very advantageous Sale of the Estate, we now find that, after paying off all the Debts, there will be something left very considerable for his Relations. This Circumstance would have greatly contributed to brighten up the Evening of his Days, could he have known it, poor Man, as satisfactorily as we now do.

So ignorant was I of the World, that I did not know it was one great Instance of Politeness to go up to Town only just to come down again. And so remarkable is the Rapidity of these whirling Expeditions, that a By-stander might fancy that the national Welfare depended on their Speed. We have now brought down with us, I assure you, as Part of our Retinue, a domestic Chaplain, a Mr. Supple; so silken, and so complying, that I could almost fancy him to say to his Patron—"Is it "your Pleasure, Sir, to believe in God?" On Enquiry, I find he is a distant Relation, and seems thoroughly broke in to the Office he is appointed to fill. Yesterday as I was returning from my usual Ride, I met him, like Justice *Overdo* in the Comedy, in Quest of Adventures and Enormities; our Chit-chat for some Time was agreeable enough, and seemed entertaining enough to my Companion, till unfortunately a Word or two escaped me about Servilities, which damped our Conversation. He observed as an Answer, "Now I know you think that I am forced to submit to some Servilities as you call them, but I must inform you that my Mode of Life is perfectly agreeable to me. Mr. Trimmer keeps a good Table, and has the choicest Liquors; to be sure the Country hereabouts is dull enough, but we have always Company in the House with whom to pass away the Time. Business indeed is what I have little Concern with; mine is only to dust the Books, clean the Bird-Cages, and perhaps now and then to make Rebusses or Charades for the Ladies. It is indeed absolutely necessary that we should have some Amusements amongst ourselves, otherwise it would be so dull as to be insupportable; for I have been sauntering about these two Hours, and cannot meet with any one Thing worthy of Observation." Here I interrupted him with observing, that "Nature, to a Mind capable of Reflection like his, every where presents a Fund of Entertainment; to a Man who knows how to take a Ride with Enjoyment, a Blade of Grafs or a declining Hill affords an infinite Scope for Contemplation. I could, in this sequestered Scene, truly repeat with Shakespeare, that I

Find Tongues in Trees, Books in the running Brooks,
Sermons in Stones, and Good in ev'ry Thing.

I

But

But if this retired and confined Prospect has no Chārms for you, I will return with you to the Top of the Hill, and present you with an Object that may call forth your Attention ; this is at once a Cure for Pride and a Lecture to Ambition, at once reminding Philosophy of its true End, and making none but the Ignorant tremble to behold it. It leads the Languid to Hope, allays the Thirst of Avarice, and places Wealth on its true Foundation. To you and me, Sir, it may be the Vehicle to Happiness ; a Car more triumphant than ever graced the Conquests of a Cæsar or an Alexander."—"Good God ! Sir, says my Companion, what can you mean ? I can see nothing but a HEARSE." In a Word, as I found the present delighted him not, I thought it by no Means unfair to raise his Prospect to Futurity. I am,

My dear Son,
Your truly affectionate Father,

C. L.

LETTER VI.

*To a Lady under great Distress and Anxiety of Mind,
from her Friend.*

TO preach Patience and a Contempt of Pain, with a supercilious Gravity, to Persons in your Situation, is only throwing Oil upon Fire as a Means to extinguish it. Every human Sensation must be dead in the Heart which could sit under your Load of Life, and not feel the Weight of it ; equally bad must that be which could look on without partaking in it. Such stoical Apathy is all an empty Parade. Mankind are blest with social and sensible Endowments for wise and good Purposes. Prosperity or vicious Depravity may impose a false Bias on the Mind and destroy its tender Feelings ; but a seasonable Lesson of Affliction will convince us, that this acquired Sternness is a Violence to our Nature, and degrades its original Dignity. I neither can nor would I wish to root up the natural Produce of a noble Soil, and pave it with Stoic Marble ; but I may justly endeavour

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to keep it clear of Briars and Weeds, which might take Root and grow troublesome in the foul Weather of Adversity. These Trials, I speak from Experience, are the same to the Mind as Thunder is to the Air ; they dispel the unwholesome Combinations of the Affections and Desires, and purify the intellectual Faculties. For we feel within us a natural Longing after Happiness, some hidden Impulse continually urging us to attain whatever we think best calculated to fill up the Want we are conscious of. The Vicinity of worldly Objects, and their Fitness to catch the Senses, very frequently leads Persons of superficial Judgment to depend upon them for that Purpose ; and though this Correspondence between our Passions and the Things around us was wisely designed to make our Passage through Life easy and convenient, yet, if indulged too liberally, it overpowers our Reason, and is productive of the most disgraceful Consequences. Like Wine, it invigorates our Spirits if used seasonably and moderately ; but the Excess of it intoxicates us. Affliction shews all these alluring Subjects through a proper Medium, and how unequal to the Capacity of an immortal Soul are the united Gratifications of every worldly Enjoyment. As these Phrases are the calm Result of a Mind schooled in Adversity, of a Mind which knows what it is to be troubled ; let us unite in adoring God's Goodness, who has given us such Marks of his Regard, and falling down before him cry out in the Fervour of Adoration, " Lord ! thou hast made many rich ; Thou hast made many great ; but happy are they to whom thy merciful Visitations have taught Wisdom." Adieu. Believe me ever

Your sincere and affectionate Friend.

LETTER VII.

A complimentary Epistle from Mr. Pope to Mr. Hughes.

Dear Sir,

EVER since I had the Pleasure to know you, I have believed you one of that uncommon Rank of Authors who are undesigning Men and sincere Friends ;

who when they commend another have not any View of being praised themselves. I should therefore be ashamed to offer at saying any of those civil Things in Return to your obliging Compliments in Regard to my Translation of Homer, only I have too great a Value for you not to be pleased with them; and yet I receive Praises from you with less Pleasure than I have often paid them to your Merit before, and shall have frequent Occasions, I doubt not, of doing again, from those useful Pieces you are still obliging us with. But if you were pleased with my Preface, you have paid me for that Pleasure, by your entertaining and judicious Essays on Spenser. The Present you make me is of the most agreeable Nature imaginable, for Spenser has ever been a favourite Poet to me; he is like a Mistress, whose Faults we see, but love her with them all. What has deferred my Thanks till now was a Ramble I have been taking about the Country; from which I returned Home and found your kind Letter but Yesterday. A Testimony of that Kind from a Man of your Turn, is to be valued at a better Rate than the ordinary Estimate of Letters will amount to. I shall rejoice in all Opportunities of cultivating a Friendship I so truly esteem, and hope very shortly to tell you in Town how much I am,

Sir,
Your obliged and
Faithful humble Servant,
A. POPE.

LETTER VIII.

From Mr. Hughes to Earl Cowper. On his resigning the Office of Lord Chancellor.

My Lord,

THOUGH I cannot help joining with the general Voice in lamenting, with much Concern, the Loss the Public has sustained in your Lordship's quitting that great Trust, which never has nor can be placed in more worthy

worthy Hands; yet I think it my Duty, at the same Time, to congratulate your Lordship on your being honourably eased from a very great Burden, the constant Fatigue of which must have made it uneasy, and might have proved prejudicial to your Health. Your Lordship has been seen to act in every Thing with that Prudence, mature Thought, and equal Temper, that the Resolution you had taken must have been founded on the best Reasons; and I must zealously and sincerely wish you all the Satisfaction in the Consequences of it which you can expect or desire. I never can express the half of what I feel, as often as I think of your very generous and distinguishing Favours to me, the Circumstances of which will ever leave on my Mind the most grateful Impressions. I esteem that short Space of my Life, in which I had the Honour to attend your Lordship, as one of the happiest Parts of it; and if I cannot avoid, on this Occasion, having a proportionable Concern, yet I think myself obliged in Duty to declare to you, who has shewn so very humane and tender a Regard to my Welfare, that I have no Regret for any Consequences to myself, so much as that of being deprived of the Satisfaction of being near your Lordship, and the frequent Opportunities of being honoured with a Conversation filled with Goodness and Condescension, and every Thing that could render it valuable and agreeable. Wishing you Increase of Health and Happiness, with the most dutiful Regards to your Lordship and my Lady Cowper,

I am, &c.

London, May, 1718.

JOHN HUGHES.

LETTER IX.

From a Nobleman to his Son on leaving the University.

My dear James,

YOU have now attained that Period when the *toga virilis* perfectly becomes you. The Education you have received will, I doubt not, enable you to appear as a Gentleman, and occasionally acquit yourself

174 The Complete LETTER-WRITER.

as a Scholar; but in the Character of the one let me particularly recommend to you to avoid any Thing which borders upon the Fop. I would not have you hold even Drefs in Contempt; but remember that all Extremes are ridiculous, and that the happy Medium is the Line which Men of Sense prefer. All barbarous Expressions and vulgar Phrases are also to be avoided in Conversation; but Affectation in the Choice of uncommon Words is likewise to be condemned. Latin or Greek Authors, if quoted at all, should be used sparingly; for a Parade of Learning is carefully to be guarded against; and there is not a more obnoxious Animal in Existence than a professed Pedant. Be rather cheerful than dogmatalical in Conversation, and mirthful than witty; neither be positive in maintaining an Argument, but condescending. Arguments, however they may have been considered as the Soul of Conversation, often hurry Men into warm Altercations, which are sometimes productive of very disagreeable Consequences. When you begin to find a Man's Temper to be roused in Debate, you may frequently prevent many evil Effects, by endeavouring to pass away the Subject; it is much better to rest satisfied with the Consciousness of your own Superiority, than by pushing too far, for the Sake of a short-liv'd Triumph, to hazard the Loss of your most valuable Friends. You will be feared rather than esteemed, by a contrary Conduct; you will be shunned rather than courted or caressed; every one will be apprehensive that their Turn may be the next, to feel the Lashes of Satire which positive and obstinate Disputants seldom fail to exercise. I shall say nothing at present as to the Capacity of Life in which you may chuse hereafter to appear, nor with Respect to many other Matters of very great Import in your external Conduct and Behaviour; but there is one Object in which you should be more than commonly circumspect. In your Choice of a Wife, I presume you will not be insensible to the Charms of Beauty; I would only caution you not to be so far captivated by it as to blind you to her Faults or Blemishes. Virtue should be a leading Consideration in your Choice; and good Sense and good Humour ought not to be overlooked in a Partner for Life. It would be needless

needless to caution you with respect to Age, as I should suppose you will scarcely chuse one older than yourself; and I would not wish her to be inferior in Family. A Fortune is certainly a Matter not to be objected against; but that should not be a principal Consideration, as your Estate is sufficient to support the Dignity of your Family.

I am, my dear James,
With the most tender Respect,
Your affectionate Father.

LETTER X.

From a Lady to her Brother. An Exhortation to Oeconomy and Frugality.

I Am sorry, my dear Brother, that I have nothing more than Wishes to offer you this Year. As yet I have not paid all my Debts, and you are sensible this is the very first Use I ought to make of my Pension. With a little Oeconomy surely you might live comfortably; but your Extravagance pierces me to the very Heart. Let me conjure you to break off from Pleasures, which ever prove more expensive than the Necessaries of Life. Be somewhat delicate in the Choice of Friends; for your Fortune and Salvation alike depend on the first Steps you take at setting out in the World. I write to you now as a Friend; apply yourself to your Duty, love God, be honest, arm yourself with Patience, and you can want for nothing. Lady Thomson has often given me this Counsel, and hitherto I have found the Benefit of it. Adieu, dear Brother; pardon this short, friendly Sermon. I shall be happy no farther than you are so; and you will be happy exactly in Proportion as you are virtuous.

Jan. 2, 1788.

Yours ever.

LETTER XI.

From a Gentleman to his Sister, in Answer to the preceding.

IT is just as impossible for me, my dear Sister, to cease loving you, as it is for you to leave off chiding me. Not to answer your Reproaches by availing myself of that pitiful Right of Seniority which I owe to Chance alone, I shall follow your Counsels, which are the Fruit of a System of Wisdom formed by your own Reflections. I will never more see the Earl of H——; for though I might see him without Danger, it cannot be done without giving you Uneasiness. I should be sorry to afflict you; and from this Consideration I promise to sacrifice to you the Passion * I am so fond of, because you are extremely averse from it. But it has not hitherto hurt me so much as you have been told. Intreat the Countess of D. and my Lord N. to let me languish no longer. The Vexation of seeing so many climbing to the first Employments, while I remain in the subaltern Posts, greatly increases my natural Melancholy; but I should be rid of low Spirits were my Mind freed from these Inquietudes. From one Thought to another, from Project to Project, I sink into Dreams, which consume me like a slow Poison. I ride out every Day, and find myself the better for it. Charlotte's little one is a very pretty Creature; his Mother recommends him to me, not as to a Relation, but as a Favourite. You plainly see she is mistaken; for I design sending him to you. The withered Beauty sends you a thousand Compliments, and says that you grow young again; but nothing keeps old Age better than Favour. Love me, my dear Sister; I shall think myself no longer beloved, when you leave off telling me my own. I daily pray to God that he would make me as much his as I am yours. I have seen Mr. Johnson, who is, I think, more than a Man. Nothing ever inspired me with so strong a Desire to be a good Christian, as to see Virtue thus practised by the Preacher of it.

I am,

My dear Harriot's

Affectionate Brother.

* Of Gaming.

LETTER XII.

*On the present Inequality of Rewards and Punishments.
To a worthy Gentleman in Distress.*

SIR,

I Could not omit taking this first Opportunity of testifying how deep a Sense I have of your Misfortunes, but shall offer nothing by Way of Consolation. You have too much Fortitude and Philosophy to stand in Need of it; but I am sorry to hear you have fresh Occasion of exerting that Nobleness of Soul, and that Perfidy and Injustice reign through every Climate. It may seem strange that Fortune, changeable as she is represented, is generally pretty constant in persecuting Merit, though some People may accuse Providence of Partiality in this Respect. But we see not the Ends which the wise Disposer of the Universe has in his wise Dispensations; for doubtless he is just and good in all his Decrees. And when we consider that true Greatness of Mind shines brightest in Adversity, and that nothing so much magnifies the Hero and the Christian, as rising superior to Afflictions and Distresses; we shall not be surprized to find the one inflicted in order to render the other conspicuous. Your Enemies confess that you have Talents to give a double Lustre to Prosperity, and your Friends hope that you will yet have an Opportunity of exerting them. It is my sincere Wish and ardent Prayer, as it is of all the honest and disinterested, that your Affairs may take this happy Turn; and this not only for your own Sake, but for that of Numbers whom your Example might reform. I have the Honour to be, with the highest Respect and Veneration,

Sir,

Your most obedient Servant,

TUEODOSIUS.

178 The Complete LETTER-WRITER.

LETTER XIII.

To a Gentleman who had the Misfortune to break his Leg by a Fall.

Dear Sir,

I Am extremely concerned to hear of the unfortunate Accident that has befallen you, as I can truly say, and hope to be believed, that next to your Relations I do not think you have any Friend who is more sincerely interested for your Welfare than myself. Misfortunes of this Nature will sometimes happen in Spite of the greatest Care in the World ; and when they do, it is the greatest Happiness to be well armed with Patience, and to be able (as all wise Men are) some Way or other to make our Advantage of them. Though it is Experience purchased at a very dear Rate, yet when a Man has paid the Price for it, it would be very hard if he should not gain something at least. Knowledge and Wisdom are properly enough said to be often born of Affliction, an Offspring painful in the Birth, but of the most valuable Possession. Indeed the Reasonings of Philosophers and Divines are very idle to one who is in the Extremity of Pain ; but when he is come to himself, and at Leisure for Reflection, such severe Admonitions as yours was do of themselves preach to him, and offer him Rules of Prudence ; they require him to use Caution against all such Ills as may be avoided, and to be prepared against such as cannot. They teach him to value himself aright ; and since he finds his Body subject to a thousand Accidents, to turn his Care rather to the noble Entertainment and Improvement of his Mind ; to pursue the Pleasures of a rational Being, which consist in Wisdom, Virtue, and good Sense, and to stand up with Bravery and Resolution to answer the great End of his Creation. All this may be done without a Man's turning Hermit, or forswearing his innocent Pleasures and Diversions ; without forsaking Company, or, when he is in it, appearing morose or precise. It will not make him awkward, unfashionable, or stiff ; on the contrary, it will accomplish him and make him polite, and, I will venture to say, not only make him a better Man, but a finer Gentleman too. I find, Sir, that I am betrayed into a long Letter before I

was aware, and perhaps I have been too officious and talkative; but you will pardon me, since I have only been representing to you what I suppose may have been your own Thoughts on this Occasion. I am very glad to understand that you are in a good Way of Recovery: I hoped to have been with you before this Time, but I have Chains that hold me here still, and will not be broken. As soon as I can possibly get free, I will hasten down to you with Eagerness and Affection to pay the Acknowledgments of, Sir,

Yours, &c.

LETTER XIV.

From a Lady to her Friend, describing the Conduct of a Gentleman lately reformed from an inveterate Habit of Swearing.

Dear Madam,

WHEN I concluded my last, I had several Things to add, which I think worthy of Notice, and therefore shall now continue the Subject. My Cousin's Fellow-traveller having expressed an extraordinary Esteem for Elliot, it did not seem to fall very short of the most cordial Friendship. His Confidence and Assurance, hitherto the Source of great Impertinence, was now melted down by a Kind of Deference and Shame, arising from a Sense of Folly and a Consciousness of superior Worth; his present modest manly Diffidence served to check the first Impulses to an idle Gaiety, and cured him of that forward talkative Temper which had before rendered his Conversation very disgusting. His Ingenuity in confessing his Crime prepossessed us in his Favour; we soon found him a sensible Companion in Spite of the Thoughtfulness which now threw a Cloud over his natural Vivacity. My Aunt complimented him on his open Frankness of Heart, which had made him dare to confess his having been in an Error; her Son acknowledged that she had also spoke his Sentiments, and he was thereupon admitted to a more intimate Acquaintance. Elliot, since his Fellow-traveller had changed his

Sentiments, was in a most forlorn and disconsolate Condition ; he was visibly uneasy that himself alone was left out of the Conversation, only because he could not share in it, and being jealous of the superior Respect which was now paid to his Friend, he was confounded and disappointed in all his high-raised Hopes of future Pleasure, without having it in his Power to complain. Our Subjects of Discourse for the rest of the Day were extremely grave, but our Minds enjoyed that sober and solemn Kind of Entertainment ; this is attended with more Delight than the frolic Laugh of Mirth, and has the Power of accompanying, with a serene Satisfaction, the most distant Reflections. These calmly-pleasing and self-approving Sensations were so exquisitely sweet, and every one seemed so intent upon the Subjects of Conversation, that they did not depart till late in the Evening, and even then it was with a visible Reluctance. I have now to inform you, Madam, that Lætitia has breathed her last ; notwithstanding her former Terror and Agitation of Mind, her last Minutes were perfectly composed. As Nature was quite spent, she left the World without those Struggles and convulsive Agonies which render that awful Moment so terrible with Persons of stronger Spirits. We have seen the Child several Times, and both my Mother and Sister seem perfectly fond of it. It is an engaging little Creature, and I must love it ; but my Duty in this Case is extremely easy, as it is attended with all the Pleasure of following my own Inclinations, and the Satisfaction it gives to all our Friends. I am, my dear Madam, your ever affectionate,

CHARLOTTE EVERE

LETTER XV.

The Blessings of Resignation. From a Lady to her Friend.

MY Wishes are at Length granted.

No : Since the Disgrace
Of the proud Vashti, in whose Place I stand—

I never felt a Pleasure equal to that I now enjoy. I congratulate you on your Victory. Your Joy is mine, and I am thoroughly sensible of it ; but the Competition

petition alarmed me. That every Thing has thus changed in an instant, let us refer to him who distributes Happiness and Misery as he thinks fit. This Thought is the Centre of all my Reflections; and at my Age, you will find the Comfort of ascribing to Providence the Glory of the Success we meet with. Adieu.

Yours.

LETTER XVI.

From a Gentleman in embarrassed Circumstances to a neighbouring Earl.

My Lord,

A N unforeseen inevitable Misfortune having happened to me, for which a too careless Oeconomy had left me totally unprovided, I find it necessary to sell my Estate and to quit the Country. I could find a ready Purchaser in Mr. Freewill, who, with the merciless Rapacity of an Exchange-Broker, watches like a Harpy the Decline of every Gentleman's Fortune in this Neighbourhood, in order to seize on his Possessions. But the tender Affection I bear to my Tenants makes me solicitous to consult their Good as much as possible in the Sale, as my hard Fate will not allow me longer to contribute to it myself. I will not here say more than that I cannot more effectually provide for their Happiness than by selling to your Lordship. I am, my Lord,

Your Lordship's most obedient
And devoted Servant,

E. B.

LETTER XVII.

From the Earl, in Answer; a Pattern for the Great.

SIR,

I Am extremely concerned any Accident should have happened which makes it possible I should lose from my Neighbourhood a Gentleman of Family, of so very worthy a Character, and one I so greatly esteem. But I hope

hope Means may be found to prevent what would be so extremely regretted by all who have the Pleasure of knowing you. I have always regarded the independent Country Gentlemen as the Strength and Glory of this Kingdom, and the best Supports of our excellent Constitution; and no Increase of Power or Property to myself shall ever tempt me to lessen the Number of them, where it can possibly be avoided. If you have Resolution to enter on so exact a System of Occonomy as will enable you to repay any Sum you may want in seven Years, whatever that Sum is, I shall be most happy in advancing it, and will take it back in the Manner most easy to you. I think I could trace out a Plan by which you might retrench considerably in a Manner scarce perceptible. I will call upon you To-morrow Morning when I am riding out, when we will talk further on this Subject; and be assured, that none of the greedy Leviathans of our Days can feel half the Pleasure in completing a Purchase, that I shall do in declining this, if I can be so happy as to keep you amongst us. Your accepting this without Hesitation will be a Proof of your Esteem which I can never forget; as it will shew you think too highly of me to fear my making an ill Use hereafter of having had the Happiness of doing for you what, if we were to change our present Situations, I know you would rejoice in doing for me. I have a Fund, which I call the Bank of Friendship, on which it is my Rule to take no Interest, which you may command to its utmost Extent.

I am, dear Sir,

Your affectionate Friend,

WESTBROOK.

LETTER XVIII.

On the Folly of Duelling. To a Gentleman who had declined accepting a Challenge.

My dear Sir,

SIR George has been so kind as to send me the Bath Paper, which contains every Particular of the Dispute with Mr. Conolly. Your Conduct, in every Circumstance

cumstance of it, receives my full Applause. Mr. Bramston's Family speak in the highest Terms of Acknowledgment to you. The Physician who attends poor Mrs. Thomas has repeated to me their Relation of the Affair, with their Sentiments upon it. There is nothing so pleasant, so honourable, or so useful to Persons even of the highest Rank, as to have the good Report and Friendship of worthy and respectable People. It astonishes me extremely, that the Custom of Duelling does not yield to the common Sense of Mankind. That it does not, is among the many Proofs of the Influence of Fashion. Courage is out of the Question; and every Man who falls in a Duel, is a Victim sacrificed at the Altar of that all-powerful Demon. The Duellist risks the killing of those to whom he is bound by the Ties of Nature, which is an Inhumanity; and he puts himself in imminent Danger of being killed, which is a Kind of Despair. He takes upon him to do Justice for himself, which is despising the Laws, and consequently an Act of Injustice; and by professing to renounce Forbearance, Patience, and Charity, he renounces Christianity. He commits these Crimes for the most frivolous Reasons, which is a real Folly; and he plainly shews a greater Regard to his own Interest than that of the Public, which is against every Principle of true Courage. These, and all the Consequences in a future State to himself and his Antagonist, he disregards, because he is unable to resist the Influence of Fashion. I look with Impatience to the Time when you will once more honour my Roof with your Presence. The Eyes of poor Mrs. Thomas brighten for a Moment, as she expresses her Hopes to see you again before they are closed for ever. I am

Your most affectionate,
WILLIAM THOMAS.

LETTER XIX.

To a Lady from a Gentleman, describing his Distress on the Death of a Friend.

YOUR last most kind and most charming Letter came very seasonably for my Consolation and Relief in the

the most affecting Distress I ever knew. The Death of my dear Hartopp has almost broken my Heart, and there was only one possible Misfortune in the World which could have made me more miserable. Even now I feel it afresh, and my Eyes at this Moment so swim with Tears, that I scarcely can see my Pen. But here the Extravagance of Grief is excusable; the dear departed Friend I bewail, was the kindest, the noblest Soul, and his Affection and Regard were almost unparalleled. His very Servants saw it, and paid their Court to me; but he is dead, and I live to mourn for him at my Heart, which swells and trembles this Moment as if it would break. I never, except once for the Death of an ever-honoured Parent, and once on taking Leave of a beloved Woman, felt such a Sensation of Anguish. Affection and Gratitude create those Emotions of Misery which will make me a Mourner for my departed Friend, till some Friend shall become a Mourner for me, if I ever shall find a Friend of my own Sex who will love me so tenderly or so well. But I have a Consolation in reflecting on the calm and tranquil State of his Mind at the Time of his leaving the World. He took his Farewell of me with every Blessing; and grasping my Hand with a Look of unutterable Affection, his last Words were, “ You will be happy in your Love.” This is the only stable Comfort remaining, the Love and Faith of my dearest Almira; and I will still hope that she will partake of my Solitude, and divide my Cares; that she will teach me to forget my Sorrows in her affectionate Bosom, and to look upon her as my only Comfort and Happiness. Adieu.

LETTER XX.

On the Exercise of our Reason and Freedom of Enquiry in Matters of Religion.

Dear Madam,

YOUR rallying so agreeably an Assertion in one of my former Letters, that rural Scenes are the most unfruitful of Adventures, has so much the Air of a Compliment

pliment, that, however undeserved, I think I ought to thank you for it. You may consider Harriot's Story in what Light you please; but knowing the Interest you are pleased to take in her good or bad Fortune, I am induced to send you the Particulars. Her Father, when angry and when pleased, differs so much from himself, that he cannot be considered as the same Man. You would have thought my last Letter a vile Slander on his Character, had you been an Hour or two in his Company after his Reconciliation. The rest of the Day was spent very agreeably, nor was any Thing omitted to confirm the amiable Harriot's Happiness. The Subject of religious Liberty was judiciously introduced. Persecution, it was observed, could only arise from a Principle which must arraign the infinite Sagacity of the sovereign Creator of all Things; who had wisely given a Variety of Tastes and Degrees of Capacity and Understanding to the Mind of Man, to make Room for Heaven-born Charity. Hence the Love of Truth results, and the Test of every kind and benevolent Affection. Amidst the greatest Variety of Tempers, Educations, and Capacities, Charity, like the Sun's invigorating Powers, presents the most lovely Scene, and gives Life and Spirit and Beauty to all around; mutual Complacency and Benevolence breathe an eternal Spring, and at once blossom, bear Fruit, and yield a friendly Shade. Thus should we look on our native Country, continues another, the Seat of Liberty, and her Sister's earthly Throne. In this View we should regard the whole World. The honest Turk should be our Friend; the sober faithful Chinese, that lays the divine Confucius to his Heart, and the Indian of either World, blest with simple Innocence and native Truth, shall be my Brothers. Wherever I find a Man who loves his God and Mankind, I will press him to my Breast. Harriot's Silence induced him to proceed. Is not this, says he to her, a very desirable Disposition? and if so, what must any one think of Popery, with her smooth Uniformity of barren Sands, but when blown with the baleful Wind of Persecution, arises into curling Torrents, and spreads Ruin and Destruction over the wide Creation. Nor will this Storm be laid, till Showers of Blood, pouring from honest Hearts, beat down the Dust,

Dust, and for a Time hush the wild Uproar to a Calm. Forgive me, Madam, seeing her bite her Lips, if I do but just touch on a Subject, which, if dressed in plainer Language, would wound your tender Heart. Persecution is a Tempest raised by the Breaths of Hell, whatever outward Profession may pretend. But the Cause of Liberty is connected with a free Enquiry, and it is necessary for us to make Use of our Reason, if we wish to discover Truth from Error. A very slight Glance at the principal Systems of Religion throughout the World is sufficient to shew the Absurdity of their various Pretences to Infallibility; it is equally ridiculous and foolish to suffer the Conscience to be enlaved by the Dervise or by the Christian Priest, and as impossible to discover Truth from Error, without Enquiry, in the Zealot of Rome and London, as in that of Turkey or Siam. But the Subjects were managed with much Delicacy, and were at least so satisfactory to Harriot, that she boldly ventured to declare she would study the Truth of her Religion; and the Consequence has been, that she is already a Protestant, and confirmed in the Principles of that Profession. I am, dear Madam,

Your very affectionate

CLARA.

LETTER XXI.

*To a Gentleman, from his Sister, who fancied he had Cause
of Displeasure against her Husband.*

RENOUNCE the Sight of me! And is it possible for this Language to come from a Brother! I shall never survive your putting such a Resolve in Execution. You must not, you will not do it. Let your Affection for me, and in me those dear Parents we have lost, excite in you all those tender Sentiments you feel for both. Is it impossible for you to forgive my Husband his Zeal to serve you? This may be too impetuous and mistaken, but his Good-will is his only Crime. He is sensible, my dear Brother, that he hath no Right, no Authority

thority over you, but those of Affection. He desires no other, nor interests himself in your Affairs in any other Light than as a Friend and Brother. I long most ardently to see you, and if I did not fear to be importunate, would fly to you with my Husband; our Regret, our Tears, our Affection should efface the Remembrance of what is past, and confirm anew the Sincerity of our Love and Friendship. Let me intreat of you then, my dear Brother, not to deprive us of your Company.

Yours.

LETTER XXII.

The Gentleman's Reply to the preceding.

IT is impossible, my dear Sister, to withstand your affectionate Solicitation, but it is equally impossible for me to consent to see your Husband. He will probably be as willing also to avoid me. If you would be alone this Evening? promise me this, and I will be with you by seven o'Clock. I shall not be able to stay above a Minute; but it will be sufficient that I shall have seen you, and renewed the Assurances of eternal Friendship.

Yours ever.

LETTER XXIII.

From a Lady abroad to her Friend in England.

Dear Madam,

THAT your Mind is formed with all the Requisites for Friendship I am quite convinced, but am as fully persuaded it was not calculated for Love, or else you would not wonder at my Resolution of following Mr. M. to the Camp, if he is obliged to go. I foresee all the Inconvenience that your Friendship has made you paint in the strongest Light; nay, as I have not that Fortitude you possess, every dangerous or dreadful Object is doubled to my weak Mind and strong Apprehensions. I

I feel myself in that Condition which you only suppose may be the Case, as I am married. But were I sure all the frightful Scenes would happen that your Friendship and my Fears have formed, if he is obliged to go, it will be easy to me to share them with him. His Tenderness will not suffer him to ask it, but the Knowledge that my Company will be agreeable to him would lead me through any Thing; and as my Resolution is fixed to gratify that Desire his Fondness only expresses; I will leave this Subject for Time to shew the Event. The late Birth-Day here has afforded much Amusement; it was celebrated in the new Hall, which is just finished, and is considerably larger than St. George's at Windsor. It was kept sufficiently warm with Stoves, and decorated with Orange-Trees and Myrtles in full Bloom, ranged in Rows that formed a Walk on each Side of the Hall, and only left Room for the Dancers in the Middle. The Walks gave the Company Opportunity to sit down sometimes, as they were hid from the Presence of the Sovereign. The Beauty, Fragrance, and Warmth of this new-formed Grove, when you saw nothing but Ice and Snow through the Windows, looked like Enchantment, and inspired my Mind with pleasing Reveries. In Rooms adjoining were Coffee, Tea, and other Refreshments for the Company, and when we returned into the Hall, the Music and Dancing in one Part, and the Walks and Trees filled with Beaux and Belles in all their Birth-Day Finery, instead of the Shepherds and Nymphs of Arcadia, made me fancy myself in Fairy-land, and Shakespeare's *Midsummer Night's Dream* was in my Head all the Evening. I have now got a little Cot in the Country, which is a vast Delight to me; for here we are free from that Constraint which always attends a Court, and the Company, or more properly the People, which we cannot avoid seeing in Town. We have one English Family, with whom Mr. M. has contracted a great Friendship; and their Conversation and Understanding would make their Acquaintance courted in England. They often go down with us. The House is built of Wood, and has only a little Hall, with two Parlours on one Side of it, and a Kitchen and Offices on the other, with four Bed-Chambers, and Closets above. It stands

on a rising Ground, which leads with a natural green Slope to a fine Meadow, which is terminated by the Sea; behind it is a Wood, of many Miles, of Birch and Fir. The Uncertainty of the Country would render all Art or Cultivation ridiculous, and as it is rural without, it is rustic within; the Tables furnished with Delft, and the Beds with white Callico, Ruth Chairs, and the rest in Proportion. One Parlour is furnished with Books and Maps; which, with my Frame for Embroidery, are the only Things that make it differ from a Farm. Here we spend three Days in a Week very agreeably. Mr. M. reads to me, and I work; while our Cows, Sheep, and Poultry feed around us, and are so tame to come close to our Windows. If we had such a Retreat near you, that I might also have a Friend of my own Sex, how should I despise all Grandeur! But till that can be, I have in him the Confidence of Friendship and the Tenderness of Love, which will make me happy in all Vicissitudes of Fortune. Adieu.

Yours.

LETTER XXIV.

Mr. Hughes to Mr. Addison.

Dear Sir,

I AM extremely obliged to you for your kind Letter. The warm Expressions of Friendship in it give me a much more sensible Pleasure than any I could receive from the Approbation of my Verses. I confess when I wrote them I had no Thoughts of your printing them; and though nothing would flatter me so much in the making them publick as the Satisfaction of seeing my Name with your's, yet I am one of those Friends who think your present Resolution (of suppressing my Verses) perfectly right, and entirely acquiesce in your Reasons. I cannot but applaud at the same Time your chaste Enjoyment of Fame, which I think equally above Envy, and incapable of receiving any Addition.

I am, with all possible Esteem, Sir,

Your most affectionate and
Most obedient humble Servant,

JOHN HUGHES.

LETTER XXV.

To Mr. Duncombe from Bishop Herring, a descriptive and entertaining Epistle.

Dear Sir,

I thank you most affectionately for your obliging Enquiry after me, and I bless God, have the Satisfaction to inform you that I am very well, after the most agreeable Journey I ever had in my Life. We travelled slowly and commodiously, and found Wales a Country altogether as entertaining as it was new. The Face of it is grand, and bespeaks the Magnificence of Nature; and so enlarged my Mind, in the same Manner as the Stupendousness of the Ocean does, that it was some Time before I could be reconciled again to the level Country. Their Beauties were all in the little Taste; and I am afraid, if I had seen Stowe, in my Way Home, I should have thrown out some very unmanly Reflections upon it. I should have smiled at the little Niceties of Art, and beheld with Contempt an artificial Ruin, after I had been agreeably terrified with something like the Rubbish of a Creation. Not but that Wales has its little Beauties too, in delightful Streams, and fine Vallies; but the Things which entertained me were the vast Ocean and Ranges of Rocks, whose Foundations are hid, and whose Tops reach the Clouds. I know something of your Cast of Mind, I believe, and therefore I will take the Liberty to give you an Account of an Airing one fine Evening, which I shall never forget. I went out in the Cool of the Day, and rode near four Miles upon the smooth Shore, with an extended View of the Ocean, whose Waves broke at our Feet in gentle Murmurs. From thence we turned into a little Village, with a neat Church and Houses, which stood just at the Entrance of a deep Valley; the Rocks rose high and near at each Hand of us, but were on one Side covered with a fine Turf full of Sheep and Goats, and grazing Herds, and on the other with Patches of yellow Corn and Spots of Wood, and here and there a great Piece of a bare Rock projecting. At our Feet ran a Stream clear as Crystal,

Crystal, but large and foaming, over vast Stones rudely thrown together, of unequal Magnitudes, and over it a wooden Bridge, which could scarce be said to be made by the Hands of Art. As it was Evening, the Hinds, in many Parts of the Scene, appeared returning Home with Pails on their Heads. I proceeded in this agreeable Place till our Prospect was closed, though much illuminated by a prodigious Cataract from a Mountain that did, as it were, shut the Valley. All these Images, together, put me much in Mind of Poussin's Drawings, and made me fancy myself in Savoy at least, if not nearer Rome. Indeed, both the Journey and the Country, and the Residence were most pleasing to me.

I am, dear Sir,

Your obliged and assured Friend,

Rochester, Nov. 3, 1738.

Tho. BANGOR.

LETTER XXVI.

To a young Lady just recovered from a severe Sickness.

ITREMBLE, my dear Girl, but to think of the Danger you have escaped. What then should I have felt had I been apprised of your labouring under it? As Providence has graciously spared you, my Aunt's Conduct cannot justly be condemned; but what Amends could she have made me for depriving me of my Share of necessary Attendance, and taking my last Farewell of you, had you been lost to us for ever! Yet I can perceive, my Love, that your Heart has by no Means received either a due Impression of the Mercies you have experienced, or of the Instability of human Felicity. Your giddy Imagination presents you with no other Idea of what is past than a common Incident, as likely to have befallen any other Person as yourself. But such Judgments are highly erroneous. If we are to consider ourselves as under the immediate Protection and Direction of an all-wise Power, can we conceive that whatever seeming Accidents reach us are only meant

meant to affect our corporeal Part ; " a Sparrow cannot fall to the Ground without the Permission of its Creator," and surely we shall not deem ourselves of less Value than they ? I know no Person to whom such a Visitation could be more essential or more salutary ; for the Height of Pleasure you had attained, the blooming Graces of your Person, and the idle Admiration by which you was surrounded, contributed to perjuade you that you was more than mortal. But so palpable a Conviction of the Insufficiency of Youth, Prosperity, and Adulation, to preserve you from the Hand of Sickness, or the Jaws of Death, should have inspired you with new Sentiments. The Importance of the Subject will shelter it, I trust, from your Disgust or Disregard ; for this Affliction was certainly sent in Mercy to prevent your committing some gross Error, which might have destroyed your Peace or your Reputation. You should therefore consider it as the most fortunate of Events ; and this should lead you to be accustomed to weigh and deliberate your future Steps. Should you relapse into your former giddy Course, you will become the Object of general Contempt ; but my Letter, if you vouchsafe it a Reading, may produce the same drowsy Effects as a certain Person's Conversation ; however, you may take my Word for it, they are equally calculated to promote your real Happiness ; for the Time to come, therefore, listen with a complacent Ear to his honest rational Proposals, and bestow a favourable Eye upon my Epistles. If you would but divest yourself of vain and absurd Prejudices, we could very shortly convince you that you have hitherto been grasping a mere Shadow, and have most blameably neglected the Substance. Custom indeed can reconcile us to Evil, and its Power is not less prevalent with respect to what is good. Suffer not so inestimable a Gem as your excellent Understanding to be lost, or at least abused, in your Possession. If you will only call in its Assistance, it will enable you to live a Life of Reason ; but useless as you render it at present, be assured it will revive to add a Poignance to the Reproaches of Conscience, and prove your greatest Torment. I will not weary you with enlarging at present, and shall only renew this Subject at your own Request (a Pleasure

I fear I shall not sooner receive) or upon some new Provocation; but I must add, that your Happiness is my Happiness, and that no Mortification or Disappointment can affect you which I shall not partake of. You have ever esteemed me, and why then can you wound me in the tenderest Part? I could forgive, I could support your Neglect of me, but I shall never be equal to your Misfortunes. Adieu.

Yours ever.

LETTER XXVII.

On the Nature and Tendency of metaphysical Writings, and of their Use and Abuse. To a Metaphysical Writer.

AT Sight of the metaphysical Ideas with which you have filled the Work you have communicated to me, my Thoughts upon that Subject were roused; and, according to my slender Abilities, I formed an Idea of Man, such as he is, and such as he ought to be. I see him at one and the same Time, so little and so great, so weak, and so strong, that I have been at once both vain and excessively humbled. You will judge for yourself if I have rightly observed. It is not of so much Importance on such a Subject to say Things that are new, as to say them well. Readers of Metaphysics are often disgusted, and very justly, by the Affectedness of the Writers to be very abstract. The more simple and natural Things are, the more Beauty there is in them. Metaphysics, to arrive at Truth, should only give us back the Impression of our own Feelings, when the Dispute is about the Faculties of the Soul, otherwise we wander in the Land of Chimæras. But most Metaphysicians, ancient and modern, thought that they must erect Systems; which has been the great Source of the Ridicule to which Metaphysicians have been exposed, as the Science in itself has the greatest Truth and Simplicity. For the Eye of the Mind is not like the Eye of the Body. I may see a Thing in Idea which my Neighbour does not see; Ideas arise from a thousand different Causes, and from hence Philosophers vary in Opinion.

K

This

This persuaded Malbranche, that we see every Thing in God; and Locke, that our Ideas originate in the Senses. As you are not a System-monger, I approve your Sentiments the more; you are not for tying People down to your Opinions, though all your Ideas seem to me to be distinct, your Principles clear, and your Consequences just. Hence your Work is the Fruit of a sound Judgment and a solid Understanding. You will probably find Opponents after you have published your Opinions; a Proof that you have not convinced them, and a sufficient Reason for your not attempting to reply. Some Writers will cry out, and you must give them Leave to bark; such would new mould all who are not of their Opinion. These Observations immediately occurred on the general Subject of the Work; and if the Remarks herewith transmitted should in any Respect meet your Approbation, or should contain any little Touches worthy of your Work, you can easily introduce them, by adapting them to your own Style, and such an Appropriation will give them an essential Merit. Perhaps indeed it will be the first Time that a Pen of Gold, and a leaden one, have been employed in the Execution of the same Work; but you would have it so, and I could not refuse, when it gave me an Opportunity of proving the Esteem and Attachment with which I am

Yours, &c.

LETTER XXVIII.

On the Nature of Gratitude. To Sir John North, Knt.

SIR,

THE first Office of Gratitude is, to receive a good Turn civilly; then to retain it in Memory and acknowledge it; and thirdly, to endeavour a Requital. It is in vain for me to attempt this last Office, especially towards you, who have laden me with such a Variety of Courtesies and weighty Favours, that my poor Stock comes far short of any Retaliation. But for the other two,

two, as I am not conscious to have been wanting in the first Act, so I shall never fail in the second, because both these are within the Compass of my Power; for if you could pry into the Contents of my Memory, you would discover there a huge Magazine of the Favours you have been pleased to do me safely stored up, to preserve them from moulder away in Oblivion. Courtesies should not be a perishable Commodity; though if I should attempt any other Requital, I should extenuate your Favours, and derogate from the Worth of them. But if to this of the Memory I can contribute any other Act of Body or Mind to enlarge my Acknowledgments towards you, be assured that I shall be ever ready to court any Occasion whereby the World may know how much I am

Your grateful humble Servant.

LETTER XXIX.

On the Happiness of a contented Disposition. To a young Lady.

My dear Friend,

THE Miseries of Mankind have been the constant Subject of Complaint, from the Beginning of the World to this very Moment. But People do not consider that Content, if not Happiness, is within the Reach of almost every Person living. It solicits us in a thousand Shapes; and is always at our Doors if we would receive it, but we reject its Offers. Indolence and Ignorance are its constant Enemies. The Person who would be truly contented must, besides an habitual Virtue, attain to such a Strength of Mind as to confine his Happiness within himself, and keep it from being dependent on others. Such a Mind feels a secret Pleasure in the Consciousness of its own Perfection, whilst it is cheered by a thousand innocent Gratifications. And "how happy is that Being, who by Prayer and Contemplation can open a Communication betwixt God and his own Soul! who knows that his heavenly Helper is at Hand,

and is more ready to help us than any Thing can be to annoy us." What can affect a human Mind with a more lively Sense of Happiness than the pleasing Reflection that we are acting under the Eye, and with the Approbation of infinite Wisdom, Power, and Goodness; who will crown our virtuous Endeavours here with Happiness hereafter, large as our Desires, and lasting as our immortal Souls? It seems indeed an useless Labour to multiply Volumes for the Purpose of ascertaining wherein Contentment consists, as it is perhaps in the Power of almost every Person to obtain it. That few are happy does not appear to be from the Want of Means but from Want of Resolution. We are apt to despise what is within our Reach, and ardently to desire that which we cannot possibly acquire. Thus we pursue what we can never possess; and reject what we have in our Power, which would at least make us easy, and probably happy. Terrestrial Felicity consists in Religion, Health, Regularity, and Ease; and that you, my dear Friend, may be thus happy, is the sincere Wish of

Yours.

LETTER XXX.

From a Lady to her Brother, a Congratulation on his Recovery from a grievous Indisposition.

THE Re-establishment of your Health, my dear Brother, and the Return of your natural Chearfulness, have given me an inexpressible Pleasure. The Portrait you have drawn of the Misses Barlow is so perfectly amiable, that I cannot forbear congratulating you on the Happiness you possess in so delightful a Society. In one Sense indeed I may be said to partake of it. The Adventure you related to me in your last Letter drew Tears from my Eyes; it does Honour to Humanity. I had a Visit yesterday from Mr. Raymond, who knew nothing of your Departure. He was very earnest in his Enquiries after you, and I told him the Substance of what you have communicated to me. Do not neglect

this

Correspondence. I need not add our Desire of Remembrance to Mrs. Caygill; continue, dear Brother, your Affection to

Your loving Sister.

LETTER XXXI.

From a Lady to her Friend, giving an Account of her Brother's ill Health.

MY Brother yesterday, my dear Friend, returned to London. I know not the Reason of so quick a Departure, but he is far from being more chearful than when he left me; indeed he is so melancholy and weak, that I am under great Uneasiness. It is absolutely necessary to do our utmost to prevent any ill Consequences from his present desponding Situation, and therefore the Physician has advised him to go and drink the Waters either of Matlock or Buxton; but I shall give the Preference to the latter, because my Brother will then be in your Neighbourhood, and my Anxiety on his Account will be greatly relieved. I beg, my dear Friend, that you will take the Trouble of providing him with a convenient Apartment near the Waters, which he is recommended to drink at the Spring Head. You will excuse him from residing with you, which is rather at too great a Distance; but I shall envy his Situation, because he will have so many Opportunities of enjoying your Company. Adieu.

LETTER XXXII.

From one Sister to another, with Reflections on her imprudent Conduct.

YOU are greatly mistaken, my dear Sister, in your Opinion of my Heart. I never denied Pity to the unhappy, and such I certainly consider you. Providence has been peculiarly gracious to you from the first Moment of your Existence, and the best of Mothers

was continued to you as long as her Care was really essential; an uninterrupted Share of Health, Contentment, and Reputation, has been your Portion, and you need not have one Wish ungratified, if you could but moderate your Desires, and preserve them within the Bounds of Reason and Propriety. Does not your Sensibility feel the honest Reproaches of your Heart, for throwing away madly those Blessings which would make Thousands happy? How can you view yourself in the odious though just Light of an ungrateful, giddy Being, hurried on by a fatal Levity into Improprieties which your very Nature abhors? And can you suffer a false and contemptible Pride to restrain you from making an honourable Retreat? That you are subject to Follies and Vanities, is your Misfortune; but to suffer tamely your whole Life, Happiness, and Fame, to become a Prey to them, is your Fault. I should address you in very different Terms, if you were either less capable of conquering your perverse Inclinations, or had never been taught to distinguish between right and wrong; if you had not voluntarily rejected the former, and adopted the latter for your Rule of Conduct. I should then, instead of awakening Reflections, have offered my most friendly Advice; but we should deem it absurd in an unlearned Peasant, should he presume to preach before a learned Congregation. Let me beg you then to return to Propriety and Peace, which indeed cannot be separated. Too frequent Repetitions of ill Treatment may cure the most lively Passion; manifest then the Greatness of your Soul, by acknowledging, or otherwise shewing that you are duly sensible of your late Folly. I will give you no Account of myself or Affairs, till you have, by making proper Atonement for past Transgressions, entitled yourself to some Pretensions to Rationality.

I am,

My dear Sister's most affectionate.

L E T.

LETTER XXXIII.

The Vanity of the great World, with the Advantages of Riches, duly exercised, as exemplified in the Character of a Nobleman. To a young Gentleman.

I Am never so happy, my young Friend, as when I know that you are so. I perfectly agree with you as to the Charms of Lord M's Hermitage, and admire that genuine Taste for elegant Nature, which gives such a spirited Variety to the Life of the wisest and most amiable of Men. But does it not give you, at the same Time, a very contemptible Idea of the Power of Greatness to make its Possessors happy, to see it thus flying as it were from itself; to behold it seeking Pleasure, not in the Fruition, but in the temporary Suspension of those supposed Advantages it has above other Conditions of Life? The impartial Lord of all has fixed the cheerful Seat of Happiness in the rural Cot; and Health, Peace, Content, and soft domestic Tenderness, the only real Sweets of Life, smile on the humble Roof of virtuous Industry. The Poor complain not of the Tediousness of Life; for their daily Toil shortens the flying Hours, and every Moment of Rest from Labour is to them a Moment of Enjoyment. But to the Great, who are surrounded from earliest Youth by Pleasures which court their Acceptance, whose Taste is palled by Habit, and a too great Facility of satiating every Wish, Lassitude and Disgust creep on their languid Hours; they want the doubtful Gale of Hope to keep the Mind in gentle Agitation, and sink into a dead Calm, more destructive to every Enjoyment than the rudest Storm of Adversity. The haughty Duchess, oppressed with tasteless Pomp, and sinking under the Weight of her own Importance, is much less to be envied than "the Milk-maid singing 'blithe,'" whom she only esteems the Object of her Pity and Contempt. Your Acquaintance with the great World has shewn you the splendid Misery of superior Life. You have seen those most wretched to whom Heaven has granted the amplest external Means of Happiness. Such are ever in Pursuit of the Shadow of Happiness, whilst the Substance glides past them unobserved,

and they sink unlamented to the Grave. Happiness loves the Vale of Life; 'tis here that we must meet the Conversation of a Friend, that Conversation which "brightens the Eyes." Yet we must not absolutely confine her to those humble Scenes; her Presence is not unattainable to Royalty itself, and the Hand of simple unerring Nature generally leads to her delightful Abode. My Lord M. also has successfully fought the lovely Goddes in the Calm of Retirement, in the Bosom of Friendship, in the Sweets of domestic Life, in the tender pleasing Duties of Husband and of Father, and in the Practice of Benevolence and every gentler Virtue. His Spirit and Resolution have enabled him to burst the magic Fetters of Example and Fashion, and he has nobly dared to be happy. His Plan of Life is certainly, as you observe, the most worthy a reasonable Creature; for he has enlarged his own Circle of Happiness, by including in it that of all Mankind, and particularly of all around him. His Bounty, like the deep silent Stream, glides unobserved, and his generous Spirit acts more by preventing Want than by relieving it. It is his Glory and his Pleasure that he must go beyond the Limits of his own Estate to find Objects of real Distress. By encouraging Industry and a Spirit of Chearfulness amongst his Tenants, he maintains as much as possible the natural Equality of Mankind on his Estate. His Farms are not large, but moderately rented; all are at Ease, and can provide happily for their Families, but none rise to exorbitant Wealth. The very Cottagers are Strangers to all that even approaches Want; for when the busier Seasons of the Year are past, he gives them Employment in his Woods or Gardens, and finds double Beauties in every Improvement there, when he reflects that from thence

" Health to himself and to his Infants Bread
" The Labourer bears."

Plenty, the Child of Industry, smiles on their humble Abodes; and, if any unforeseen Misfortune nips the Blossoms of their Prosperity, his Bounty, descending silent and refreshing as the Dews of Heaven, renews their blooming Sate, and restores Joy to their happy Dwellings.

lings. The Maxims, indeed, by which he governs all the Actions of his Life are manly, benevolent, enlarged, liberal; and his generous Passion for the Good of others is rewarded by his Creator, whose Approbation is his first Point of View, with as much Happiness to himself as this sublunary State is capable of. I am, my dear Friend,

Yours affectionately.

L E T T E R XXXIV.

To the Rev. J. Duncomb from the celebrated Author of Clarissa.

Dear Sir,

I Take this Opportunity (by the Hands of your worthy Father) to attempt to thank you, with a staggering Pen, for the Letter of the excellent Lady who subscribes to it the Name of Sylvia. I am charmed with every Line of it. A Time there was when I could have written Sheets upon the Contents; but now I am unhappy with these violent Tremors. At Times they quite unnerve me, and will not suffer me to hold a Pen. My best Respects to this unworthily-afflicted, this prudent, this magnanimous, pious Lady. She has my Praises and my Prayers. She has greatly interested me in her sad and future Destiny. Will she not allow me to be acquainted with her Progress to Perfection? To be told in what Manner she is able to contend with her Difficulties, should they continue, and maintain her Resolution? I hope she will allow me this Favour. What a glorious though painful Situation is hers! The godlike Power of Forgiveness is all her own. Her Supplications to the Throne of Grace for herself (who that lives has not some Failings?) must succeed; she has, let me boldly say, a Claim to be forgiven, since she can forgive the Trespasses of one who, forgetting his Vows of deserved Love and Honour, can be guilty of premeditated Trespass against her, and, higher still, resolve almost against all Hopes of Redress and earthly Reward, to return Good for Evil! Poor Dorastus! what a Figure makes he, placed in the Eye of even mitigated Justice, with his admirable Wife! Poor (indeed poor) Dorastus! Oh that thou

thou wert to read, that thou wert able to reflect duly upon the following noble Sentiments of thy exalted Lady! Here, my Friend, my Pen staggering in my Fingers, I was about to dictate to a faithful Hand the Passages from the Lady's Letter which I so deservedly admire. But finding that to do her Justice I must transcribe the greatest Part of her Letter, I forbore.

Adieu, my dear Mr. Duncombe!

London, July 14, 1757.

S. RICHARDSON.

LETTER XXXV.

*From Archbp Herring to the Rev. Dr. George Benson,
an eminent dissenting Teacher, on the Blessings of Toleration.*

Reverend Sir,

I Cannot satisfy myself with having sent a cold and common Answer of Thanks, for your Volume of most excellent and useful Sermons. I do it in this Manner with great Esteem and Cordiality. I thank you, at the same Time, as it becomes me to do, for your very obliging good Wishes. The Subject, on which my Friends congratulate me is in Truth Matter of constant Anxiety to me. I hope I have an honest Intention, and for the rest I must rely on the good Grace of God, and the Counsel and Assistance of my Friends. I think it happy that I am called up to this high Station, at a Time when Spite and Rancour and Narrowness of Spirit are out of Countenance; when we breathe the benign and comfortable Air of Liberty and Toleration; and the Teachers of our common Religion make it their Business to extend its essential Influence, and join in supporting its true Interest and Honour. No Times ever called more loudly upon Protestants for Zeal and Unity and Charity. I am, Rev. Sir,

Your assured Friend,

Kensington, Feb. 2. 1747-8.

T. CANTUAR.

L E T.

L E T T E R XXXVI.

A Letter of Thanks for a Favour conferred upon the Writer in his Absence.

S I R,

I send you most due and humble Thanks, that, notwithstanding I have played the Truant, and have been absent so long from Oxford, you have been pleased lately to make Choice of me to be Fellow of your new Foundation in Jesus College. As the Quality of my Fortunes and Course of Life now run, I cannot make a present Use of this your great Favour, or rather Promotion; yet do I highly value it, and humbly accept of it, and intend by your Permission to reserve and lay it by, as a good warm Garment, against rough Weather, if any fall on me. With this my Expression of Thankfulness, I congratulate the great Honour you have purchased, both by your own Beneficence, and your painful Endeavour besides, to perfect that national College, which hereafter is likely to become the Monument of your Fame as well as a Seminary of Learning, and will perpetuate your Memory to the latest Posterity. May God Almighty prosper and perfect all your Undertakings, and provide for you in Heaven those Rewards which such public Works of Piety are usually crowned with! and may I ever remain sensible of the Favours conferred upon, Sir,

Your very obliged Servant.

L E T T E R XXXVII.

On writing Letters, and the Necessity of answering them duly.

Dear Cousin,

THE last Week you sent me Word that you were so cramped with Business, that you could not put Pen to Paper. If you write not this Week, I shall fear you are not only cramped, but crippled; at least I shall think you are cramped in your Affection rather than in your Fingers, and that you have forgot how it was once

my good Fortune to preserve you from drowning when the Cramp seized you in the River. The Cramp, as I Think, is a sudden Convulsion of the Nerves. But the Ligaments and Sinews of my Love to you are so strong, as never to have been subject to such spasmodical Convulsions. Letters are the very Nerves and Arteries of Friendship, the vital Spirits and Elixir of Love, which in Case of Distance and long Absence would be in Danger to languish, and quite moulder away without them. Among the Italians and Spaniards it has been considered as the greatest Solecism in good Manners, not to answer a Letter with like Civility; by this alone they will distinguish a Gentleman from a Clown. It has also a very great Advantage, as it is one of the most virtuous Ways to employ Time; and I am the more covetous of a punctual Correspondence with you, because I commonly gain by your Letters. Your polite Style and elegant Expressions delight me; and your Lines are interspersed with such choice Flowers of Poetry and Philosophy, as always give me Pleasure. I understand there is a very able Doctor who reads the Anatomy Lecture this Term; and if your Tutor will dispense with you, your Hours cannot be spent better than in hearing him. But I must here put an End to my Letter, being cramped for Want of more Matter, and must rest now, as ever,

Your affectionate Cousin.

LETTER XXXVIII.

To a young Lady, on the Injustice and Cruelty of judging others.

HOWEVER unfavourable Appearances may be, my dear Henrietta, never form a rash Judgment on the Actions of others. Upon those which bear a doubtful Meaning, Charity should induce us to put the most favourable Construction. How know we, but that the Action we condemn might arise from a good Motive in the Person who appears to be guilty of it? An amiable young Woman has taken an obscure small Lodging in a Country

Country Village, who sees nobody, and has desired the People where the lodges to procure her some Needle-work for her present Support; and she seldom leaves her little Apartment, being also frequently in Tears. "Very dark and strange (the neighbouring Prudes say) is this! they dare say she is no better than she should be. They can even fancy that her Shape has an odd Appearance; but suppose that Madam will leave her Country Lodgings in a few Months, and commence a Lady of the Town in the Purlieus of Covent Garden." How unjust and cruel are these wicked Suspicions! The unhappy, the innocent Emily has exerted the most heroic Virtue, in escaping from a Guardian who pursued her with a criminal Passion; but what made her Trial the harder, though it added to her Merit, was, that she tenderly loved him, yet her glorious Resolution has enabled her to prefer Poverty and the most wretched Obscurity rather than yield to his infamous Solicitations. How should such Censurers blush at their malignant Censures, and learn to imitate, instead of reproaching, such consummate Virtue!

Adieu, my dear Henrietta,

Yours.

LETTER XXXIX.

On the Advantages of innocent Employment. To a young Gentleman.

WITH the utmost Delight I see my dear young Friend perpetually employed in some useful Art or innocent Amusement. Besides the real Advantages which must arise from a Habit of Industry and constant Employment, the Mind is not idle. The Sensation of Lazitude, so painful to many, cannot fasten on an active Disposition. A Variety of little Incidents and Amusements for the Relief of the Wants of others, if we ourselves are happily placed above feeling them, is attended with a more refined and keener Sensation than any other Enjoyment. This Power of finding a Variety of Objects, which must perpetually occur in a Habit of constant

stant Employment, tends not only to soften the present Uneasiness, but the Fear of the most disagreeable Situation we may be liable to experience in this changeable State. Mankind in general view disagreeable Scenes, separately from their little Comforts, as they do the torrid Zone; which is thought destitute of all the Enjoyments of Life, because they only consider how excessive the Heat must be. But the Showers and refreshing Breezes, which are so sweet and salutary, never enter their Minds, but are happily the Consolation of Experience. I am,

My dear Friend,

Yours most affectionately,

Horton, June 28, 1788.

J. ADAMS.

LETTER XL.

The Qualifications of an independent Senator described. To a young Gentleman from a Nobleman.

THE present Member of Parliament for —— being in a State of Health which seems to forebode a Termination of Life at no great Distance, it would be very agreeable to me if my dear Mr. Johnson would think of offering himself a Candidate to succeed him. But I must be so plain as to tell him, he will have no Assistance from me except my Wishes; and that he has nothing to trust to but his own Merits and the Name of Johnson. For it is a Point both of Conscience and Honour with me, never to intermeddle in Elections. As the Preservation of our happy Constitution depends on the perfect Independence of each Part on the other two, so the Moment that the House of Lords can make a House of Commons, (Heaven grant that Moment to be far distant!) Liberty and Prerogative will cease to be more than Names, and both Prince and People will become Slaves. Hence it is, that although the whole Town is mine, I always leave the People to their free and uninfluenced Choice, and never interfere farther than to insist on their keeping themselves as unbiassed as I leave them. I would even

even prosecute the Man who was base enough to take a Bribe, though he who offered it was my nearest Friend. Thus I have the Pleasure of keeping myself free, and at Liberty to confer Favours where I please ; thus I secure my own Independence by not invading that of others. If this Conduct was general, it would preserve the Balance of our glorious Constitution, which is of much greater Consequence to Britons than the Balance of Power in Europe ; but we resemble those Persons who busy themselves in regulating the domestic Concerns of their Neighbours, and suffer their own to be ruined. I know too well your generous Sentiments to doubt that, in procuring this Settlement, I shall give to my Country a firm and unshaken Patriot ; at once above Dependance on the most virtuous Court, and the mean Vanity of opposing a Prince's just Measures from a too eager Desire of Popularity. Yet I would not have you insensible to Praise, or the Esteem of your Country ; but seek it only by deserving it. Though it be in Part the Reward, it should not be the Motive of your Actions ; your own Approbation should be your first View, that of others only your second. I mean not to wrong the Integrity of your Heart, by supposing you capable of distressing the Hands of Government for mercenary or ambitious Purposes ; the virtuous Senator regards not Men, but Measures, and will concur with his bitterest Enemies in every salutary and honest Purpose, or rather, in a public View, he will have no Enemies but the Enemies of his Country. Your Goodness in supplying one of my Tenants, involved in a temporary Distress from an Accident, has reached me ; Gratitude would not permit the poor Man to observe that Injunction of Secrecy which you laid him under. I will not rob you of the Pleasure of making an honest Man happy, by insisting on returning the Money to you ; but I shall only indulge you this once, and you are the only Person from whom I have ever suffered my Family (for such I consider all my Tenants and Dependents) to receive an Obligation. This Favour I have refused even to your Father. Adieu, my Friend,

Your affectionate

D.

LETTER XLI.

On due Confidence in Professions of Friendship. From a Lady to her Son-in-Law.

LET us have no more, I beseech you, about this Woman, whom we all love beyond every Bound of Reason. She is very well, and I now write to you wholly in my own Name. I want to talk to you about Sir Thomas Davenport, to beg you, by all the Confidence you have in me, to observe my Advice in your Conduct with Respect to him. I know the Manners of some People in Hampshire, and the Pleasure they take in fomenting Divisions, insomuch, that if one is not continually on one's Guard against their Discourse, one is insensibly led away to join in their Sentiments, which are often very false and unjust. I can assure you that Time, or some other Reasons, have made a great Alteration in Sir Thomas's Temper; he has been very mild for some Days past, and, provided you are not resolved to treat him as an Enemy, you will not find him one. Let us take him at his Word, till we find he does something to contradict it; for nothing so soon overturns a good Intention as to shew a Diffidence of it, and it is often alone sufficient to be suspected for an Enemy, to make a Person become one in Reality. The whole is then at an End, and there are no longer any Measures to keep. But Confidence engages to good Actions, one is agreeably affected with the good Opinion of others, and cannot readily bring one's self to forfeit it. In God's Name then open your Heart, and you will perhaps be surprized by a Behaviour that you at present little expect. I never can think this Man conceals any Rancour in his Heart, under so many Professions of Friendship as he has made us, and of which we had better be Dupes than entertain false or injurious Suspicions. Follow my Advice, it is not mine only; several very worthy and intelligent Persons require this Conduct from you, and give you Assurances that you will not find yourself deceived. Your Family is persuaded of it. We see better into these Things than you; so many People who

love

love you, and have some Pretensions to good Sense and Discernment, cannot certainly be all of them mistaken.

I am, my dear Sir,

London, June 20, 1788.

Yours affectionately.

LETTER XLII.

On taking Care of one's Health. To a Lady.

THE Baronet certainly doats, and knows not what he would be at. I did not eat any Fruit at Belfont, because there was no Fruit there to eat. I dine in a wholesome Manner, and if foolish People would have me sup at six, before one's Dinner is digested, I laugh at their Proposal, and let it alone till eight. But on what do I sup I beseech you? why on a Quail sometimes, or perhaps the Wing of a Partridge. I walk out, I acknowledge; but if People would have me stay at Home, they ought to cry down the fine Weather. I have never been abroad during the Evening Damps; that is all mere Scandal. When I tell you that Dr. Taylor was always of my Opinion, was often with me in my Walks, and never opposed me in any Thing; need I say more to convince you? What then do you mean, Mr. Baronet? But pray, Sir, with all your Wisdom, does that Arm of yours disable you still? It would be a dismal Affair indeed, to be obliged to wear a Stick the whole Winter long. And you, my Lady, think you I have no Cause to chide you? Evans tells me you do not nurse yourself enough, and that, to mend the Matter, you eat the most pernicious Things in the World; that it is needless to think of recovering your Health with such a Behaviour, and that Mr. Gouch, who is the only Person that dare contradict you, is sufficiently vexed at it. I had rather she would coquet it with Mr. Jones or Mr. Any-Body, as you tell me she does, than to lay impious Hands on a Constitution upon which all our Lives depend; for it was your own Desire that I should make Use of all your Names on this Head. How well you do together! How happy are you in finding that at Home in your Families,
which

which is sought for in vain every where else ; that is, the choicest Company in the World, and all the Friendship and Safety Heart can wish for ! I think it, and say it again and again, there is not such another to be found, I embrace you with all my Heart, and conjure you to love me ever as sincerely as does

Your affectionate.

LETTER XLIII.

From a Gentleman to his Brother-in-Law on his Marriage.

YOU have had a good while the Interest of a Friend in me, but you have me now in a straiter Tie ; by your late Marriage I am become your Brother, which has turned our Friendship into an Alliance. You have in your Arms one of my dearest Sisters, who I hope, nay I know, will make a good Wife. I heartily congratulate this Marriage, and pray that a Blessing may descend upon it from that Place where all Marriages are made, which is from Heaven, the Fountain of all Felicity. To this Prayer, I think it no Profaneness to add the Saying of the Lyric Poet *Horace*, in whom I know you much delight ; I send it you as a Kind of Epithalamium, and with it may be verified in you both.

Thrice happy they, in pure Delights,
Whom Love with mutual Bonds unites,
Unbroken by Complaints or Strife,
Ev'n to the latest Hours of Life.

So, my dear Brother, I much rejoice in this Alliance, and wish you may increase and multiply to your Heart's Content. I am,

Your affectionate Brother.

LETTER XLIV.

From a Gentleman to his Constituents, in Gratitude for their Election to serve in Parliament.

I Received a public Instrument from you lately, subscribed by the principal Persons in your Corporation, wherein I find your Choice of me as one of your Burgesses for the approaching Parliament. Some other worthy Gentlemen who stood earnestly for it, as being your Neighbours, might have had better Means and more Abilities to serve you; but I will endeavour to acquit myself of the Trust you have reposed in me, and to answer your Expectation accordingly. This Election I consider as an Honour to me, and I esteem it a greater Advantage that so worthy and well-experienced a Knight as Sir James P. is to be my Colleague; for I shall steer by his Compass, and follow his Directions in any Thing which may more immediately concern the Welfare of your Town and its Liberties, either for Redress of any Grievances, or by proposing and properly supporting any Thing new which may conduce to its further Benefit and Advantage. This I consider as the true Duty of a parliamentary Burgess, without roving about at Random to general Matters. I hope to learn from Sir James what is fitting to be done upon all Occasions, and I shall apply myself accordingly to join with him to serve you with my best Abilities. With these Assurances, and the Hopes of your comparing my future Conduct therewith, to be satisfied how far I shall deserve your Favour, I rest

Your most assured and
Constant Friend.

LETTER XLV.

On the Folly of Indolence in a State of Perplexity.

My dear Friend,

IT is truly astonishing that we should bear so many Perplexities in this Life, from a ridiculous Notion that

212 The Complete LETTER-WRITER.

that they are not to be remedied, when perhaps nothing is more easy. Half the Miseries in this World are of our own making, and they are little better than the Corrosion of idle Discontent; for we sit down in a blind Acquiescence that we can have no Relief, and therefore will not stir a Finger to help ourselves. We lose many an Advantage and Comfort, because we do not try to exert our own Reason, and frequently expect even a Miracle from Heaven to help us. But one of our greatest Wickednesses is, to arraign Providence as the Cause of our Calamities; for we are commonly impious enough to lay the Blame wholly on Heaven—on infinite Goodness! What shocking Ingratitude! Guilt only can make us wretched here; for however a good Man's Heart may bleed even to Death, it will never feel a Torment like the Rendings of Remorse. Let the Virtuous remember this, however keen their Affliction. The World indeed is bad, but it affords Content, if we will be at the Pains to seek it; if we will but repose our Cares, our Hopes, and our Wishes, on that gracious Being, who knows both the Time and Means proper for his everlasting Purposes. But remember, ever, that Sorrow loses its Sting, when Virtue embalms the Wound. I am,

My dear Friend,

Most sincerely yours.

LETTER XLVI.

On the Pleasure of familiar Friendship. To a Lady from her Mother.

MY Letter of To-day will be a mere Matter of nothing. In the first Place I have nothing of yours to answer; and, in the next, I have no News to send you. Williams was telling me the other Day the kind of Things he has sent you; he calls it News, but I laughed at him for his Pains, and assured him I would never load my Paper with such idle Stuff. He sends you Word that Lord H. is to resign his Government to General B. and to have that of P. with a Reversion to Mr. H. but this

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is a mere false and idle Report, and is not mentioned in any Place of Credit. He informs you that the King is to leave London the 7th of next Month: Very pretty that! but I assure you I shall send you nothing but what is absolutely true, and if I can get no better Intelligence than this, I will even let it pass unnoticed, and entertain you with something else. But I am very well pleased with Williams as well as with you. He takes a great Deal of Care of your Mother in your Absence; and whenever the least Dispute arises between the Doctor and me, we always chuse him Arbitrator. It is a great Satisfaction to reflect that we have such a Friend, who is deficient in no one good or valuable Qualification, and consequently can never be wanting in any Respect. If you had forbidden us to talk of you, when together, as a Thing disagreeable to you, we should be greatly embarrassed; for a Conversation of that Kind is so natural to us, and we feel so agreeable a Propensity to it, that we fall into it as it were insensibly. And if by Chance, after long Exercise on the Topic, we for a while turn aside to something else, I begin again in the old Strain; and, "Come! I say to him, one Word about my poor Girl! we are very ungrateful to forget her so long." Then we begin anew, and run over a thousand Incidents, as if they had but just occurred. If I was to swear a thousand Times to him that I did not love you, I do not think he would believe me; but I value him as a Confidant who enters entirely into my Sentiments, and what then can I say better of him. But I must here stop the Career of my Pen, by adding only that I am, as ever,

Your affectionate Mother.

LETTER XLVII.

On the Choice of proper Objects of Charity. To a young Gentleman.

AMONG the various Species of Misery I would recommend to the feeling Heart of my young Friend to relieve by his Bounty, is the poor Debtor. His Case,

of

of all others, is the most pitiable. The Beggar at least enjoys Freedom; he has the Benefit of freth Air, and partakes of the Charity of the well-disposed. The Slave has the Benefit of Exercise, and of its Attendant, Rest; and his Labours are sweetened with the pleasing Hope of Redemption. The Lunatic in Imagination is also happy, and frequently enjoys more in Idea than others really possess. The poor confined Debtor alone, harassed as he is with all their Afflictions, is wholly deprived of their Comforts. He has the Lunatic's Restraint, without his Ignorance of Misery. He is a Beggar, without Freedom, Air, or Charity; a Slave, without the wholesome Vicissitudes of Labour and Rest; a Prisoner for Life, without even the Alternative of present Death or Liberty. Such a Condition should excite our Compassion, as it demands our Pity; and to relieve or alleviate the Hardship is divine and god-like. I am, my dear Friend,

Yours affectionately.

LETTER XLVIII.

On the Satisfaction and Pleasure of a Religious Life.

WHAT a superlative Comfort, my dear Friend, do those happy Souls enjoy, who, by the Innocence of their Lives and Purity of their Intentions, can look up with humble Hope to their heavenly Maker! The most dismal Dungeon, the most frightful Solitude, is no longer such to those happy few, who have their Support within themselves; to those who know their Defender is nearer to them than any Thing can be which may annoy or disturb them. Many People imagine, that in order to be religious they are fairly to bid Adieu to all worldly Amusements for ever; to shut themselves up from the World and all its Enjoyments; to assume a most melancholy Countenance, and to shake the Head at “even Pleasure’s Name.” But these good People greatly deceive themselves in this Matter, and are under a very fatal Deception in supposing Religion to consist in a Contempt of the innocent Pleasures of this World.

True

True Religion is a perpetual Source of Joy, Love, and Tranquillity. Life is the Gift of Heaven, and surely then it can never be irreligious to enjoy it. Those who can be happy in their own Reflections, and contribute all in their Power to the Happiness of others, answer most effectually the Ends of their Creation. For the Enjoyment of Life calls forth our Gratitude to the Author of it, and opens the Heart to Chearfulness, Kindness, and Benevolence; and by giving us a Taste here of Happiness, excites in us a Desire of securing it through Eternity, and enables us to resign every worldly Felicity for those Joys which are without Change and without End. I am, my dear Friend,

Most assuredly yours.

LETTER XLIX.

*A Letter of Introduction, on Behalf of a young Gentleman.
From a Lady in England to her Daughter abroad.*

MR. Jacobs, my dear Child, has insisted on my giving him a Letter of Introduction to you. What a Joke is this? since you know the Friendship and Esteem I have for him, and that his Father is one of my oldest Acquaintance. You are not ignorant of the Merit of either the one or the other, and have all the Respect for them that I could wish you to have. Of what Service then can my Letter be to him? To me indeed it is of Service, as it furnishes me with an Opportunity of writing to you; and indeed it is odd enough to observe what Pleasure one takes in conversing with a Person one loves, though at a Distance; and how tiresome it is to be obliged to write to others. I think myself happy in having begun the Day with you. Little Harper has attended me for a bad Cold, but this will be over by the Time you receive my Letter; after having talked of you, I set about writing to you. The Post lately has been very irregular, and those People who are so very obliging to set out at Midnight with my Letters to you, are very remiss in bringing back your Answers. The Rector and I are continually talking about your Affairs;

Affairs; but he gives you an Account of all that passes, therefore I shall say nothing farther. Your Health, your Ease, your Affairs, are the three principal Subjects of my Thoughts; from which I draw an Inference for you to reflect upon, and am,

London, July 4, 1788.

Yours,

LETTER L.

From a Gentleman to his Friend, on Recovery from an alarming Sickness.

My dear Hardwick,

THE Shortness of your Epistle almost leaves me without Matter to reply. What! had you no Anecdote to furnish out a Dozen more Lines? No News of Importance sufficient to exercise your Pen, or employ my Time? no Account of a Trip to Scotland, to visit the Son of Vulcan in his sacerdotal Capacity? Has the Lemnian god of Gretna Green no Votaries of Hymen? have no Sacrifices been made at his Altar? Surely, Thomas, you could have furnished me with something of this Nature worth mentioning, for at this Time I am incapable of reflecting on more serious Subjects. The Disorder has left a Stupor in my Head, which renders it not only improper, but I am also unwilling and even adverse to indulge in more solid and momentous Speculations. So that your former Letter must still remain without an Answer, as I dare not yet trust myself to think upon any Thing which carries with it the least Appearance of Difficulty. My Health seems to put in the strongest Claim to my Attention, and I have no Inclination to regard any Thing which does not in some Measure contribute to its Restoration. By my foolish Neglect of the Means which would have secured to me the Enjoyment of it, I have impaired my Constitution and hazarded my Existence; and surely it would be unpardonable to split again upon the same Rock, from whence I have lately so narrowly escaped with Life. Hardwick will excuse my declining this Subject at present,

till

till all my Faculties and Powers of thinking are more perfectly restored; when that will be, I shall not yet, I fear, be able to determine, as my Strength returns but very slowly. At present, therefore, I can only think of Amusements; and I know not how it is, I find those to be most pleasing which are most simple and childish. Sometimes I endeavour to engage Mrs. Denton in them, but she generally seems to feel their unmeaning Insignificance; and whenever she does join, my Importunities rather than her own Choice for the most Part prevail. Adieu, my dear Hardwick.

Yours as ever,

Rugby, July 7, 1788.

T. DENTON.

LETTER LI.

From a Gentleman to his Friend, in Answer to a Letter acknowledging the Error of his former Conduct.

YOU will believe me when I assure you that a Messenger from Heaven with the Insignia of Peace and the Assurance of eternal Happiness at the closing Hour of Life, could not have given more Rest and Joy to my Heart than those last Lines of yours. May the same Sentiments guide you, the same Resolutions direct you, through every Period of Time! may every future Hour of your Existence here serve to confirm you in those pleasing Reflections! and may the good Spirit which dictated those Sentiments, through whatever Means it has been accomplished, still direct you to produce the pleasing Fruits in the Actions of your Life! If a few of our Actions would be wrong, (and where is that spotless Being, whose Deportment is not in some Respects erroneous?) our Mistakes once discovered, what should hinder the Pleasures arising from Repentance and an Acknowledgment of our Crimes in all prudent Cases? what should hinder that the Pains of the one should not be succeeded by the Pleasures of the other? And what greater Pleasure can a Mortal enjoy? what more exquisite Satisfaction can he feel than what arises from the Conviction, that though he was once wrong, he knows

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at last that he is right? Let this Conviction, my Friend, take a firm footing in your Heart; let it be securely rooted, so as to prevent every Fear or Danger of a Relapse; and in the Consideration of your own Weakness, let your Mind be impressed with such Thoughts as may give you additional Strength and Fortitude. For Man, alas! how weak a Being is he, yet how strong! he is capable of every high Post, and equal almost to any Difficulty, but how often is he stopped in the Career of his Pursuits, and checked in his Progress by a Straw or a Feather. Adieu, believe me,

My dear Friend,

Ever yours.

LETTER LII.

A facetious Letter from a Gentleman to his Cousin at School. On the Importance of correct Writing.

Dear Cousin,

A Letter of yours was lately delivered me; I read the Superscription not without Difficulty, but when I opened it, I wondered in what Language it was written. I thought at first that it must be Hebrew, or some other Dialect of the East, and so went from the Liver to the Heart, from the right Hand to the left, to read it, but I could make nothing of it. I then thought it might be the Chinese Language, and went to read the Words perpendicular; but the Lines were so crooked and distorted, that no Coherence could be made. Greek I perceived it was not, nor Latin, nor English; so I gave it up for mere Gibberish, and your Characters to be rather Hieroglyphics than Letters. The best is, you keep your Lines at a good Distance, like those in Chancery Bills, who, as the Clerk said, were made so wide on Purpose, because the Clients should have Room enough to walk between them without jostling one another; but this Wideness would have been excusable, if your Lines had been straight, whereas they were full of odd Kind of Undulations and Windings. If you can write no other-
wise

wife, one may read your Thoughts as soon as your Characters; but it is some Excuse for you that you are but a young Beginner. I beg it may appear in your next what a Proficient you are, otherwise some Blame may fall upon me for placing you in your present Situation. Let me receive no more Gibberish or Hieroglyphics from you, but legible Letters, that I may acquaint your Friends accordingly of your good Proceedings. So I rest

Your very affectionate Cousin.

LETTER LIII.

To a Lady, on the Necessity and Importance of attending to Health.

I Write to you, my Dear, this Evening, as I am full of the Thoughts of going to-morrow Morning into Shropshire. Lady D. invited me the other Day in so courteous a Manner, that I must go to visit her and the Baronet, who is much more easily managed by a Visit of this Sort in the Country, than by twelve Months Solicitation at London. You would have me rely on your Care entirely in Regard to your Health, to which I consent with all my Heart, if there is any Truth in what is said, that you are quite another Person in this Respect. It would, in Effect, be a natural Conduct in you to do so, and your Neglect of it has always appeared to me a Thing very extraordinary; and I am led to believe by this Instance, that right Reason has once more resumed its Place in your Understanding. Therefore, my Dear, let me urge you to do as you say, take Milk and Broths, and hold the Care of your Health dear to you beyond all earthly Considerations. Be persuaded that Care and Regimen are not alone sufficient to recover a Stomach like yours; it is from the Continuance of this Regimen you are to look for a Cure. What signifies your taking Milk for a Fortnight, and then saying, "Well, I have taken Milk, because that has been recommended, but to no Purpose;" this is only a Mockery, and you deceive both us and yourself by acting in this Manner.

You should also consider, that without Health it is impossible for us to do any Thing as we ought; every Thing is at a Stand, and the smallest Affair costs us incredible Pain to accomplish. Indeed, the Want of Health prevents our living at all. Your present Condition is by no Means a durable Situation; yet if you would be well, you must first expect to be better. I am truly concerned for the sorrowful Weather you have had, which has been enough to give you a lasting Fit of the Vapours; but I am distressed for the terrible Inundations which you mention, of which also we have large Accounts in the Newspapers. If your Husband should find it necessary to return, I shall indeed give him a sad Welcome; for instead of taking Order for your Journey as you have, it would have been more natural and rational in you to have waited his Arrival here. But you consulted his Pleasure, as they were wont to consult the Entrails of Victims in Days of Yore, and you there clearly read that he wished you to accompany him; regardless of your Health, it was a Thing impossible for you not to go, as in Fact you have. You ought, therefore, to lift up your Eyes to God, and beg him to grant you a safe Return. I begin to fancy myself qualified to write a Treatise on Friendship; for there are a thousand Things depending on it, a thousand Things to be avoided, to prevent those we love from smarting for it. We give them Pain in innumerable Instances; wherein we might alleviate their Feelings, by reflecting upon and turning Things in all the Points of View we ought, from a particular Respect to the Object of our Esteem. In short, I could make it evident in this my Book, that there are Millions of different Ways to testify one's Friendship, without speaking of it, as well as to declare by Actions that we have no real Regard, even whilst the Traitor's Tongue is making Protestations to the contrary. I do not mean any Person in particular, but what I have written, I have written; and as I find myself diverging from the Subject of your Health, I will here check the Riot of my Pen, and subscribe, as ever,

Your affectionate.

L E T.

LETTER LIV.

On the Advantage of studying the Nature of particular Constitutions.

GOOD God! what a charming Letter have I just now received from you! what delightful Reading! and what Pleasure is it to hear you discourse on all the Points you treat of! That about Physic transports me; and I am persuaded, with the Understanding and Quickness of Apprehension that God has bestowed upon you, you might soon outstrip, with a little Application, the very Doctors themselves. Indeed you might stand in Need of a little Experience, and perhaps you might not kill with Impunity as they do; but I would much sooner trust your Judgment than theirs, in judging of a Disease. The only real Concern of Life, is undoubtedly that of the Care of one's Health; in this the World seems to be agreed, for the general Question is, "how do you do? how do you do?" and yet we are for the most Part absolutely ignorant of every Particular relating to this most necessary Science. Learn then, my Dear, and continue to finish the Course of your Studies; the Scarlet Gown is all the Diploma you will stand in Need of. Pray, what do you mean by sending us your pretty little Doctor? I do assure you, they have entirely lost their Credit here, except three or four of our Acquaintance, and their Prescriptions are according to the Principles of Reason. Is it then true that you have got the better of your Complaints? that you have no longer those Pains in the Stomach, that you have no Cholic, and that you are free from Pain in the Legs? How happy a Thing is it, that you see the Advantages of Repose, and take Care to recruit yourself. Can you be angry with me for chiding you, when you neglect yourself, and inhumanly abandon your poor Person? But I could write for Months about this wicked Conduct in you, and the Good you see attending a contrary Conduct. I have no Company from nine till eleven at Night, but I prefer this Repose, without you, to all the Evening Parties about Town. I cannot endure rambling abroad in an Evening; and I find when I am not tormented with Fears for your Welfare,

I feel your Absence prodigiously. It was cruel in you to tell me that I have nothing to do but to laugh at my Ease, when you ought to remember what this Absence of yours has made me suffer. But I can only add, that I wish for nothing so much as the Pleasure of embracing you in Person, which I hope for soon. I am,

My dearest,

Yours very affectionately.

LETTER LV.

On the Nature of Time, and the Changes produced by it.

A Little Patience would save a great Deal of vexation. Time robs us of as much as it brings us. You know that we have always found it a mere Shuffler, placing and displacing, ordering and disordering, imprinting and effacing, bringing together and separating, and in short, making all Things, good and bad, in such a Manner, that there is scarcely any knowing them again. Time shews Respect to nothing but our Friendship, and that it will always respect. But whither am I got? What a strange Digression is this! I was only going to tell you, that the Courier came in so late, that your Letters were kept back one Post, and the next I had two together; and you see what a round-about Piece of Work I have made of it. Well, no Matter! between Friends one may be allowed to let the Pen gallop a little at Random. I am sure mine has generally the Reins on its Neck. But I shall say no more than that I am, as ever,

Yours.

LETTER LVI.

On the Foundations of Virtue and Vice. To a Lady.

Dear Madam,

I Return your Ladyship many Thanks for your agreeable Letters, and acknowledge your Kindness in approving my former Epistles. The proper Arrangement

of

of Argument I am unqualified for; all that I wish is to make myself understood. It has ever been a Maxim of mine, not to trust too much to our spontaneous Feelings. I believe neither Virtue nor Vice are radical in the human Heart, but that the Seeds of both are placed in us; and that it depends upon ourselves which to cultivate, and which to extirpate. I cannot think our moral Virtues are derived from Nature, because nothing can be brought by Custom to that which is contrary to its Nature; neither do I think that our Vices are natural, because then we should never be virtuous, and it would not be agreeable to the Justice of God to punish People for those Defects which were produced by Nature without any Fault of their own. God laid no Foundation of Wickedness in his Creatures; this is an unnatural Superstructure of our own, without any Ground of Support. But I must leave the Province of enlarging on this Topic to your Ladyship, whose Qualifications for it are so much superior. I am, dear Madam,

Your very obliged Friend.

LETTER LVII.

On the Nature of Fashions and Propriety in Dress. From a Lady to her Friend.

My dear Friend,

I Comply with your Desire to give you my Opinion on Dress; and shall premise, that our innate Consciousness precludes the Necessity of inculcating trifling Attentions. An elegant Mind is a sufficient Monitor, and will always exclude what is offensive to Delicacy. To some Persons I am sensible Dress may appear trifling, but in my Opinion it is of infinite Consequence; what Addison said of Dancing may be justly applied here, "That no Person can dress well, that is to say, with a thorough Propriety, who has not a good Understanding." There are three Things necessary to be observed, as Qualifications for this Purpose; Propriety, good Sense, and Modesty. The first is distinguishable in adapting

Dress to the Station and Time of Life; the second, in the œconomical Arrangement of it; and the last, in its Adjustments. In this Age Dress is a Science; but it may very easily be attended to, and the Woman who does not avail herself of it is to blame. The most exquisite Delicacy should unite with the utmost Simplicity; nor can the first exist without the last. Excellence in every Thing, in Dress, in Poetry, in Painting, and all the fine Arts, depends on Simplicity; but Simplicity alone does not give it, for Choice is required, and Nature admits such infinite Variety as affords sufficient Exercise for Taste. Plain Dress for a plain Man or Woman, at least implies Modesty; but Women have greater Opportunities than Men to expose themselves, as their Dress consists of many more Articles, and therefore a stricter Attention is requisite, because Dress has ever been esteemed to convey a striking Emblem of the Mind;

For the Apparel oft proclaims the Man.

But we must not deviate very much from the Fashions. If a Fool's Cap were fashionable, she would be a Fool who did not wear it; and those who will not conform to the Custom of the Country where they reside in their Dress, the Mob survey as if they meant to triumph over them. Indecency does not consist so much in the Cloaths, as in the Singularity. I am,

My dear Friend,

Yours affectionately.

The



The COMPLETE LETTER-WRITER.

P A R T I X.

Letters wrote mostly on great and solemn Occasions, or on the most serious and important Subjects.

L E T T E R I.

On the Death of a Patron, from a Clergyman in the Country to his Son in Town.

Dear Son,

AT six o'Clock this Afternoon I was again sent for, not to pray by my Friend, but (at my own Request) to pay the last Tribute to expiring Friendship. He had no Orders to give about either his Plumes or his Monument. "If I have lived well," said he, "my Deeds will be graven on the Minds of Men, and I shall have the Blessings of the deserving. Let the Poor be decently supplied on the Occasion with all Necessaries; and if they loved me, they will not wish for Superfluities. I have ever been their Protector, and they would not, I am sure, convert my Funeral into an Hour of Festivity. I feel an Awe, but no Grief, at my Dissolution. It has been said that some Philosophers have been above Terrors; I am much rather disposed to fear they were below Humanity. To shudder is the Part of the guilty; to stand undismayed is the Language of the Stoic; but it is the Duty of a Man to be humble. Before the Mortification commenced I had need of all my Resolution; but I hope in those Moments I confessed Virtue on the Rack, and suffered Torture only to refine my Ore from its Dross."

Dross. There is, I am now convinced of it, a Counterpoise to all human Misery, some hidden Resource which the Mind can best supply at its utmost Exigency ; I feel it now, and should think it ill exchanged for all that Titles, Wealth, Fortune, or Power could bestow upon me. I am journeying apace to that undiscovered Country,

was

That Bourn, from which no Traveller returns, and would not wish for one Hour's Addition to my Life for aught but for my Friends. Amongst these, added he to me, my dearest Reynolds, I have ever principally esteemed you ;" and then taking a Ring which was near at Hand for the Purpose, he gave it to me with these parting and affectionate Words, "Accept this as the last Token of my Testimony and Friendship," and eagerly grasping my Hand, said, "I wished for more, but"—He was silent, and looking fervently to Heaven, he sighed, and expired. This Scene awakened all my Feelings, and for some Minutes I experienced an awful inexpressible Something ; for Tears and Grief had nearly overwhelmed me. I have now again recovered my Tranquillity, as it would ill become me to fall a Victim to Distress, when my Life and my Profession demand me to make Use of its Instruction. By his Death I have had a Trial of that Fortitude, which I hope I have not altogether disgraced ; what I have lost you can easily recount with me. His Character is well known, and particularly to you ; but I must observe that, notwithstanding the Falshood of a bad World which he had largely experienced, his Heart was never steeled against the Feelings of Humanity. He was benevolent without Vanity, and generous without Ostentation. He had a Heart, perhaps, too susceptible of soft Impressions, which ever laid him open to the Designs of the artful and disingenuous. Thus, from the Superiority of his Understanding, he derived a Weakness in his worldly Conduct. He was warm in his Resentments ; but, lest he should be behind in Reparation, he always paid over Price for the Blessing of Reconciliation. He was skilled in all the necessary Truths of the Religion he professed ; and it was no inferior Branch of his Knowledge, that he

was ever willing to remain ignorant of those deeper Mysteries which its divine Author thought fit to conceal from him. He was to me a Patron, a Benefactor, and a Friend; a Friend that—but I will here close the Subject, entreating you to withdraw frequently from the busy Scenes of Life, to contemplate the Character of a Man, which may add Fervour to Virtue, Zeal to Religion, and Confidence to Truth.

I am, dear Son,

Your truly affectionate Father,

G. R.

LETTER II.

An affectionate Letter on the Loss of a Friend.

Dear Madam,

I Know too well the melancholy Reason of your present Silence, and do not presume to interrupt it, or desire you to write till perfectly convenient. But the Consideration of this Day's beginning a new Year, induces me to send you my best Wishes, not my Compliments, on that Occasion. I am just returned from Church, where, with the most ardent Sincerity, I petitioned that your valuable Life might be prolonged beyond the common Date of Humanity. It is my hearty Prayer that your Sensibility may never more be wounded by the Loss of a Friend, but that you may enjoy uninterrupted Health and every Species of Happiness. I am,

Dear Madam,

Yours, &c.

LETTER III.

In Answer to the preceding.

SIR,

I Have no suitable Return for your most kind Wish. The second Article includes every Thing, and is the best Condolence I have received; for on such Occasions

little can be said to the Purpose. As to the rest, when I enjoy Health I am thankful; but there are not many Species of Happiness which I can enjoy. People in advanced Life, as their Connexions dissolve, grow indifferent, and find their Attachment to the World daily decrease; the few Pleasures they can relish may generally be safely afforded them. Your Correspondence is numbered among the few that I regard: You will continue it to me, and accept the sincere Acknowledgments of, Sir,

Your very humble Servant.

LETTER IV.

An Epistle of Condolence to a Gentleman on the Loss of his Lady.

Dear Sir,

I Never opened any Letter with Reluctance which you sent till your last. The Sight of its black Seal communicated a social Mourning to my Heart, and I lament and feel your Loss with Sensibility too strong for my Expression. Indeed I consider myself as unfortunate that I should never so much as know you had the Happiness of such a dear, soft, amiable Friend, till the very Moment in which you inform me she has forsaken you. Sorry I am that I now know it; but at the same Time I know both your Heart and Understanding too rightly, to attempt unseasonable Comfort to the one, or to suspect the other of too long or too impatient a persisting, to forget that Resignation is a Duty. You may remember that I have undergone before you this hard Trial; for you were the last undomestic Friend that my poor Wife conversed with. And as I have experienced your Distress, I may assume some Right to your Belief when I acquaint you with its Consequence. You will continue for some Time to mourn with inconsolable and pungent Sorrow; every Place and every Piece of Furniture which you can look upon, must needs recal some tender Image that will summon Tears into your Eyes, and Pain into your Memory. You must not hope to see a Friend whom that lamented one, now gone, had ever

ever seen with you, but it will revive a thousand nameless little pausing Places for Reflection, to stop sorrowful upon. Almost every Thing you hear, see, taste, or meditate, will croud a fresh Variety of Goadings on your Recollection, to encrease and sharpen your Calamity. But your Sorrow will admit a gradual Mitigation, and transform itself, by slow insensible Degrees, into a gentler but not less faithful Melancholy. Yet it is a childish and ill-founded Injury which fashionable Delicacy does to Mourners, when it judges them most kindly treated by the Silence of their Friends upon the proper Object of their Sorrow. For I persuade myself that true and generous Grief must rather find itself disturbed than comforted by any Theme less social to the present Disposition of the Heart, than one of the same Species with that Melancholy which it labours under. I have therefore sent you a short, rough-drawn, but natural Picture of my own Mind's true Impression, fix Years after it had suffered such a Loss, as from my very Soul I now condole with you upon your present full and fresh Sense of. I am,

Dear Sir,

Your most sincerely afflicted

Humble Servant,

A. HILL.

LETTER V.

On the Death of an only Son. From a Lady to her Friend.

Dear Madam,

I Am sensible that nothing can be offered for your Consolation which you are not already Mistress of, and that if you cannot find sufficient within yourself to make you support this severe Stroke with Patience, no Person is capable of prescribing to you. But it is not in my Power to know you grieve without grieving with you, and it is as impossible for me to refrain testifying how deeply I am affected with your Loss. The Death
of

of your Son is indeed a Misfortune to the Public; his early Virtues gave the fairest Prospect of his becoming an useful Ornament to the World. This very Reflection must no doubt aggravate your Affliction. All the charming Ideas you had formed to be in an Instant dashed; his Eyes, so lately sparkling with all the Fire of Wit and Spirit, to see them now closed for ever; this is a Shock which nothing could alleviate but the Assurance that you will hereafter see your Expectations of this World more fully accomplished in a superior Orb. There neither Disease nor Death can rob him of his Glory. But this Assurance you do not want; though you know at the same Time that Nature in these Cases is at Enmity with Reason, and will prevail in Defiance of all Arguments. Yet there are two Considerations, which, to a Person of your Disposition, my dear Madam, may have more Weight than any which concern yourself only. While you afflict yourself, you afflict all those whom you would wish to render happy. Besides, your Case is not singular; there are Mothers who not only labour under the same Calamity with you, but perhaps many others, from which you are totally exempt. If you are so little able to support your Sorrows, how must they sink and be overwhelmed with that Load of Griefs which is laid upon them. But I will force myself to believe that a Lady, who in every Action of her Life has hitherto appeared to live more for the Happiness of others than herself, will in this Exigence, trying as it is, give a Proof of her Fortitude; and that this will be no less exemplary than the many other beneficial Virtues which have rendered her so justly dear to all that know her, and in particular to, dear Madam,

Your sincere Friend,

MARIA.

L E T.

LETTER VI.

The Vanity of terrestrial Enjoyments, with Reflections on our Duty to our Creator. From a Lady after Sickness.

Dear Madam,

SOME few Days past, had I been born the Heiress of Empires, I would gladly have resigned my Pretensions for the Happiness of enjoying once more writing to you. The sacred Rites of a departing Soul had been administered to me; and I saw my Mother's Anguish and my Father's Tears. The Physician who attended me had pronounced the solemn Sentence of my immediate Dissolution, and I felt that within myself which more than all confirmed me in the Belief that I was going to make my everlasting Exit from this World. What did I not for some Hours endure! The Pains of Body were no longer felt, being lost and swallowed up in the more dreadful Agonies of the Mind. My Remissness in reflecting on the Fate which now seemed just falling upon me, and all my youthful Vanities, came fresh into my Mind; they were now so many Scorpions which stung me to the very Soul. My Pleasures and Amusements which I had so eagerly pursued, now reproached me with a wretched Waste of Time, and with sinning against my own Reason. In the midst of these terrible Ideas, at once I fell into a Slumber, though all my Friends say it was a Convulsion. This was the last Effort of my Malady, in which Nature struggled hard and overcame her Enemy; perhaps I should have said, the Great Author of Nature was pleased to listen to my ardent Vows, and snatch me from the Grasp of Death, and I came to myself when every one believed me gone for ever. But Death, in holding the Mirror of Future before me, at the same Time gave me a Retrospect of what I was going to leave behind me; and taught me that this World was little worthy of Attention, when stript of the false Colours which our Imaginations put upon it. Friendship is best adapted to create real Happiness below, especially with such as can discern the true Blessings of Life from the counterfeit; with such as can discover, through all their Tinsel Covering, the Worthlessness of the greater Part of sublunary Enjoyments;

ments; with such who are incapable of Flattery themselves, and know how to despise it in others, and being truly sensible that they have a glorious Home to which they shall one Day be called, behold with Unconcern whatever Events may happen to them at the Inn where at present they sojourn. By confining my Company to this Class, I expect to keep but very little; I am sure of one such Friend at least in the excellent Sophia. This Change, though you may perhaps attribute it more to Vapours occasioned by my late Indisposition, than to a confirmed Sense of my Duty, you will be convinced of from Time and Perseverance. My Conversion is at present sincere, and I hope will continue so; I rely on Heaven to make it permanent, and the charitable Assistance of those Friends who wish me well. Haste, I beseech you, to strengthen these Resolutions; for though I had always an extreme Love and Reverence for you, both are now greatly increased, since the Almighty Dispenser of all Blessings has been graciously pleased to inspire me with Sentiments and Inclinations more conformable to yours. I have not yet been suffered to leave my Chamber, and your amiable Niece has passed an Hour or two with me every Day through the whole Time of my Confinement. But I have Need enough of her Aunt also in my present Situation, to shield me from the thousand Temptations my launching out again into the World may involve me in. I am, my dear Madam,

Your most affectionate Friend,

ELIZA.

LETTER VII.

To a Lady on the Death of her Husband.

Madam,

I was so stupified by the Sense of your great Weight of Sorrow, that a Week is past, and I have yet no Power to reason on the terrible Calamity. Indeed it would be an officious Insult in Good Nature to allow itself the Privilege of offering insignificant Advice to such

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an Understanding as your own, so exercised in deep Affliction. And yet this last Stroke, so following upon the Neck of others almost equally insupportable, compels and calls upon the Duties both of Pity and of Friendship to say something, how unfit soever, to assert the Part we bear in such a Trial of your Excellence. But remember, Madam, that you suffer in a suffering World; though there are thousands who have none of your Accomplishments, who have also none of your great Griefs to struggle with. God meant uncommon Minds to bear uncommon Dis, ensations; and 'tis the Justice of his Hand as well as its Severity. He suits the Labour to the Strength, and lends us an Example in such Resignation and such Piety as yours for the Instruction and Advantage of the weaker. Perhaps it may be some Relief to think, if you have lost a Bosom Friend, that he too has lost his Pain, his Disappointments, and his Injuries. He is delivered from Ingratitude and Malice, and has exchanged Anxiety for endless Happiness. If 'tis decreed that you and all your dear lost Comforts are to meet in a serener World, and know each other there, consider that you are most to be lamented, who are last to taste a Joy which those you mourn for are now sharing. And if we must not please ourselves with that delightful and immortal Hope, what Motive can deserve our Anguish which concerns a World so frail, and where our Blessings are so short and perishing. I am afraid that I say too much, though I feel that I say too little. If my Concern were the Measure of my Letter, I should scarce know when to end. I would have waited on you, but dare not trust my Courage; yet I shall not long be able to stay from you, though I know the Weakness of all Comfort in such Cases as your present one, which is truly and affectionately mourned by,

Madam,

Your very humble Servant.

LETTER VIII.

*On the Death of Mr. Richardson, the celebrated Author
of Sir Charles Grandison, &c. To a Friend.*

Dear Sir,

ON Monday last I saw an Account of the Death of Mr. Richardson. You have lost a valuable Friend, and the World an ingenious Man. I know no modern Author that was a greater Master of the Passions than he was, or had a greater Insight into human Nature. I have somewhere read, but where I cannot tell, that Dr. Harvey, who discovered the Circulation of the Blood, was so delighted in reading of Virgil, that he would sometimes fling the Book away, and say "it had a Devil." I confess in reading Clarissa, which I take to be Mr. R's capital Performance, and seeing her Piety, Purity, and Delicacy so ill used by a Lovelace, I have been scarce able to pacify myself till I have recollect'd that this Scene, so artfully worked up, had no other Existence than in Mr. Richardson's Fancy or Imagination. I am obliged to him, for he hath contributed much to my Entertainment, and I hope I may say to my Improvement; for I have many Times thought I have returned from reading him a better Man than I was before I began. How can a Man be better employed than by instructing Mankind, and making them wiser and better than they otherwise would be! To this good End I cannot but think his Writings greatly conducive, except some Scenes in Pamela and Clarissa, which I confess I have sometimes thought had better been left out. I am,

Dear Sir,

Your most obedient humble Servant.

L E T.

L E T T E R IX.

A young Gentleman's Answer to a Challenge, highly deserving the most attentive Consideration.

S I R,

WITHOUT entering into any Observation on your nice Manner of calculating Time, I must inform you that I am just returned from seeing the Family of the Lady you treated in such a scandalous Manner. She refused, it seems, to dance with you. In the Hearing of many People you then threatened to be revenged on her, and this Revenge was to alarm and insult her in the Street on her Return Home. The risking my own Life, or the taking away that of another Person, is a Thing which I shall never be brought to do. If I should be guilty of an Injustice, I should be willing, I trust, to make the most public Satisfaction; and if I receive it, I know how to forgive, or, if the Public is concerned, to have Recourse to the Laws. At the same Time I know how to defend my Life, if any one should be so rash as to attack it. This Language, Sir, in your Opinion, may mark me for a Coward; but he who dares withstand the Tide of popular Prejudice, fashionable Folly, and false Honour, shews more Courage than the exposing himself to the Attack even of so renowned a Person as yourself. I shall not meet you, Sir, to-morrow Morning according to your Invitation. I would advise you rather to go the contrary Way to that you propose, and to make all possible Haste; the Mayor in a very few Hours will have signed a Warrant to apprehend you, when a Security will be demanded for your good Behaviour, which it will not perhaps be in your Power to find. That I may never hear from you again, unless you are become a reformed and a better Man, is the sincere Wish of

Your humble Servant.

L E T.

LETTER X.

On the Necessity of preparing for Death. To a Friend.

I Have received your melancholy Letter, but am too well acquainted with the Vapours to be frightened at it. Their usual Effect is to make one fancy Death just at Hand; but that Effect is corrected by their keeping it a long Time in View. This is what Mr. Abrahams has often told me. I should, however, be scrupulous about endeavouring to drive such Thoughts entirely out of your Head; for it is good to prepare for Death, especially when we have long Accounts to make up. 'Tis with this we ought to be occupied, and not about what will happen after we are dead. I will send you our Genealogy as soon as I get it in Order; and I should be glad to know who Mr. Jenkins was, for that is the darkest Thing I find in it. Let me desire you to divert yourself, never to be alone, to eat sparingly and often, to take the Air on Horseback, and not dreaming in a Chair, as I fancy I just now behold you. Adieu. You tell me nothing about your Wife; but you will never be happy nor well with God, if you do not live well with one another.

Yours.

LETTER XI.

On the Loss of a Friend. To a Gentleman.

NO one can be more affected with your Grief than I am, nor is there any Thing which I would not do to alleviate it. I am very sensible that your resigned Temper is the most solid of all Remedies; but though this serves to keep one from murmuring and complaining, it does not prevent the Impressions of Sorrow, nor hinder the Heart from pining under a Loss so great as that which you have lately met with. Treat yourself then as you would certainly treat another Person under the same Circumstances; you would prescribe Diversion and Amusement, which, as your Friend, I take the Liberty to remind you of. Would to God I could supply

ply the Place of the Person Heaven has deprived you of. Yesterday I saw our Friend Atkinson; I cannot be easy while I see his Merit so ill rewarded.

Yours ever.

L E T T E R XII.

Reflections on Mortality, occasioned by the Death of a Friend.

S I R,

YOUR Reflection on Mr. Wells's Death remind-
ing me very forcibly of the Brevity and Uncer-
tainty of human Life, brought on that pensive Frame of
Mind which I am but too apt to indulge; in which
every Amusement and Pursuit of this transitory State ap-
pears beneath the Regard of a rational Being. I say *too*
apt to indulge, because a constant Remembrance of these
Things might unfit us for the common Offices of Life,
and detach us wholly from Society. Who that considers
the Unsteadiness of the Soul and the Frailty of the
Body, with their Relation to each other, can avoid Se-
riousness? who that considers the Fears and Doubts of
the former while the latter is afflicted by Pain or Sick-
ness, or that while the Body appears sound and healthy,
the Soul may make an unprepared Exit, can avoid the
Impression of Melancholy? who that reflects upon "the
limited Space of our Existence in Comparison with
Eternity, but must behold with Contempt the Bustle that
is made about passing this short Period, and the various
Aims and Ambitions which are crowded into it?" In
the Eye of him who gave us Being, the utmost Extent
of it is no more than a Moment of Duration scarce per-
ceptible; which Reflection alone is sufficient to destroy
our Attachment to the World, to render its Grandeur
contemptible. But it is well for Mankind that they do
not long retain these Ideas; that their Passions flow in
and destroy their Philosophy. Whither am I going? I
must put an End to this Letter and to these hasty Ob-
servations, and can only at present return my Ac-
knowledgments for your literary Remarks. I am,

Sir, Yours, &c.

LETTER XIII.

From a young Clergyman to his generous Friend, who had procured him a Living.

LET me seize a few Minutes before I set out for Melton, to offer the sincerest Thanks which grateful Affection can dictate to that Friend who has, in a Manner so peculiar to himself, sought my Advantage, and exerted his Activity and Interest for my Sake, at a Time when Distress sat heavy at his own Heart. My Surprize was almost equal to my Satisfaction when I found that I was presented to the Living of Melton. But I was soon informed to whom I was indebted for a Recommendation so warm and flattering, though I fear heightened by the partial Tongue of Friendship. You are not, I understand, exactly acquainted with the Value of the Living which has fallen to me in Consequence of Mr. Abraham's Promise to you. I hear that the nett Income is an hundred and fifty Pounds a Year, with a very convenient and complete House, lately built, situated in a very pleasant Garden; that the surrounding Country is delightful, the Neighbourhood good, an agreeable Village, and the Church at a very desirable Distance. But I will give you a more particular Account when I have seen the Place, to which I am hastening, being

Most affectionately yours,
THOMAS JACOBS.

LETTER XIV.

From Mr. Needler to Mr. Duncombe, on the Imperfection of our present Condition.

Dear Sir,

HAVING received your obliging Letter, I went on Tuesday according to Appointment, to visit Mr. Hughes; but to my Surprize was informed that he was very ill, and had just fallen asleep. He is, it seems,

seems, relapsed into his Fever. I returned Home melancholy, and disappointed, reflecting upon the Imperfection and Uncertainty of all earthly Happiness. How many Advantages, said I to myself, must concur in a single Person to render him completely happy? Nature, Virtue, and Fortune, must each contribute their Share; and if any one of these fails to bring in its Quota, his Happiness is lame and imperfect. And how rarely do we find them conspiring to favour the same Person? Suppose him endued by Nature with a clear Understanding; by the Principles of Virtue with Piety, Justice, and the most improved Humanity; possessed of the Esteem and Love of all that know him; if a Fever revels in his Veins and exhales his Spirits, how little Taste and Enjoyment can he have of all the rest? The Stoicks indeed thought Virtue alone sufficient to Happiness, and thence concluded that since it is in every Man's Power to be virtuous it is also in every Man's Power to be happy; but alas! every Day's Experience too clearly proves the Vanity of this Notion. Human Life is liable to many Miseries, which all our Virtue and Prudence can neither prevent nor remedy. They may indeed in some Measure contribute to support and buoy us up under these fatal Calamities; but to remove them entirely is beyond their Power. I am, Sir, your much obliged

And most affectionate humble Servant,
H. NEEDLER.

LETTER XV.

From a Lady who had lost her Son, a promising Youth of Nineteen.

Sir,

I AM very sensibly obliged by the very kind Compassion you express for me under my heavy Affliction. The Meditations you have favoured me with afford the strongest Motives for Consolation that can be offered to a Person under my unhappy Circumstances. The dear lamented Son I have lost was the Pride and Joy of my Heart;

Heart; but I hope I may be the more easily excused for having looked on him in this Light, since he was not so from the outward Advantages he possessed, but from the Virtues and Rectitude of his Mind. The Prospects which flattered me in Regard to him, were not drawn from his distinguished Rank or from the Beauty of his Person; but from the Hopes that his Example would have been serviceable to the Cause of Virtue, and shewn the younger Part of the World that it was possible to be cheerful without being foolish or vicious, and to be religious without Severity or Melancholy. His whole Life was one uninterrupted Course of Duty and Obedience to his Parents, and when he found the Hand of Death upon him, his only Regret was to think of the Agonies which must rend their Hearts; for he was perfectly contented to leave the World, as his Conscience did not reproach him with any presumptuous Sins, and he hoped his Errors would be forgiven. Thus he resigned his innocent Soul into the Hands of his merciful Creator, on the Evening of the Birth-Day which completed him nineteen. You will not be surprised, Sir, that the Death of such a Son should occasion the deepest Sorrow; yet at the same Time it leaves us the most comfortable Assurance that he is far happier than our fondest Wishes could have made him. This must enable us to support the Remainder of Years, which it shall please God to allot for us here, without Murmuring or Discontent; and quicken our Endeavours to prepare ourselves to follow him to that happy Place whither our dear valuable Child is gone before us. I beg the Continuance of your Prayers, and am, Sir,

Yours.

LETTER XVI.

To a Lady, seized with immoderate Grief on her Husband's Death.

Dear Madam,

IT was with extreme Concern that I read your last Letter. Indeed, I sincerely sympathize in your Affliction. I don't wonder that the sudden Death of a Person

Person so dear to you as his Lordship, should damp all your Spirits, and make the most sprightly Pen that ever wrote deal in the most solemn and awful Truths. Sickness, Pain, and Death, have indeed a natural Fendency to check the Sallies of a gay Disposition; to call back the Thoughts from the pleasurable Amusements, the vain Pursuits of Life, and for a while to confine them to the more important Review of our own Conduct. They are bitter Medicines, but such as have the most healing Virtues; Virtues adapted to strengthen, improve, and exalt the Mind. To be forced to take a final Leave of that Form we love; to bid a long Adieu to the Spirit with whom we have daily conversed with pleasing Inter-course—is very hard, and the sensible Heart-strings must feel the dreadful Rent, the distressful Mind is torn with Anguish. But, O my dear Madam, why do you say *for ever?* The Separation is not surely for ever! soon you will see him in a more lovely Form! soon the well-known Mind, cloathed in heavenly Radiance, will congratulate your Arrival on the blissful Shore. Why do you complain that “he is now a senseless Lump of Clay? Mistake not the Object of your Affection; he is all Life and active Spirit. Those shining Virtues that, while you enumerate them, seem to add to your Grief, and which, you tell me, will ever renew your Sorrow, ought to be the pleasing Source of Joy. Though you lament his Loss, lament not his Exaltation, nor derive your Tears from the very Subject of his Felicity. He is in the Land of Virtue; its native Clime. How often do you repeat the Words *poor dear Man*, and dwell on Sounds expressive only of Pity! Pity, Madam, is not for Angels. It is you alone who is the Sufferer. Could you but be sensible of his Happiness, Extasy and transporting Rapture would dry up your Tears. Would you wish him back? would you have him, to please you, leave the Seats of Bliss, and exchange the Regions of unfading Felicity for a World of Sin, at best but a transient Happiness intermingled with Pain and Trouble? No; this you cannot wish. “But he was happy too soon”—too soon, would you say, his Pain and Sorrow and dangerous State of Trial were at an End? Would you have prolonged his Misery? You certainly mistake

your Motive, for this cannot be Love. Recollect yourself then, my dear Friend, and endeavour to lose the Sense of your own private apparent Loss in the delightful Contemplation of his transcendent Goodness. Repose yourself on the sovereign Will of the Almighty, whose Determinations are always safest, wisest, best. Let every dewy Tear be wiped away by the Happiness of him you loved. Love him still, but be disinterested in your Affection ; imitate him and rejoice in his Virtues, and while you dwell with Pleasure on his Felicity, anticipate your own. I will add no more, but believe me to be, with the most tender Sympathy and Commisera-tion,

Dear Madam,

Your very affectionate Friend,

THOMASIN CHAMBERS.

LETTER XVII.

To a Lady, on the Comforts and Advantages of Religion.

Dear Madam,

THE same Precaution is necessary, as for me, since what I now write is only for your own Eye. The painful Conviction I have acquired of the unhappy Situation of my Husband was completed before your Letter arrived to strengthen my Suspicions ; I will confess that I did not escape that Chagrin and Dejection of which you express your Apprehensions. Miss Elliot's Lover, as I told you in a former Letter, I designed to be intimately acquainted with, and soon found a very natural Occasion in a Walk where we met her ; he assured me that his Esteem for me would have induced him to be the first in the Offer of Friendship, could he have presumed to take the Liberty. But I soon acquainted him with my Motives, and was liberal in her Praises, in Encomiums on her Gracefulness and modest Deportment. I added, that I could not give Ear, without the utmost Indignation, to those who would persuade me she was in keeping ; for a Life of Guilt could not wear so easy and chaste

an Aspect. I told him that I would carry my Frankness very far, by declaring that my Concern for this unfortunate Girl had first made me studious of cultivating an Acquaintance which I hoped might prove of Service to her. I expostulated with him on reducing a Woman which might have been an Ornament and a Pleasure to Society, to Shame and Solitude? He replied, that he would be equally frank with me; observing, that in vulgar Eyes his Connection with Miss Elliot has something reprehensible in it, but that a Person, like me, who should be above Prejudice, would be of a different Opinion. He asserted that this only was wounded by such a Conduct; that he respected Miss Elliot as much as if she were his Wife; and that many Husbands would think themselves very unfortunate to be as faithful to their Wives as he was to her, without any Constraint, and purely from the Inclination of their own Hearts. He owned that this wretched Prejudice had banished her from the Society of Women, but that she lost nothing by it except noisy Impertinence and sure Disgust; and that a Woman of her Disposition was happy to be free from the Mortification. The little Circle of Friends which she has around her amply indemnifies her for losing the Conversation of the jealous, the impertinent, and the vain; and if there were many like you, Madam, she would suffer infinitely by being deprived of their Society. Till she had the Honour of knowing you from my Descriptions, she was never sensible of the Inconvenience. But his Compliment was little attended to, and I asked if he esteemed as nothing the Crimes into which he had urged her; whether he had thought of the Consequences in a future State; or if he could think without Horror of being her Associate in eternal Misery? Though he forced a Smile, he acknowledged that, on so serious a Subject, he could not dissemble his Sentiments;—but what was my Surprize on hearing him express, You have too good an Understanding, Madam, to believe what you say to me on that Subject, and I should never forgive the Marquis if he has not yet cured you of the Errors of Childhood. The Horror of his Discourse made my Hair stand up on my Head, though I had Power to conceal the Agitations of my Mind. I asked him with an Air

of Calmness if he thought the Marquis so firmly established in his Principles, as to be incapable of changing them? The Change, he observed, would surprize him, and he spoke it with an Air of Assurance, which, without the greatest Violence to myself, would have made me really angry; the Marquis is not yet come to those Years of Childhood into which Men sometimes relapse, and till then I see no Reason to fear any "Change which would disgrace his Reason. One would have thought, such was his Air of Assurance, that his Irreligion was founded on incontestible Proofs. I had Reason to fear that it was so; but a Thought occurred which emboldened me, that Christianity is not merely for the learned, but for all Mankind without Exception. If the simple and ignorant are bound to believe, their Faith, I thought, must be obvious. This encouraged me to sound the Depth of his Reasons. But his Objections were frivolous and easy to be refuted. Common Sense was fully sufficient to annihilate those Arguments which he thought victorious and unanswerable. Though I found he was staggered, I could not determine in what Respect my Arguments had made an Impression on him, and he left me without any Intimation of an Inclination to change his Principles. One Thing, which was very simple, I had much insisted on. Supposing, said I, that an Infidel has as much Reason to doubt as a Christian to believe; yet upon the Principles of common Sense I should chuse to be a Christian. Such a Conduct would expose me to no Risque. Religion, if it had no Foundation, would at least be a comfortable Error, which would support me under Circumstances of Distress, and deprive Death of its Horrors by the Hopes of an happier Existence. But an impious Man, if mistaken, runs an alarming Risque, and must be dreadfully deceived. I have to hope the happy Change occasioned by this Discourse presages that of my Husband. The Earl came to me the following Morning, and confessed his Inability to sleep; though I should have told you that the Marquis was in London for six Days. My Profelyte agreed with me on the Necessity of his concealing our Conversation and its Effects; and the remaining Doubts he had upon his Mind were removed by the pious and learned Dr. James, to whom I recom-

recommended him. But he has undertaken to change my Husband's Principles, and wishes me to appear ignorant of his having ever obtained any other. If he should voluntarily shut his Eyes against the Light, I should never be able to survive his Obstinacy. But he is arrived, and enquires if I have written to you ; I have excused myself with observing that I would do it to-morrow Morning. The Earl will take an early Opportunity of laying the first Foundations of a Conversion I so much desire. I know not how I shall acquit myself of the Letter I am to write in their Absence ; but you may expect a Tincture of that Anxiety under which I now labour.

Adieu, my dear Madam,

Yours.

LETTER XVIII.

From Archibishop Herring to Mr. Duncombe, in his last Illness.

Dear Sir,

YOU may be sure if I had been in any good Condition of Health and Spirits, you would not have been so long without Thanks for your last kind Letter. I continue extremely out of Order, I think in a confirmed Dropsy ; and though I am sure Dr. Wilmot has done all that Art and Friendship can do for me, I rather lose Ground. I have now been near half a Year in this dismal Way, worse than the acutest Pain, because of its Duration ; and every Thing I take feeds the Distemper, while at the same Time it prolongs Life.

Tho' ready oft the Port t' obtain,
I'm shipwreck'd into Life again.

I know who sent me hither, and how much it is my Duty to attend his Summons for a Removal ; but Life is over with me, and sometimes, in my Airings, I repeat two pretty Lines of Parnell,

But what are Fields, or Flowers, or Air, to me ?
Ah ! tasteless all, if not enjoy'd with thee,
O Health !

I am, dear Sir,

Your assured Friend,

Croydon House, June 22, 1756. Tho. CANTUAR,

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LETTER XIX.

From a Lady, in Answer to a Letter of Condolence on the Loss of a Friend.

Dear Madam,

I Am greatly obliged to you for the kind Concern you express for me. I am in better Health than I could expect, but dare not tell you the State of my Mind; for your Sentiments are so much above the Weakness of human Nature, that you can scarcely allow Affections the Weakness which will attend on those whose Minds are formed for soft Passions. I look upon yours, though very humane, as of the masculine Kind, and when you are afflicted you would scorn the womanish Relief of Tears. You might perhaps allow less Minds that childish Folly in the first Attack of Sorrow; but you would expect, after the first Transport of Passion was over, that Reason, Resolution, and Resignation should take Place. I will admire your Way of thinking, but must now, as I have long done, despair of being able to follow your Example. I am engaged in a vast deal of Business, and hope, if I am not so regular a Correspondent, you will forgive me. I flatter myself with the pleasing Prospect of returning to England next Summer, and then your Conversation will, I trust, form my Mind to Submission, and teach me to behave as I ought in order to preserve the Title of,

My dear Madam,

Yours.

LETTER XX.

From a Lady in Town to her Friend in the Country, describing her Husband's dangerous Sickness.

YOU will not wonder, my dear Madam, at my Silence as to the Person and Character of our new Sovereign, when I tell you I have not been nearer to her than seeing her at the Coronation; for though there have

have been Masquerades and Balls at Court, and a regular Drawing-room twice a Week, I have been at none of them. Poor Mr. T. has been very ill, and still continues so: My Mind suffers the most cruel Torture for him, and my Fears find much Danger in his Illness. If I had a little of your Philosophy on this Occasion, but, alas! I have not one Grain, though I strive hourly to arm my Mind to support the Shock I dread with any Degree of Decency. Now I doubly feel the Absence of my Friends, and yours in particular, whose Tenderness and Strength of Reason would soothe and argue me into a little Fortitude. Chance has brought me acquainted with a Gentleman and his Wife, who are very kind; they scarcely leave me, and as he is very easy with all that are about him, relieve me by their Attentions to him while I take the Opportunity of procuring a little Sleep. They are now both with him that I may go to Bed, which I have not done for three Nights past; but I was willing, nevertheless, to catch this Moment before I enjoy that Rest, to assure you that in all Vicissitudes of Fortune or Allotments of Providence, I am,

My dear Madam,

Yours affectionately.

LETTER XXI.

To a Young Clergyman, on the Subject of Oratory.

SIR,

SINCE you have thought proper to consult me upon the Discourse which I lately heard, I must tell you in my usual Style of Freedom, that I found many excellent Observations in it, and much to be applauded. But the Affectation by which it was enervated had less of my Approbation than perhaps you might expect. It looks like a Work which has been made and painted at a Lady's Toilette. For the future let me advise that your Heart may speak when you mount the Rostrum, and you will speak well. Fancy should be employed only to make a Border for the Painting, but you have made it the Foundation of your Discourse. A good Orator

should keep a Medium between the Italian and the French, or in other Words, between a Giant and a Dwarf. If you suffer yourself to be spoiled by the Manners of the Age, you will never be able to get rid of that affected Eloquence which tortures both Words and Thoughts. To a young Man of Abilities it is of great Importance to receive such Advice, and above all to follow it ; and I depend upon your Modesty to take it in good Part. With all possible Desire of seeing you a perfect Orator, I am,

Sir,

Yours, &c.

LETTER XXII.

From a Clergyman to his Friend, on Philosophy and Religion.

My dear Sir,

MANAGE Matters so that your Philosophy may not deprive you of a Title to Heaven, and that I may there have the Pleasure of seeing you. I should be extremely concerned and grieved to lose Sight of you for an Eternity, who have so much contributed to my present Amusement. You are one of those singular Men, both in Head and Heart, whose Friendship we would wish to continue beyond the Grave, when we have once the Pleasure of knowing them ; and surely no Person can have more Reasons than you to be persuaded that the Soul is incorporeal and immortal. Years pass away for the Philosopher, as they do for the Fool ; but in what they are to terminate, must engage the Mind of the thinking Man. Confess that I know how to accommodate my Sermons, so as not to startle your Men of Fashion ; and if Discourses of this Nature were more frequently made with as much Brevity and Friendship, you would listen, perhaps, sometimes to the Preachers. But it is not enough to hear them ; whatever is said should find its Way to the Heart. May it produce good Fruit there ; and may the amiable M——— become as good a Christian as he is a Philosopher, and then I shall be doubly his Friend and Servant,

E. B.

LETTER XXIII.

On the Impiety of arraigning Providence. To a young Lady.

My dear Matilda,

I Cannot think without shuddering upon that wicked Family, which can presumptuously arraign the Providence of an all-wise and all-sufficient Being, for what their own Follies have justly brought on their Heads. Are we to think lightly of the Deity's Almighty Power or providential Operations, because every Man is not rich, or because every Spot is not covered with Flowers ; Is an Artist to be blamed, because Gold and Vermillion do not fill up the whole Canvas ? How unfit are we to pronounce our Opinions, when we see so very small a Part of the Designs of Providence explained ! and yet how commonly do we hear the Generality of the World ascribing particular Incidents to God's Judgments. What an impious Profanation of Language ! what a presumptuous and daring Arrogance ! Let us wait the Event of Things, the Causes of which we are doubtful at least, if not wholly ignorant ; that will teach us the Expediency of those light Afflictions, which are but for a Moment, however apparently severe for a Season. We must not judge of a rich Piece of Tapestry, when wrapt up in its Plaits and Folds ; it must be displayed and expanded before us, to discern the Skill of the Contrivance, the judicious Variation of the Colours, the Beauty of the Execution, and the Harmony of the whole. An irregular Distribution of Happiness and Misery among the good and bad, we are apt to lament ; but seldom consider what is the proper Happiness of Man, or who are the good and bad. We cannot expect Effects different from their Causes ; Nature must not be inverted, and different Causes must produce different Effects. The Virtues of a Saint will not preserve us from the immediate Death of Immersion in a boiling Furnace. The good and virtuous Martin should not complain, if he is neither so rich or robust as his Neighbour, the Fox-hunting Squire ; and for this obvious Reason, that the Means which produce Wisdom and Virtue, are extremely different from the Means which procure Health and Riches. But

as “Grapes spring not from Thorns, nor Figs from Thistles;” so we should wait with Patience God’s own Time, to discover the Mysteries of his Providence. It is then only that we shall plainly see the apparent Expediency of our present Afflictions; and the gushing Tear, the heaving Sigh, will be changed into Songs of Joy and Hymns of Wonder. I am,

My dear Matilda’s
most affectionate.

LETTER XXIV.

On the Duty of Resignation. To a Friend.

LE T Resignation, my dear Garforth, to the Will of the Almighty be one of the chief Duties of your Life. How dreadful is a hardened Disposition, which will not yield to the Dispensations of its Maker! of which we have a melancholy Proof in Dorothea. Her Loss indeed was severe in the Death of the worthy Theodosius, to whom in a few Days she was to have been united for Life. Every Thing was prepared, even the bridal Ornaments and the costly Furniture; but the cold Hand of Death suddenly seized him, and he was lodged in the “dusky Grave.” Dorothea, since this melancholy Period, though several Years are elapsed, has excluded herself from all Society; her Tears still flow, and Sorrow and Despair, notwithstanding all Endeavours to console her, are her inseparable Companions. In vain do her kind Friends suggest, that Wisdom gives not Way to Misery, but always seizes the Hold which Reason offers both for present Support and future Deliverance; that Grief is the most senseless and insignificant Passion in the World, which regards only the past that cannot be recalled, and is so far from helping us, that it increases our Burden. The World can give us but little; and the Air we breathe in, Food, Health, and Liberty, constitute the whole of our real Wants, for which Thousands are now pining. All the rest is boundless and imaginary. If we look back our past Life, we shall find

find it a continued Series of Mercies, Escapes, and Deliverances, for which we cannot be sufficiently thankful. Are we to repine at our Lot, or to arraign Providence, because we are involved in a present Perplexity? Let us look back and consider, whether at some preceding Time we were not in one much greater; and then let us ask ourselves, how we were supported under such a Calamity? or how we extricated ourselves from such an impending Evil? The same Almighty Power which supported me with his tender Mercies in my former Perplexities, will still continue; for his Arm is not shortened, nor is his Power the less. I am convinced that, in his own good Time, he will either remove, or teach me to bear the present Evil; and to Him I look up as to "my Glory, my Defender, and the Lifter up of my Head." By reflecting how many Evils we have already escaped, we may learn to bear the present Grievance with Patience; and to consider that the Evil we dread may not come to pass, or if it does, that it may be alleviated by an hundred unforeseen Incidents. "We should not take up Sorrow upon Interest," lest we should become Bankrupts. The lowest State on Earth may practise the heavenly Virtue of Resignation as its sweetest Comfort. You may sweeten your melancholy Hours with the Practice of those heavenly Virtues, which I fear are seldom known in gilded Roofs and splendid Palaces; the mild Virtues of Resignation, Purity, Devotion, Patience, and Humility. But it is Time to finish this Epistle, and to assure you that I am

Most sincerely yours.

LETTER XXV.

To a Lady, on the Death of her Husband.

THERE was no Sorrow sunk deeper into me a long Time past, than that I conceived upon the Death of my dear Friend, your Husband. The last Office I could do him was to put him in his Grave; and I am sorry to have met others there, who had better Means

to come in a Coach with six Horses than I, in so mean Equipage, to perform the last Act of Respect to so worthy a Friend. I have sent you herewith an Elegy, which my melancholy Muse hath breathed out upon his Hearse. I shall be very careful about the Tomb you design him, and will think upon an Epitaph. I beg you will present my Respects to Mrs. Ayres. So wishing you all Comfort and Contentment, I rest

Yours most ready to serve you.

LETTER XXVI.

Reflections on a well-spent Life, and the Advantages of it at the Hour of Death. To a noble Lord.

My Lord,

YOUR late Letter affected me with two contrary Passions, with Gladness and Sorrow. The Beginning of it dilated my Spirits with Apprehensions of Joy, that you are so well recovered of your late Sicknes, which I heartily congratulate; but the Conclusion of your Lordship's Letter contracted my Spirits, and plunged them in a deep Sense of just Sorrow, while you please to write me News of my dear Father's Death. Truly, my Lord, it is the heaviest News that ever was sent me; though when I recollect myself, and consider the Fairness and Maturity of his Age, and that it was rather a gentle Dissolution than a Death, and when I contemplate the infinite Advantage he hath got by this Change, it much lightens the Weight of my Grief. If ever human Soul entered Heaven, surely he is there; such was his constant Piety to God, his singular Indulgence to his Children, his Charity to his Neighbours, and his Candour in reconciling Differences; such was his generous Disposition and his unwearied Course in Actions of Virtue, that the greatest Felicity I can wish my Soul, when it shakes off these Rags of Flesh, is to ascend to his and to partake of the same Bliss. Your Lordship will excuse my taking this abrupt Leave; as soon as my Sorrow is a little digested, I shall more fully testify how much I am

Your Lordship's very humble Servant.

LETTER XXVII.

From a Clergyman to his Friend, during his last Sickness.

I Am truly very ill, but what comforts me is, that it is not of my own seeking. It has always been my Opinion that every Man should be careful of his Health; for by destroying the Springs of Life, we put it out of our Power to discharge our Duties. But Sickness, when it is not an Effect produced by some Excess, but is sent directly from God, is the most proper Penitence to expiate our Sins and Errors. It scatters a wholesome Bitterness over the Pleasures of this Life; it shades the Objects which seem to dazzle us; it insensibly detaches us from whatever is mortal, and makes us quite familiar with Death. Since the Beginning of my Illness I have been more sensible than ever of my own Insignificance; I have seen that my Body is only an Edifice which tumbles to Pieces when least expected. Sometimes my Disorder is acute, and sometimes it seems to sleep, but it is only to wake with double Violence. From the Moment of our Birth indeed we are exposed to all Kinds of Infirmities and Accidents, and may look upon every Thing around us as the immediate Cause of our Ruin; but what the Appetites lose, the Soul should recover. Indeed the severest Distemper is but slight to a Christian Philosopher, who is employed only in heavenly Matters. If the Stoicks suffered with Constancy, who had no Motive to influence them but ridiculous Vanity; what a Reproach is it for Christians to sink under the Violence of bodily Distempers. But alas! it is easy to preach fine Precepts, and we are frequently only intrepid in Speculation. I say this only with Regard to myself, who, after having mentioned those Things which are the most capable of supporting me, attend much more than I ought to my Sufferings. However, the more severe they are, the more ought I to look towards Heaven; the only Place where there is neither Pain nor Sorrow. It will give me Pleasure to see you as soon as you can; for you would be here this Moment, if my Desires were Wings

to

to transport you hither. I have something to say to you relative to my Situation, which cannot be committed to Writing.

I am,

Yours.

LETTER XXVIII.

From the same to the same, in a more advanced State of his Illness.

YOUR Correspondent is now reduced almost to a Skeleton, and employing his emaciated Fingers in writing to you. Had I viewed only the Glory of this World, I would have said of Death, when he presented to me the Cup of Bitterness, “ let it pass from me ;” but my Thoughts happily were taken up with Heaven, so that I could exclaim to myself, “ how brilliant and how pleasing is this Cup ! ” There is certainly no greater Blessing upon Earth, than to unite ourselves to Death before he strikes the last Blow ; but as I seem to draw him in with my Breath, he appears to be disarmed of his Terrors, and as my Days diminish they become more valuable, by bringing me nearer to Eternity. But my Pains are so violent, they oblige me to lay down my Pen ; God only knows when, if ever, I shall resume it.

—After seven Days and Nights of continual Torture, I yet live and enjoy a Moment’s Ease, and once more take the Pen into my Hand. My Mind acquires new Strength as my Body decays, which I consider as a peculiar Favour of Heaven ; there is only one Thing which gives me real Affliction. I have not done all the Good I ought to have done, for which I can only pray to God that he would pardon me through the Merits and Mercies of a Redeemer, and deign to accept my small Remains of Life as an Expiation for my Sins. If I had any Intervals of Tranquillity, for I am not always Master of my Faculties, I would recommend to the different Sects of Christians the Cultivation of Peace and Charity, the distinguished Mark of the Religion they profess. But I wish to die as I have lived, with Gratitude to all

who have done me Service, and always your Friend. It has been the divine Will to shew me, in a dreadful Manner, the Emptiness of worldly Grandeur, while I was surrounded with it; by mixing for me a Cup of Gall and Wormwood. But nothing surely can be a greater Happiness to a Christian than to die like his afflicted Saviour; and if I have not the Consolation of seeing you again on Earth, I shall expect you in Eternity, where I trust we shall enjoy the invaluable Blessing of meeting again in Heaven, who will then be our Universe, our Element, and our Life. Adieu,

Yours.

LETTER XXIX.

On the melancholy Effects of youthful Dissipation.. To a young Lady.

WHAT! do I see my dear Harriet in Tears! quite oppressed and overwhelmed with Grief! I wonder not that your gentle Bosom, the Seat of spotless Innocence, should feel the utmost Pity, mixed with Horror, at the melancholy Spectacle you have lately seen. To see an unhappy Youth, not yet arrived to his twentieth Year, brought out upon the Scaffold, amidst an infinite Number of Spectators, must be awful indeed! to see his afflicted Parents attending the sad Scene, with streaming Eyes, and the dying Youth in unutterable Anguish, how the Blood shudders! The Crime of Forgery, which he had unwittingly been drawn in to commit, to support his Dissipation, is of a heinous Nature; but Pity for his premature Fate is great. With far other Hopes and other Expectations did his fond Parents educate him! and how anxiously did they watch the Progress of those Talents which proved his Ruin! Bad Company proved his Bane. The smallest Deviation from the right Path is to be shunned like a Pestilence; for a fatal Detection must some Time or other be the Consequence. Young Men, on their entering Life, should consider the Folly and Emptiness of Midnight Meetings;

Meetings; they should reflect upon the Consequences of expensive Revellings, the Shame and Remorse, and the constant Fear of Duns and Creditors; and they would not hesitate a Moment to prefer the Pleasures which constantly attend a Life of Regularity. Books and the Sciences, not to mention bodily Exercises of all Kinds, will afford constant and noble Employment. The old English Proverb, "that Honesty is the best Policy," contains as much Truth as good Sense. For mere Self-love, if Principle does not, should induce us to be honest. If, upon the first Assault of any Temptation, we would fly from it with Horror as from a Viper, we should avoid most bad Actions; but we parley with Danger, and suffer it to return again and again. But if we once deliberate, we are lost. It should serve to check the thoughtless and giddy-minded, before they comitt an Act of imprudent Folly or Wickedness, what a Triumph it will be to their Enemies, and what a Grief to their Friends, they would not behave as they do. The great Point is, for young Minds to gain that intrepid Virtue, which could make them firmly resist what their Reason disapproves. Believe me,

My dear Harriet,

Yours sincerely.

LETTER XXX.

From a Lady to her Friend, on the Pleasures and Advantages of Morality.

YOU know I am always a little prepossessed with my Reading; and therefore it is for the Interest of those I converse or correspond with, that I should read none but the best Books. That which is uppermost with me at present is a Treatise of Morality, by an anonymous Writer; he has likewise a Treatise on the Means of preserving Peace among Men which delights me. Never did I see any Thing so really useful, so full of Fire and Imagination. If you have not yet read it, I desire you will; and if you have, I would recom-

recommend your reading it over again with fresh Attention. I think that all Mankind in general are included in it; I persuade myself it was made for me, and hope to profit by it, at least I shall do my Endeavours towards it. You know I could never bear to hear old People say, I am too old to mend; I should much sooner pardon young People for saying, I am too young. Youth in itself is so lively, that were the Soul and Mind to be as perfect as the Body, we could not forbear adoring it; but when Youth is no more, then it is high Time to think of making ourselves as perfect as possible, and to endeavour to make up the Loss of Beauty by the Graces of the Mind. I have long made this the Subject of my Meditations, and am therefore determined to work every Day at my Mind, my Soul, my Heart, and my Sentiments. My Mind at present is full of this, and therefore I fill my Letter with it, having nothing of much Consequence besides to send you. Adieu, my dear Madam,

Yours ever.

LETTER XXXI.

In Answer to an Epistle describing the Sickness of a Friend, with Reflections on a Death-bed Scene. To a Lady.

IT was not without Reason, my dear Friend, that you was concerned at the Illness of poor Sir James L. It was something very extraordinary, but I have taken a Liking to that young Fellow ever since I saw him in London. This makes me more ready to believe the good Things you say of him; though I think it extraordinary, the violent Fear he is in of Death. His Situation, such as you describe it to me, furnishes an admirable Subject for Reflection. It is certain, at that awful Period we must have a great Deal to trust to. This will occasion all our Despair and all our Uneasiness, and we shall then stand in Need of that Time which we now wish to pass away so sweetly; and willingly give up every Thing for one of those Days, which

we

we now let slip with so much Indifference. Such are my Meditations in my rural Walks. The Christian System of Morality is an excellent Remedy against all Evils; but then I would have it truly Christian, and free from those supernumerary Trappings with which it is too frequently encumbered, otherwise it is empty and unprofitable. The Doctor thinks I reason pretty well sometimes on this Subject; but then a Breath of Air, or the Dancing of a Sun-beam, dissipates the Reflections of the Night. I beseech Heaven to raise poor Sir James, of which I shall expect the earliest Intelligence. You could not have given me a smaller Idea of the Place I hold in Sir Thomas's Heart, than in telling me it is all which remains unoccupied by you. One must indeed be of a very easy Disposition to be satisfied with this. But I have only to say that I am, as ever,

Yours.

LETTER XXXII.

Religion, the only solid Foundation of Futurity. From a Tutor abroad to his Friend in England.

Dear Sir,

I hope this Letter will find you safely arrived at your peaceful Habitation, and that you found all your Friends in perfect Health. That you have employed some trusty Person to make Enquiries in Yorkshire concerning my worthy Parent, I make no Doubt; and that, if she is still living, you have transmitted to her the small Sum of Money I have by this Time been enabled to spare, to administer to her Wants. It is the Wish of my Soul to make that respectable Woman easy and happy in her old Age; to accomplish which my utmost Endeavours are always exerted. My young Friend is affected with extreme Melancholy, and I have therefore urged his Removal from a Place which revives in his Mind so many disagreeable Ideas. But I have also discovered, with great Pain, a strong Portion of Scepticism; and though I have endeavoured to remove it, how much have I wished for your Instruction to assist me in explaining what perhaps I am not sufficiently informed

informed in. My Lord is possessed of almost every good Quality, and is rational and impartial even to Self-condemnation ; he is virtuous from Principle, and is universally approved. He possesses every amiable Virtue, without any Consciousness of them, only as they are the Means of Happiness ; so that his Virtues have a certain Freedom and Elegance of Nature about them, which is inexpressibly charming. Indeed there is but one Shade to his Character, though sufficient, if it were to continue, to eclipse the whole ; but I trust in God that, through my humble Endeavours, it will be removed. I was surprised, as soon as I was certain of his Infidelity, at his regular Attention to religious Observations ; when he informed me, that one of the first Principles of a Deist is, to conform to the external Ceremonies of Worship for the Sake of Society. After enforcing the Sentiment of one of our English Divines, " That supposing an Infidel had as much Reason to doubt, as a Christian to believe, the Principles of common Sense would plead for the Christian ; for such a Conduct would expose him to no Risque, and Religion, if it had no Foundation, would be a comfortable Error, which would support us under Distress, and deprive Death of its Terrors, by the Hope of a happy Existence hereafter. But if an impious Man is mistaken, what a Risque does he run ! Dreadfully must he be undeuised !" He then said, that his Mind was unhinged by many Doubts which had been infused into him, as there were many Things he could not understand ; but added, that this will ever be the Case where different Religions have introduced Prejudices, Enthusiasms, and Scepticisms, and different Systems of Philosophy so confounded, and universal Deceit so undermined Truth, that if all Men's Actions and Principles could be thrown into one View, the imaginary Chaos would have less Confusion in it. To which I replied, that " our not being able to understand the most mysterious Parts of Christianity, is no Argument against the Truth of them. How many Things are there in Nature, which I cannot possibly doubt, and yet am totally ignorant of the Methods whereby many of them operate ; and of some I know not the Use ? Can you say what Purpose the fiery Comet

Comet answers? how its Motion is produced, or why its Period is so regular, though its Motion is so unequal, and its Course so eccentric? Not less conspicuous is the divine Goodness and Power in the Variety as well as the Multitude of living Creatures. Every green Leaf, that of the Sage for Instance, swarms with little Animals; view it through a Microscope, and you see it covered with a Kind of Cobweb, in which Multitudes of little active Creatures, with piercing Eyes, are busily employed. Examine the Nettle, and its whole Surface is covered over with Needles of the most perfect Polish, every one of which has three Points; these Needles rest on a Base, or Bag of flexible Substance, filled with a sharp poisonous Liquor, which is discharged at the Extremity of every Point of the Needles that cover the Surface of the Nettle. The Poison, which excites the Sense of Pain, is thrown out from a Hole visible in every Point. Indeed the great Author of Nature has discovered himself to us in the Profusion of his Blessings, and engages our Affections by his boundless Muniti-
cence; and if a due Sense of such inestimable Benefac-
tions does not lead us to a Knowledge of him who is the Fountain from whence they flow, we must not only be shamefully remiss but ungrateful. We should reflect on the End for which the Beauty, Order, and immense Treasure of the whole was intended; but we should be careful not to extend our Enquiries beyond the Li-
mits prescribed to human Reason.

I am ever, dear Sir,

Your obliged and

Obedient Servant.

LETTER XXXIII.

*On the Death of Friends, with some useful Reflections.
To a Gentleman.*

Dear Sir,

I Am greatly concerned to acquaint you that the ani-
mable Lady C. is no more. It is needless for me to
mention my Lord's Distraction of Mind, or the Distress
of

of all her Friends on this melancholy Occasion. The young Duke of B. is inconsolable, and regrets her as if he had been himself the distinguished Object of her Affections. I have done every Thing in my Power to soothe and support them ; but being conscious how unequal I am to the due Performance of the Task, I wish incessantly for your Assistance. I have urged to my noble Friends, that to lament for the happy is Impiety and Folly. To feel for one's own Loss is the Impulse of Humanity ; but a too great Indulgence of Affliction is contrary to the Laws of Christianity. But, you may believe, I did not intrude these Sentiments until a fit Opportunity. There are, in Truth, certain Moments when the Music of the Spheres would be discordant, and when the Condolence of our dearest Friends is an unwelcome Interruption. The Death of my respectable Friend and Tutor has also called for my own Resignation, while I have been exerting myself to reason others into Tranquillity ; to his Memory I owe every Thing, for he was my only Comforter and Support, when my unkind Relations had plunged my most amiable Mother into the greatest Distress. What Judgment, what Knowledge, and what Virtue are gone with him to the Grave ! Would to God he could have left me his Learning and Experience in Life ! A Legacy of 1500 Pounds he has indeed bequeathed to me ; and if my Mother has survived her Misfortunes, let me trouble you to receive it from his Executor, and transmit it to her. If she is no more, lay it out in any Manner your Wisdom shall direct. But I am called to the young Duke, who has had a Fall from his Horse, and has received a violent Contusion on the Head. The Surgeons are just arrived, and declare him to be in the utmost Danger.— The Duke again sends for me.—In a very feeble Voice, he has thus addressed me, “ My dear Friend, my Obligations to you are inexpressible. I love you with the Tenderness of a Brother, and as I find myself dying, you will soon be sensible I am not ungrateful. Persons who give up their Time, and sacrifice all their Inclinations to the Humours of others, cannot be overpaid by any Thing we can do for them. I know, my dear Friend, added he, how much you have suppressed your own

own Grief to mitigate ours ; but this is a small Obligation in Comparison of the new Lights you have afforded me. The little Charlotte and you will share equally of two thirds of my large Possessions." He now grew faint, but soon recovered ; in two Days after the Fever came on, and now all Hopes are extinguished, as nothing but his Death is expected. I can write no more.

Yours.

THOMAS MORDEN.

LETTER XXXIV.

On the Rheumatism and its Effects. From a Lady to her Daughter.

GUESS, my dear Child, what is the Thing in the World that comes the quickest, and goes off the slowest ; that brings you the nearest to Health, and removes you the farthest from it ; that throws you into the most agreeable Situation imaginable, and at the same Time hinders you from enjoying it ; that flatters you with the most pleasing Hopes, and keeps you the longest from the Accomplishment of them. Cannot you guess ? Do you give it up ? Why, it is the Rheumatism. I have had it these three-and-twenty Days. Since the fourteenth, I have indeed been free from the Fever and Pains, and in this delightful Situation, thinking myself strong enough to walk, which is the whole of my Wishes, I find myself swelled all over, Feet, Legs, Hands, Arms. But this Swelling, which they call my Cure, and in Effect is so, is the sole Occasion of all my present Disquiet ; was I good for any Thing, I might make it of some Merit to me, but, however, I think I am pretty well got over it, and that in two Days more I shall be able to walk. I receive Letters every Day from our Friends in London, congratulating me on my Recovery. I have taken Dr. James's Powders, which have done me much Good, and I am going to take them again ; it is a never-failing Remedy in these Disorders,

orders, but should be taken under the Direction of experienced Persons. After this, I am promised a long Succession of Health. My first Step will be to return to London; therefore I desire you to calm all your Disquiets. You see how faithful an Account we have given you of the Affair, and that should make you easy. But I shall tire my Amanuensis, as I dare not yet ask my great Hand if it will please to write a Line or two; I must therefore bid you Adieu.

LETTER XXXV.

The EDITOR is so highly delighted with the following concise, pathetic, and elegant Letter, that he cannot refrain from giving it a Place in this Collection.

The late Lord Buckingham's Letter, when Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, to his particular Friend Dr. Cradock, Archbishop of Dublin; congratulating his Recovery from a putrid sore Throat.*

My Lord,

THE Enquiries of a Lord Lieutenant concerning the Health of an Archbishop, might have been deemed equivocal; but his sincere Congratulations on the Recovery of a respected Friend, cannot be misrepresented.

BUCKINGHAMSHIRE.

* Dr. Cradock was translated from Kilmore to Dublin in 1772, where in 1779 he was succeeded by Dr. Fowler.

LETTER XXXVI.

Reflections on an early and immature Death. To a Lady.

AT length, my dear Friend, after a Multitude of false Alarms and vain Hopes, we have lost the poor Marquis. I must confess to you that I have been greatly affected with the Death of this excellent young Man. If

If a truly Christian End can administer Cause of Comfort to Christians, we have the greatest Room for Consolation in the Assurance of his being happy. Never did any one shew more Resignation, a greater Love for God, nor a fuller Portion of Grace. If any one could have insured Life to him, he would not have accepted it; his Confidence in the Mercies of his God was so great, that there is the greatest Reason to believe his feeling such a Disposition of Soul as he would not willingly have hazarded on any Account. He lost a great Quantity of Blood, and was very much against being bled the last Time; but the Physicians over-ruled him, though he told them he saw they were resolved to kill him in Form. The Death of the Earl of D. which was thought to have proceeded from Want of being bled, has occasioned the Loss of many Lives since. I cannot connect any other Subject with this melancholy Relation, and therefore must conclude,

Yours.

LETTER XXXVII.

On the Inhumanity of speedy Interments, and the Necessity of steady and persevering Patience. To a Gentleman in England.

My dear Sir,

IN my last I mentioned that the Death of my young Friend was every Moment expected. On going into the Apartment I clasped the dead Body in my Arms, for such it was; and my Difficulty to practise those Lessons myself I had so frequently and recently given to others, was great indeed. As I was appointed his sole Executor, I was determined not to precipitate Matters; for I had heard of People's recovering after a long Interval of Cessation of the animal Spirits. I therefore thought it reasonable, humane, and consistent with my true Regard for his Memory, to act cautiously in his Interment. Some have even risen from their Graves after three Days; and both Charity and Religion

ligion recommend a sufficient Time to wait, that Life, if it still subsists, may manifest itself by Signs. I find it is customary here to inter Bodies in four-and-twenty Hours; but that is not a sufficient Time to distinguish between a real and apparent Death. After two Days had elapsed, I understood it was rumoured amongst the Domestics, that the Englishman was mad, as NO Corpse had been ever kept so long at Naples; perhaps some of them were impatient for their Legacies. But I let them speak on, and was determined to watch him till a Change took Place, before which I would not permit the last Offices to be done him. I was rewarded for my Trouble; his Breath appeared on the Glass after the third Day, and my Care, Attention, and Tenderness (under God) have happily restored him to my Wishes. What a Lesson! How many People are buried alive! how often is a premature Death occasioned by the selfish Disposition of hireling Nurses, to whose Care the last Offices are consigned by their *over-delicate* Friends, *fond* Husbands, *affectionate* Wives, or *dutiful* Heirs! how does their extreme Self-love prevent them, under the Disguise of Sensibility or weak Nerves, from proving the Sincerity of their Professions! How unchristian is it in England to leave the House of a great Man the very Instant he dies! or to send a poor one to the Undertaker, who furnishes every Thing for the Occasion; as if all Affections and Obligations were to end with the last Breath of the Party. Thank God, my young Friend, whose Situation occasioned these Reflections, is now able to sit up in Bed. We have not yet acquainted him with the Circumstances of his Illness, but refer that until he is perfectly recovered; however, the Language of Surprize, probably added to Disappointment, has superseded the Charge of Madness.

Naples, June 30, 1788.

Yours.

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L E T.

LETTER XXXVIII.

Reflections on the Death of Friends, with the Effects of excessive Joy or Sorrow. From a Lady to her Friend.

My dear Madam,

I sincerely rejoice in your Happiness, at the Discovery of your long-lost Son; and have to ask you Pardon for keeping you so long in the Dark. I perceived who he was, and suspected it long before I saw him. The Concealment was in order to make the Discovery more joyful; but if any bad Consequences had risen from your Excess of Joy, I should have been unhappy for the Remainder of my Life. How unthinking I was! The Heart can no more support immoderate Joy than Excess of Grief; the one is destructive by too much dilating it, the other by too great a Depression. It is equal whether the Vessel be crushed by too strong a Pressure without, or burst by too violent an Extension within. I have repeatedly transmitted to you my Congratulations by others, but cannot help now repeating them myself. Till now I have been prevented from writing to you by the Death of my Husband, my constant Attendance on him till that mournful Period, and Confinement to my Bed ever since. But I have examined my Heart thoroughly on the Cause of my great Grief; and find that I must think his Death a Diminution of my own Happiness, or of his, or else that I grieve without knowing why, and consequently that my Grief is unreasonable. Interest and Self-Love must affect me in the first Case; but if my Friend's Happiness be the Occasion of it, it shews I must have an ill Opinion of his Condition. And if I conceive that his Felicity depends entirely upon the Union of Soul and Body, my Faith is as doubtful as my Happiness. Grief then is an Effect of Infidelity; it is impious and unreasonable, as deviating from that perfect Obedience and Resignation we owe to God, and therefore not allowable in a wise and virtuous Man, who makes it his Endeavour to know and perform his Duty. I have now in some Measure recovered my Tranquillity; and strive to divert my Attention and amuse my Mind.

—Fare-

—Farewel, my amiable and beloved Friend; may Heaven confirm and continue all your Blessings to you! But let us not forget, that upon whatever Foundation Happiness is built, when that fails it must be destroyed. For this Reason, it is Wisdom to chuse such a Foundation for it as is not liable to destructive Accidents. If Happiness is founded upon the Health, the Welfare, the Life of our Friends, a thousand Diseases or ten thousand fatal Accidents may have Power to destroy it; but if it be founded upon the infinite Bounty and Goodness of God, and upon those Virtues which may obtain his Favour, its Foundation is immoveable, and its Duration eternal. Once more adieu.

Yours ever,

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ON



ON THE PRESENT PREVAILING M O D E S o f E D U C A T I O N,

A N D

A RATIONAL ONE POINTED OUT.

MANY Observations have fallen from the Hands of some able Pens, respecting the Advantages and Disadvantages of the different prevailing Modes of Education. But Fashion is frequently sufficient to set aside all Argument, and to supersede all Reason, whatever may be advanced to rectify or restrain the swelling Tide of any popular Mistakes.

The Editor thought he could not better fill up a few spare Pages, than by presenting his Readers with some brief Remarks on this Topic. Men may labour to Eternity to erect a goodly Superstructure, without being ever able to effect it, if the Foundation is not perfectly found. Some Crack or Flaw will be found to destroy the goodly Appearance which the subsequent Endeavours gave a Right to expect; some Blemish will be discovered to diminith the Value of this shewy Fabric.

He hopes to be excused in surprizing his Readers into the Knowledge of his Sentiments on this important Subject. A Collection of Letters, principally intended for the Service of young People, seems to require a few Observations on the literary Education and Instruction of young People; we may therefore presume on the probation

probation of the Public, as to the peculiar Propriety of subjoining this Essay.

There are two prevailing Faults in most of our Academies or Boarding Schools, which prove the Bane of Education. The first I shall instance in, is the present Rabies or Madness for fine Writing. I am not so unreasonable to condemn fine Writing merely as such, being seldom better pleased than when such Performances meet my Eyes; but how absurd is it to place the principal Part of Education in the Dexterity of performing an Exercise purely mechanical? We readily allow every Degree of Merit to extraordinary Exertions of Skill and delicate Workmanship of the Cabinet Maker, and other similar handicraft Trades; but these require great Genius as well as Industry and Application in their respective Capacities. This Merit the fine Penman may be allowed to have, if he thinks the Comparison does him any Credit; but his Qualification depends on a very few simple Principles, which can scarcely be called Principles, and a little steady Application; Genius, or Learning, are by no means requisite; and they are not very frequently Appendages to this Talent. Here the Mechanic, commonly so called, has abundantly the Advantage.

If Illustrations of these general Remarks were in any Respect necessary, it would be easy to refer to Cases where every Rule of Grammar has been subverted in writing a simple Card or Message. Few indeed who excel in this Art have the smallest Cause to boast of any other. But it is no Matter; for such is the Folly and Stupidity of Parents in general, that this Pleasure of the Eye overbears and suppresses every other Consideration. False Grammar, Absurdity of Expression, and even false Spelling, are such common Occurrences from these Writing Boarding Schools, that one has Need to be concerned for the Reason and Intellects of the Age.

I have often reflected where the Blame of this absurd Conduct ought to be laid; and at last have attributed it to Vanity in the Parents, or to Imposition in the Teacher. Perhaps both these are entitled to nearly their equal Share; though Vanity, I presume, is the preponderating Ingredient in the Composition. Writing, it is as-

ferted, is only an inferior Branch of Education ; to which even Reading is superior, however treated as a secondary Consideration. Indeed I have given too great a Degree of Importance to Reading according to the prevailing Practice ; for that obtains but a very low Rank in the Mode of Education generally pursued in our Writing Schools. In the second Place, commonly, we are to rank Arithmetic, as they themselves perhaps learnt it by Rote at School from *Walkingbame* or *Dilworth* ; for few of them, after their commencing Masters of Boarding Schools, have real Knowledge sufficient to diverge from the old beaten Track. The Operations to these Questions, besides their Insufficiency in most practical Cases, are usually pillaged or purchased from the Books of their Schoolmates ; for few Persons can be ignorant of the common Practice of securing this Kind of Assistance by a few Presents of one Species or other. But the poor despised Practice of Reading seldom obtains any distinguished Place ; Dancing, Drawing, Music, indeed any Thing, generally ensures the Preference.

Some Persons indeed have had sufficient Penetration to discover the Error before the Period of Education has too nearly approached ; but these are a very small Portion in Comparison to the Bulk of Mankind, and of these the Number is proportionably small who have sufficient Resolution to break off the Shackles. Their Vanity overpowers their Reason, and they proceed in the same absurd Track in Defiance of their better Judgment.

But this is not the only Thing to be condemned in the Practice of our Boarding Schools. Several of our Classical Schools, which are conducted by Persons of Discernment and Knowledge, have too much given Way to the prevailing Mode. By a steady Firmness to the true Interests of Literature and their own Credit, it was in their Power to have stemmed this Torrent so far as to prevent the more rational Part of Mankind from being absorbed in its Vortex ; but they have injudiciously opened the Flood-Gates, and the Inundation has on all Sides poured in upon them.

For by this accommodating Conduct it is, that the second prevailing Error has made such rapid Advances.

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The general and indiscriminate Introduction of the Writing and Mathematical Teacher into most of our Grammar Schools, is the Source of numerous Evils. The Objects of Education are multiplied, and the Pupil's Attention is divided. He has no fixed Idea of any Thing, because, from the Mode he is directed to pursue, his Views are pointed so many different Ways, that no single Impression is made sufficiently distinct to engage his Attention.

Here it is impossible whom most to blame, the Masters or the Parents. I will consider what can be said for each of them, and from thence deduce a more rational Mode of Instruction.

When Boys in particular are first sent to a Boarding School, it may be impossible for the Parents to point out any decisive Object of their future Destination for the Master's Direction. In this Case, general Improvement only can be his Aim. But surely that should not be confined to Writing, which has very little Tendency to expand and enlarge the Mind; and yet this should doubtless be the Object of a general Education.

To speak first of the Writing Boarding Schools, where, if Reading is in any Degree attended to, neither the Principles of English Grammar are at all regarded, or Notice taken of the Requisites for a pleasing and elegant Modulation of Voice. Inflexion and Cadence are what they scarce have heard of, or at least so imperfectly, that they are Strangers to their Nature. The same Monotony, or whining and canting Tone of Voice, are heard upon every Subject; and indeed what they do read at these Seminaries of Education is generally so little calculated to inspire them with a Sense of the Importance of what they read, that they are commonly at a Loss in every other Author. Writing, as I observed, is the Master's principal Object, and to that Object the greater Part of their Time is devoted. The remaining Time which is left for Arithmetic and Reading, of which the former is commonly preferred, affords very little Opportunity of establishing any permanent Principles; and therefore Recourse is had to the Expedient already mentioned. Reading, by such a Conduct, is nearly jostled out, and the Consequence need not be enlarged

enlarged upon. I know some few indeed who pay considerable Attention to their native Tongue, and instruct their Pupils in the Principles of its Grammar; but for one such Instance, ten may be found where this is little regarded.

It may seem invidious to some Persons of this Description, to advise them to retrench the large Allowance of Time which they give to Writing. But as I have undertaken the Subject, it would be criminal to suppress what my Conviction of its Propriety and Necessity assures me is right. This Portion I would add to that of Reading; and other Books should be adopted to afford greater Scope for the Exercise of the Voice. Grammar might then be very seasonably introduced, the Effects of which would soon be manifest. I would also wish to check that Propensity to Arithmetic, which most Persons are too forward to promote at an early Age. It puzzles and bewilders the young Mind, which is seldom sufficiently expanded at that Period; and deprives it of the Advantage of pursuing a Plan more naturally adapted to its State, and perfecting a Habit of Reading which would not easily be forgot. Here it may be presumed, both Parents and Masters are equally faulty.

As to the classical or academical Boarding Schools, the Arguments for postponing the Consideration of Arithmetic, and the Necessity of retrenching the Hours allowed for Writing, are still stronger. Much of the early Periods of a classical Education are employed in Repetition of the Accidence or Grammar; which renders the Exercise of the Memory habitual, and lays the Foundation for future Progress and Advancement in a solid Knowledge of the learned Languages. And what Person can, after a serious and mature Deliberation, pretend to say that there is much Time remaining unemployed for the Exercises of Writing and Arithmetic? Indeed, it must be allowed, that one principal Object is sufficient at one Time to engross the Mind; and as Reading should never be forgot, that and Writing will be an Underplot or secondary Object to relieve the Mind from Excess of Attention to any one Thing. The Languages, I repeat it, are fully sufficient to engross the Mind; and such Intervals of Relaxation from those

those dry Subjects as may seem to be absolutely necessary, will be very properly employed in Reading and Writing.

Some of the Consequences of having two or more principal Objects in View, shall be illustrated by Examples. I shall not enquire whether the Parent, the Teacher, or the Pupil, is in this Respect the primary Agent. The Classics are particularly pointed out as the Object of Education, and so are the various Branches of the Mathematics; in the Train we will also suppose the French Language is to be included. All these, when Writing and Reading are also incorporated, make a very gaudy and capital Shew; but if we attend to the Effects of such a premeditated Plan, we shall find there will be much more Smoke than Fire. If a few Phænomena appear in an Age, and if others, exalted by the extraordinary Talents which they see in their Cotemporaries, have sufficient Emulation to struggle after their Attainments,—yet this is not the Way; but for one who succeeds by this Proceeding, I will venture to pronounce that ninety-nine miscarry, and by grasping at every Thing gain nothing. But young Persons should learn one Thing at a Time, if they wish to attain a general Knowledge; and when that is attained, they may proceed to some other Branch of Education. This is the only Way in which they can reasonably hope to succeed.

An Instance occurred to me not many Years ago, which I shall here record, as it is perfectly applicable to the present Subject. A pert, forward Puppy, who had as little Modesty as Discretion, desired me to instruct him in Merchants' Accompts. He had been several Years at a noted Boarding-School, and had a Command of Hand which would not have discredited the first Counting-house in Town; I did not therefore suspect his Knowledge of the necessary mercantile Rules. But judge my Surprize, when I found it impossible to fix him to any Thing which required Attention; that, either from Giddiness or Ignorance, or both, which I have little Doubt of, I could never depend upon him to perform a common Example in common Multiplication. This Trial was of some Months Continuance; he was too old to be chastised into Regularity, too volatile

tile to be brought to any steady Application, and too vain and coxcomical to perceive his own wretched Ignorance;—at last, after some Remonstrances on my Part, we parted, and he still remains the same shallow-pated Puppy as before.

I will now give you an Instance of the good Effects of a contrary Conduct, exemplified in a Person of my Acquaintance. I have varied the Case but a very little, and that only for the Sake of recommending it as the best practical Method of attaining a general Knowledge. I would recommend a constant Pursuit of the Classics through the first Years of Instruction, to the Age of 12 or 13; considering Writing as a mere mechanical Exercise, no Way burdensome to the Memory, and the Knowledge of our native Tongue so sufficiently established before that Time, as to be only a Matter of Amusement. Then the Mind will for the most Part be suitably enlarged to receive Instruction in Figures; and I will venture to affirm (if Capacity and Genius are not wanting) that such a Progress will be made in the Course of 12 Months as must abundantly compensate for the Neglect of them in the preceding Period. Such Parts of the Classics as have been already acquired may then be substituted as Amusements to relax the Mind; with this Satisfaction, that nothing which has been attained is abandoned, or in any Danger of being forgot. The Advantages which may afterwards be expected from Instruction in the Mathematics for 12 or 18 Months longer, must therefore be very great. With Respect to the French Language, the less it interferes with the other Studies, the better; at any Rate, if possible, it should not commence till the Age of 13 or 14, and if the Opportunity of acquiring it later should not be doubtful, it might be advisable for a classical Student to postpone it accordingly.

I am far from considering this as a perfect Essay; it can scarcely be called an Outline, and I have neither Room nor Leisure to say more at present; otherwise I might have enlarged upon the Subject. A short Address on the Subject of Ladies Boarding Schools might have been introduced; but our Limits forbid it, and I must leave my Readers to draw their own Reflections from these very short Intimations. But

But the Subject, before I dismiss it, loudly calls upon me to return to the Charge. Would any Foreigner, for Instance, suppose that a Nation so distinguished for Men of Sense, so remarkable for Works of Genius, so refined and dignified in Sentiment, could be so grossly inconsistent and absurd in the common Practice of Education? Yet I will not rest the Matter on this Issue only; let me call upon any Person of common Sense and Reason to consider the Absurdity of such Conduct. Does this boasted fine Writing add one thousandth Part of a Farthing to the intrinsic Value of an Account? does the fine Flourish and smooth Turn of a Letter or a Figure rectify or correct any Errors or Mistakes? But Errors and Mistakes may sometimes happen; though I would ask which Person is most exposed to them, he whose principal Object is to display his Talent of Writing, or the other, whose Excellence consists in Accuracy and Correctness of Account. Approach, all ye Parents, and lay your Hands upon your Hearts, and say, how ye will answer it hereafter to your Consciences, that you have so often gratified your own Senses at the Risque of your Children's Welfare? Are you ignorant, or are you learned? if the former, have you never a Friend, on whose Judgment you can rely, to direct you in the right Path for the Instruction of your Offspring? You have known, perhaps, the Want of Learning yourselves; and that Want has prevented your embracing many Opportunities for your Advancement in the World. You are willing to struggle hard, that your Children may not be disappointed on the same Account; your Intention is laudable, but "you are to be pitied." You have laid out your Money, as you think, usefully; your Son is now 11 or 12 Years of Age, and can write a fine Hand, and you cannot afford to keep him at School longer; I repeat it, "you are to be pitied." You have other Children, and they must have Learning; this must give Way, and perhaps be bound Apprentice to a Taylor, a Carpenter, or some other common Business, where all his fine Writing is laid aside, and the Time and Expence of his Education are lost. He left School at the very Period when Attention to Figures would have been successful; and 'tis Odds against him that

that he can value a Piece of Timber or a Suit of Cloaths, as the little Knowledge he once had was so much in the old *John Trot Way*, that actual Practice is a Stranger to him. But by the Age of 14, he might have acquired sufficient Knowledge in this Respect; and the Object of Parent and Teacher would have been accomplished. Yet I would here wish to call back your Memory, that if his Education had run in a proper Channel, he would, before this Period, have been acquainted with classical Learning, and become a general Scholar. But all this Time has been murdered, and the Advantages which might have arisen from this Knowledge cast aside, for the vain and ridiculous Pride of writing a fine Hand! To Parents who are learned, I need say no more; where it is not too late to retreat, the Effect is certain. But shall I call upon you, O ye Masters and Instructors of Writing Boarding Schools? I fear my Reflections would be too severe, should I honestly and conscientiously express my Thoughts. I must spare you the Mortification; but desire you, as I have done those Parents already spoken of, to reflect what Answer you will make at the great Tribunal, when the omniscient Searcher of Hearts shall call you to Account:—And may God grant, that you may be induced so to reform your Practice here, as to receive an Acquittal in that awful Day.
Sit Gloria Dco.

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