

THE
A R T
O F
LETTER-WRITING,
Divided into Two PARTS.

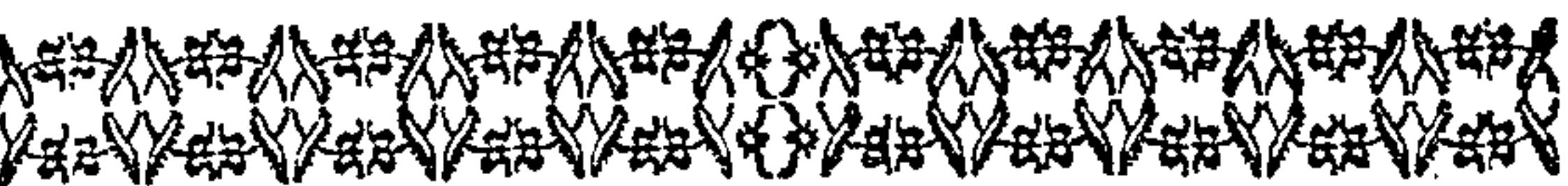
The FIRST, containing
RULES and DIRECTIONS
FOR
Writing LETTERS on all Sorts of SUBJECTS;
WITH A
VARIETY of EXAMPLES,
Equally elegant and instructive.

The SECOND, a
COLLECTION of LETTERS
ON THE
Most interesting OCCASIONS in LIFE.

In which are inserted,
The proper Method of addressing Persons of all Ranks; some
necessary Orthographical Directions; the Forms of Messages
for Cards; and Thoughts upon a Multiplicity of Subjects.

The Whole composed on a Plan intirely new; chiefly calculated
for the Instruction of Youth, but may be of singular Service to
Gentlemen, Ladies, and all others, who are desirous to attain the
true Style and Manner of a polite Epistolary Intercourse.

LONDON:
Printed for T. OSBORNE, in Gray's-Inn;
M.DCC.LXII,



TO THE
N O B L E M E N
AND
G E N T L E M E N,
EDUCATED AT
M A R Y B O N E S C H O O L.

My LORDS and GENTLEMEN,

IT is a Satisfaction to make honourable Men-
tion here of the kind Acceptance you were
pleased to favour this Collection of Letters with ;
tho' your Judgment has, no Doubt, been influ-
enced in this Respect by that of your MASTER,
a Person, not less remarkable for his accurate
and polite Taste in Matters of Literature, than
for the many virtuous and amiable Qualities that
adorn his Life. Under the Guidance of such
distinguished Abilities, what may not be justly
hoped from you ? In some of you, the pleasing
Bud of Knowledge and Virtue is seen to shoot
forth ; in some, the fragrant Blossom to display
sprightly Colours : And, with the Culture of so
skilful a Hand, can we despair of gathering the
choicest and most delectable Fruits ? For, whilst

D E D I C A T I O N.

he makes the Lustre of pure Erudition to enlighten your Minds, he corrects your Hearts with the Perfection of moral Beauty.

He was sensible, and indeed with good Foundation, that the Writing of *English* Letters, was a very important Point in the Education of *English* Youth; as, by it, they are familiarised to the Idioms and Expression of their own Language, and more readily acquire, than by any other Method, that easy and elegant Style and Manner, which characterise the Gentleman, and heighten the Embellishments of social Commerce.

By his Directions, nothing idle, frivolous, or having a Tendency to corrupt Minds, and fill them with false Ideas of Things, was to have a Place in this Collection. You will find his Desires faithfully complied with, and will have Reason to thank him, that, even in his Care of procuring Instruction for you from a foreign Hand, he has paid due Attention to form you, as he would have you, in the Byass of his own Spirit and Genius. You cannot have a better Copy to imitate; and, that you may do it exactly and punctually, is the Wish of,

My LORDS and GENTLEMEN,

Your most humble and obedient Servant,

&c. &c.

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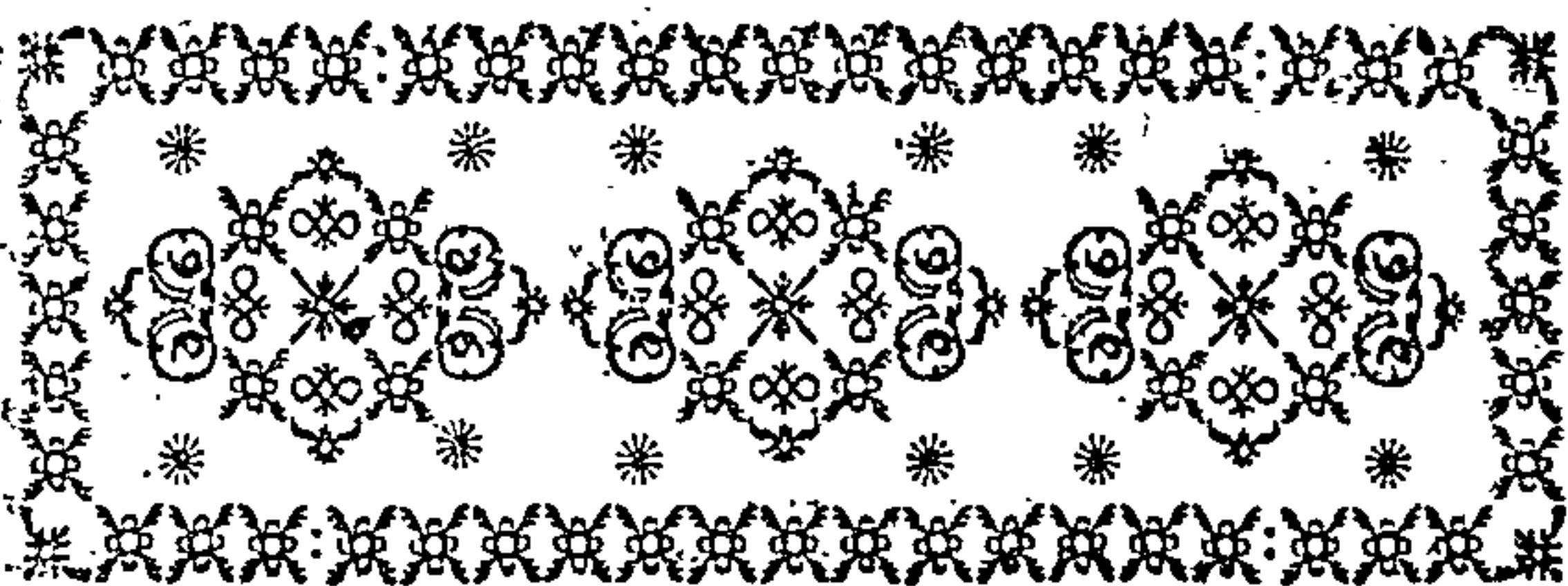
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T H E



T H E
A R T
O F
LETTER-WRITING.

P A R T . I.

C H A P . I.

*Of the Necessity of writing LETTERS, and
of the Style they ought to be written in.*



Othing is so common as to write Letters ; But it is not a common Thing to indite them well. The Necessities of Life oblige almost all Manner of Persons to have Recourse to an Epistolary Correspondence : For the Ignorant as well as the Learned have often an Occasion to correspond by Letter with their absent Friends. To succeed in this Kind of Composition is not so easy as generally thought.

2 *The Art of Letter-Writing.*

thought. To learn it, good Precepts for pointing out an accurate Method, and the best Examples for imitation, are equally requisite.

Nothing, in regard to the Commerce of Life, is more necessary than a Work of this Sort. We must, however, except the Arts and Graces of Conversation; because we have greater and more frequent Occasions for Speaking than Writing. Entertaining one another constantly is a Kind of Study, as by it we are insensibly accustomed to express ourselves with Ease and Propriety; whereas, writing but rarely and with some Reluctance, most People are embarrassed when obliged to take up their Pen: And thus it happens that the proper Style for Letter-writing is not attained without considerable Difficulty. Of this, Experience daily convinces us. Out of a hundred Persons that speak well, scarce ten will be found that write in the same Degree of Perfection, though it should seem nothing more was wanting than to commit to Paper what we have a Mind to express.

Let none flatter themselves; much more Exactness is required for Writing than Speaking. We ought to consider, that the Eyes are more faithful than the Ears. What we see on Paper, remains subject to our Criticism; and the most Part of the Things said to us, fly off from our Reflexions. Add to this, that the Discourse we hear, is supported by Succours, which, whatever may be presented us to read, is deficient in. A passionate Tone of Voice makes a deep Impression, and the Air that accompaniess Words, often steals to the Heart.

It has been observed in all Times, that the most famous Orators were never fond of publishing their Speeches, being, with good Reason, persuaded that but half the Orator is found in writing. *Demosthenes*, named by Excellence ‘The *Eloquent*,’ would never let any of his Discourses appear till a good While after they were pronounced.

A Speech

A Speech is in some Measure indebted, for the agreeable Emotions it produces, to the Advantages of Pronunciation, such as the Sweetness and Clearness of the Voice, accompanied with a due Emphasis, or the good Presence of him that speaks; but a Piece of Writing can please only by essential Graces: So that we cannot be too exact in revising our Letters, in order to send them without Fear of regretting what we have done: For we are well assured by the Masters of the Art, that they must be incorrect or ill polished, when they come out of our Hands immediately; because Faults are both less excusable, and appear greater in them, than in Works of some length: The only Means therefore for avoiding these Inconveniencies, is not to write with Precipitation; but to order our Thoughts and Words in such regular Justness and Perspicuity, as that the one may not seem Enigmatical, nor the other want an Interpreter.

We have several Books of Letters abounding with Instructions for writing them, and yet we write not the better. The little Benefit we receive from all these Directions, is an incontestable Proof, that, instead of helping us to write a Letter well, the far greater Part of them only serve to cramp the Genius and detain the flow of Thought in a Circle of Confusion. The surest Rule is to write as we speak. Think well, speak well, and you will write well. Nature, it is said, forms Poets, and Art Orators. If this same Nature has not, as it were, laboured to make us good Writers, by granting us happy Dispositions, we shall meet with great Difficulty in becoming Masters of the Epistolary Style. When it is our Lot not to be born with this rich Talent, we must read much, and transcribe often such Collections of Letters as are most in Request for their Beauty of Thought and Elegance of Diction: And thus we shall form ourselves by Degrees, and Art and Study will supply the Defects of Nature.

Three Things, in my Opinion, need only be observed in Letters. 1. To take care not to be haughty in writing to Superiors. 2. Not to demean yourself in addressing an Inferior. 3. To hold an equal Rank with Equals. Afterwards, having reflected a Moment on the Subject of your Letter, to enter immediately upon it without any long Preamble, as formerly, and withal to fancy that you are speaking to the Person you write to.

Let nothing be affected in your Letters, nor any Thing foreign to what you intend to treat of. Write as you speak; that is, without Art, without Study, and without making a Shew of your Wit. Guard against a Rock, which Pedants and the Unjudicious generally split upon: This is, by either seeking after great and sounding Words, or a Swell of pompous Thought, and both very often on frivolous Occasions. Such a Style and Manner will never pass for natural; at least, they will meet with the Approbation of none but those who have set aside the Decorum of common Sense. It is true, the Method of writing as we speak, which is undoubtedly the better, because more natural, was not formerly in Vogue; but now, few chuse to put their Mind on the Rack to discover the false Lustre of a Thought: We are pleased to see every Thing displayed in natural Colours; and, when these Colours neither strike the Eye nor Mind, we are disgusted at the Difficulties the Writer puts us to, as if he designed not to be understood.

If a Stranger was to write from the Extremities of the Earth, we should judge whether he was a Person of Genius, Knowledge, and Politeness, by observing in his Letters an easy, simple, and natural Turn, and at the same Time an Elegance and Delicacy of Expression, so much the more charming, as proceeding from Nature alone. If, on the contrary, his Thoughts are confused; if his Phrases are unnatural and destitute

ture of that beautiful Simplicity, the distinguishing Characteristic of the Epistolary Style; we may, with good Reason, conclude, that he is a Man of scanty Knowledge and of a very ill Taste.

But, if every Thing ought to appear natural in a Letter, and if Art ought to be absolutely concealed in it, let not, however, a familiar Ease be confounded with a graceless Simplicity. Let it be remembered, that a Character of Politeness should always distinguish the Letters of well-bred Persons. And, as all Sorts of Subjects are treated of in Letters, there is no confining ourselves to one particular Style. We are obliged to suit our Expressions to the Nature of Subjects and the Rank of Persons. We must rise nobly, when we write to Persons of great Consideration by their Condition of Life; and, on the other Hand, descend to more familiar Ways of Speaking, when we communicate our Thoughts and Opinions to intimate Friends.

We should use all the good Sense we are capable of, in giving an Account of an important Negotiation; and nothing but Terms of Tenderness in testifying to Parents the Share we bear in their Affliction or Joy. Here, more Sentiments than Thoughts are required; the Mind is to speak less than the Heart. If our Imagination sports in wanton Airs amidst Compliments of Consolation, it will be believed that we are not in the least affected, and that we are less attentive to the Interests of others, than our own Reputation. And indeed, it is not the way to merit Applause, to be so studious of being witty on such Occasions. Humour and Pleasantry are better reserved for facetious Topics. Judgment requires this Variety: It would have us diversify our Style according to the Nature of the Subjects to be treated of. There is not a surer Rule than to be directed by so good a Guide: It leads us where we ought to go.

It is not difficult to see what Sort of Style may suit

6 *The Art of Letter-Writing.*

best a Letter; but I know not whether it be very easy to support the Character that has been made Choice of. Our most famous Authors are not so exact in this Particular, as not to be sometimes wanting to it. Let Uniformity therefore be maintained: Without it, we shall never attain to the Good and the True in Writing.

To what has been already hinted, concerning the Disagreeableness of the bombastic Style, it will not be amiss to add, that no figurative Thoughts and Expressions, which are either too strong or too brilliant, should be used in Letter-writing, especially if the Subject-matter could recommend itself sufficiently by an easy and familiar Air. It is true, that in a well-grounded Charge against a Person, and which is made only on pressing Occasions, it may be allowable to use a bold and even vehement Manner of Speaking. The surest Maxim is to be judicious and reserved in the use of Figures. A Style flags, when intirely destitute of them; and, on the contrary, when they croud in upon one another, it degenerates into Fustian.

Let us not forget to examine exactly the Matter we are to treat of: It may have different Faces, it may appear in different Lights; all should be carefully inspected, and that which suits best our Design must be chiefly attended to.

Let us avoid Comparisons in Writing; such Beauties present a Sort of a too vulgar Air: I know not even whether they can be esteemed Beauties. At least, let it be an inviolable Law to us, to consult the Taste of our Age and Nation. Polite Persons will scarce ever now insert in their Letters, Fables, History, Proverbs or Sentences; so that we may safely renounce these pretended Ornaments, which were formerly so studiously sought after. Add to this, the Affectation so common to fine Wits, of writing frequently without Necessity and without Matter: In such

such Case we often desert Reason and Truth to devote ourselves to our Ideas, and to follow Conjectures : The Sallies of Imagination may, indeed, seem to amuse us ; but it is not worth our While to lay ourselves under such continual perplexing Restraints for the sake of shining agreeably for nothing.

Though, generally speaking, all Letters ought to be short, as those of Business, Society, and mere Compliment ; together with those written to Persons, who by their Employment are little at Leisure ; yet, the Fear of their being long, should not contract the Style, so as to make it obscure, or that Circumstances should be omitted, which are essential to our Subject. If we require an Eclaircissement, or give an Account of an Affair of Moment, must we treat this Matter as that of a Compliment, instead of shewing it with all the Particulars that may contribute to a fuller Instruction ? We are not prohibited to enlarge on these Occasions, provided we fall not into Repetitions. However, a Letter of this Sort should not, by its Length, swell into the Form and Dimensions of a Dissertation or Treatise.

Custom teaches us, that the Style used in a literary Commerce ought to be always equal ; destitute of sublime Figures ; close in Reasoning ; natural in the Chain and Connexion of Matter ; diversified in the Construction and Extent of Periods ; exact in Order ; and especially noble without Pride, and without being abrupt or impetuous : It seems also that each Period ought to contain a particular Thought ; because a Discourse, not aided by the Voice or Presence, cannot be supported without continual Strokes of Genius, in which, notwithstanding, all pointed Wit should be carefully guarded against.

It were still to be wished, that, in Letters of Respect, the Submissions made were kept within certain Bounds, excessive Flattery and servile Complaisance being banished from our Thoughts : When we grovel so

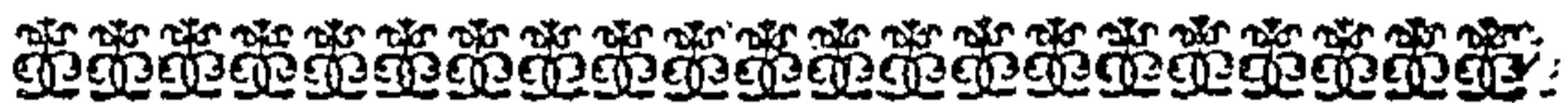
bafely, far from acquiring the Esteem, we draw upon ourselves the Contempt; of those we pretend to ingratiate ourselves with. The opposite Extreme, of treating too familiarly those above us, must be equally avoided. In point of Praise, how shall we deem agreeable and surprizing an Eulogium made without Delicacy, and quite fulsome? Praise, 'tis true, is a common Ingredient in Writing and Speaking; but the Question is, how to make a decent Offering of that Kind of Incense. Few follow the Counsel of *Horace*, who would have us express common Things and Subjects as if they were not. This Manner, which is not common, is a Turn that makes what we say our own, and heightens it with the Graces of Novelty, though a Thousand others have said the same before us.

In the Placing of Words we must consult the Ear, and judge whether its Satisfaction be compleat. However, the Care of pleasing the Ear should be no Bar to the Gratifications of the Mind. It is not enough that Words should be noble according to the Subject, or flow smoothly in harmonic Numbers; rather let us examine if they give a perfect Idea of the Things we design to express. Let us also consider, that, writing only with a View of making ourselves understood, none but such Terms as are most in Use ought to be made Choice of: The antiquated may be well set aside, and those newly coined adopted with Precaution. In like Manner, it will not be amiss to be as reserved as possible in the Use of Epithets and Adverbs. 'Tis certain, a Style not embarrassed with them will appear more agreeable.

The Affectation of having Periods of the same Length is another Fault: Their Extent and Cadence ought therefore to be diversified in as great a Degree as can be, avoiding, at the same Time, all Rhimes and Consonance.

Our Style need not be too copious, unless we are willing it should first fatigue, and afterwards become insup-

insupportable: Notwithstanding, let it not be so close as to fall into Obscurity. Conciseness is undoubtedly one of the greatest Beauties of Discourse; but it borders so nearly upon Obscurity, that it is very difficult, in following the one, not to fall into the other; and it will be always more advisable to pay a due Attention to Perspicuity, the Chief of all Perfections in Writing, without which, all others must be useless: In short, we write and speak only to be understood.



C H A P. II.

What a Letter is; and of the Parts of a Letter.

WHAT we call commonly ‘Letter,’ the *Romans* called ‘Epistle:’ They borrowed this Word from the *Greek*, to express a Thing which was to be sent; so that Epistle answers pretty exactly to ‘Mifive,’ which our Ancestors derived from the *Latin* Word, and which some use to this Day. In restraining the Signification, we specify, by Epistles, the Letters we have from the Ancients, whether the Authors of them were prophane, or that we find them in the *New Testament* and elsewhere: Thus we always say, ‘The Epistles of *Cicero*, and of *Pliny*; the Epistles of St. *Paul*, and of St. *Jerom*.’ The Dedications that appear at the Head of Books, have likewise retained the Name of Epistles, as well as those written in Verse for Praising some illustrious Person, or Satyrizing the Vices of the Age. To give, in fine, an exact Definition of a Letter, it may be said, ‘That it is a Piece of Writing which we send to an absent Person, to let him know what we would say, if we were in a Condition to speak to him.’ To make this Piece of Writing agreeable, clear, and intelligible, we

must banish from it all Common Places ; all unnecessary and superfluous Ways of Speaking ; all Equivocations ; and, lastly, all false Thoughts.

The greater Part of Letters form a Kind of Conversation among those who cannot entertain one another in a different Manner : They ought therefore to retain in their Expression that easy and natural Air we observe in Dialogues. The Ancients imitated in their Epistles the Manner Friends are accustomed to speak to each other in : They began by a Kind of Compliment in regard to Health, as it is usual with Persons accosting one another. “ If you are in good Health, said they, it will be a sensible Pleasure to me ; for my Part, I am in very good Health.” They concluded by a ‘ Farewell,’ as is customary with Persons that separate and take Leave. The Middle of the Epistle contained the Subject, and the Reasons that might support it. We observe nearly in our Letters a like Method : We have first Recourse to Civilities, whether we are obliged to thank the Person we write to, or to excuse ourselves ; or that we have some Favour to ask, or some Affair to recommend to him. These first Civilities may be deemed what is called the Exordium in an Harangue : They serve to infinuate us into his Mind, and to dispose him to receive favourably what we have to say to him. When we enter upon our Matter, we make appear to him, according to the Difference of Subjects, either the Justice of our Pretensions, or the Share we take in whatever affects him. It is afterwards customary to finish by a Protestation of Service.

But why do we not find, in most Letters, the four Parts which Masters of Eloquence make in some Measure essential to the Composition of Harangues ? We have taken Notice of an Exordium ; and it will be easy to comprehend that the Exposition of the Subject serves as a Narration, and that the Reasons for justifying our Request, holds the Place of a Proof or Confirmation.

Confirmation. If we conclude by Protestations of a perfect Submission, or eternal Gratitude, it is in order to touch the Heart, and to persuade. Such is the Intent of the Peroration of a Discourse, wherein the most vehement Figures are used for gaining a powerful Ascendant over the Minds of the Auditory.

Now, tho' this Order may be observed, yet it will be better to disregard, than to endeavour to make it appear. Nothing must shew Restraint or Affectation in a Letter; every Particular in it ought to breathe the Liberty that reigns in common Conversation. *Cicero*, the most accurate Person we find in this Kind of Writing, seems often at a Loss how to proceed: He hesitates, as it were, to seek after more proper Terms: He checks himself, and intermingles Things which seem as if they should have been separate: It is easily perceived that he took but little Care or Pains in writing them, and perhaps sometimes designedly, according to what he says himself to his Friend *Atticus*, “*Epistolas debere interdum hallucinari*,” ‘Letters should sometimes commit Blunders.’

Of the Superscription.

Many, being at a Loss how to address Persons of Distinction either in Writing or Discourse, are frequently subject to great Mistakes in the Stile and Title due to Superiors, or those of high Rank or Dignity in Life. It will not therefore be amiss to point out here the suitable Directions of Address to all Persons of Distinction.

To the Royal Family.

To the King's Most Excellent Majesty, ‘Sire, or May it please your Majesty.’

To the Queen's Most Excellent Majesty, ‘Madam, or may it please your Majesty.’

To his Royal Highness *Edward Duke of York*, ‘Sir, or may it please your Royal Highness.’

In the same Manner to the rest of the Royal Family, altering the Addresses according to the different Ranks and Degrees of Dignity.

To the Nobility.

To his Grace *A.* Duke of *B.* ‘ My Lord Duke; or, May it please your Grace, or, Your Grace.’

To the Most Noble *A.* Lord Marquis of *B.* ‘ My Lord Marquis, your Lordship.’

To the Right Honourable *A.* Earl of *B.* ‘ My Lord, your Lordship.’

To the Right Honourable *A.* Lord Viscount *B.* ‘ My Lord, your Lordship.’

To the Right Honourable *A.* Lord *B.* ‘ My Lord, your Lordship.’

The Ladies are addressed according to the Rank of their Husbands.

The Sons of Dukes, Marquises, and the eldest Sons of Earls, have, by Courtesy of *England*, the Title of ‘ Lord,’ and ‘ Right Honourable;’ and the Title of Lady is given to their Daughters.

The younger Sons of Earls, the Sons of Viscounts and Barons, are styled ‘ Honourable,’ and all their Daughters ‘ Honourable.’

The Title of ‘ Honourable’ is likewise conferred on such Persons as have the King’s Commission, and upon those Gentlemen who enjoy Places of Trust and Honour.

The Title of ‘ Right Honourable’ is given to no Commoner, except those who are Members of His Majesty’s Most Honourable Privy Council, and the three Lord Mayors of *London*, *York*, and *Dublin*, and the Lord Provost of *Edinburgh*, during their Office.

To the Parliament.

To the Right Honourable the Lords Spiritual and Temporal, in Parliament assembled, ‘ My Lords, or, May it please your Lordships.’ To

To the Right Honourable the Knights, Citizens, and Burgesses, in Parliament assembled, ‘ Gentlemen, or, May it please your Honours.’

To the Right Honourable *A. B.* Esq; Speaker of the House of Commons, who is generally one of His Majesty’s Most Honourable Privy Council, ‘ Sir.’

To the Clergy.

To the Most Reverend Father in God, *A.* Lord Archbishop of *Canterbury*, ‘ My Lord, or, Your Grace.’

To the Right Reverend Father in God, *A.* Lord Bishop of *B.* ‘ My Lord.’

To the Right Reverend Lord Bishop of *A.* Lord Almoner to his Majesty, ‘ My Lord.’

To the Reverend *A. B. D.* Dean of *C.* or Archdeacon or Chancellor of *D.* or Prebendary, &c. ‘ Reverend Doctor, Mr. Dean, Reverend Sir, &c.’

All Rectors, Vicars, Curates, Lecturers, and Clergymen of other inferior Denominations, are styled ‘ Reverend.’

To the Officers of his Majesty’s Household.

They are addressed for the most Part according to their Rank and Quality, tho’ sometimes agreeably to the Nature of their Office, as, ‘ My Lord Steward, my Lord Chamberlain, Mr. Vice-Chamberlain, &c. and in all Superscriptions of Letters, which relate to Gentlemen’s Employments, their Style of Office should never be omitted; and if they have more Offices than one, the highest need only be mentioned.

To the Commissioners and Officers of the Civil List.

To the Right Honourable *A.* Earl of *B.* Lord Privy Seal, or Lord President of the Council, or Lord Great Chamberlain; Earl Marshal of *England*, one of His Majesty’s Principal Secretaries of State, &c. ‘ My Lord, your Lordship.’

To the Right Honourable the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty, or of the Treasury, or of Trade and Plantations, &c. 'My Lords, your Lordships.'

The Commissioners of the Customs, Excise, Stamp-Office, Salt-Duty, Navy, &c. must be stiled 'Honourable ;' and if any of them are Privy-Councillors, it is usual to stile them collectively, ' Right Honourable, Sir, your Honour.'

To the Soldiers and Navy.

In the Army all Noblemen are stiled according to their Rank, to which is added their Employ.

To the Honourable *A. B.* Esq; Lieutenant-General, Major-General, Brigadier-General, of His Majesty's Forces, 'Sir, Your Honour.'

To the Right Honourable *A.* Earl of *B.* Captain of His Majesty's First Troop of Horse Guards, Band of Gentlemen Pensioners, Band of Yeomen of the Guards, &c. 'My Lord, Your Lordship.'

All Colonels are stiled ' Honourable ;' all inferior Officers should have the Name of their Employment set first ; as for Example, to Major *A. B.* to Captain *C. D.* &c.

In the Navy, all Admirals are stiled ' Honourable,' and Noblemen according to Quality and Office. The other Officers according to their respective Ranks.

To the Ambassadors, Secretaries, and Consuls.

All Ambassadors have the Title of ' Excellency' added to their Quality, as have also all Plenipotentiaries, foreign Governors, and the Lords Justices of *Ireland*.

To his Excellency Sir *A. B.* Baronet, his *Britanic* Majesty's Envoy Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary to the Court of *Turin*, 'Sir, Your Excellency.'

To his Excellency *A. B.* Esq; Ambassador to his Most Christian Majesty, 'Sir, Your Excellency.'

To his Excellency the Baron d'A. his Prussian Majesty's Resident at the Court of Great-Britain, 'Sir, Your Excellency.'

To Seignior A. B. Secretary from the Republic of Venice, 'Sir.'

To A. B. Esq; his Britannic Majesty's Consul at Smyrna, 'Sir.'

To the Judges and Lawyers.

All Judges, if Privy Counsellors, are styled 'Right Honourable,' as for Instance;

To the Right Honourable A. B. Lord High Chancellor of Great-Britain, 'My Lord, Your Lordship.'

To the Right Honourable A. B. Master of the Rolls, 'Sir, Your Honour.'

To the Right Honourable A. B. Lord Chief Justice of the King's Bench, or of the Common Pleas, 'My Lord, your Lordship.'

To the Honourable A. B. Lord Chief Baron, 'Sir, or, May it please you, Sir.'

To the Right Honourable A. B. Esq; one of the Justices ; or to Judge C. 'Sir, or, May it please you, Sir.'

To Sir A. B. his Majesty's Attorney, Sollicitor, or Advocate General, 'Sir.'

All others in the Law are styled according to the Offices and Rank they bear, every Barrister having the Title of Esquire given him.

To the Lieutenancy and Magistracy.

To the Right Honourable A. Earl of B. Lord Lieutenant and Custos Rotulorum of the County of Durham, 'My Lord, Your Lordship.'

To the Right Honourable A. B. Knight, Lord Mayor of the City of London, 'My Lord, Your Lordship.'

All Gentlemen in the Commission of the Peace have the Title of Esquire and Worshipful,' as have also all Sheriffs and Recorders.

The Aldermen and Recorder of *London* are stiled 'Right Worshipful,' as are also Mayors of Corporations, except Lord Mayors.

To *A. B.* Esq; High Sheriff of the County of *C.* 'Sir, Your Worship.'

To the Right Worshipful *A. B.* Esq; Alderman of *Tower Ward, London*, 'Sir, Your Worship.'

To the Right Worshipful *A. B.* Recorder of the City of *London*, 'Sir, Your Worship.'

The Governors of Hospitals, Colleges, &c. which consist of Magistrates, or have any such among them, are stiled 'Right Worshipful, or Worshipful,' as their Titles allow..

To the Governors under the Crown.

To his Excellency *A.* Lord *B.* Lord Lieutenant of *Ireland*, 'My Lord, Your Excellency.'

To the Right Honourable *A.* Earl of *B.* Governor of *Dover Castle*, &c. 'My Lord, Your Lordship.'

The second Governors of Colonies, appointed by the King, are called Lieutenant-Governors. Those appointed by Proprietors, as the *East-India Company*, &c. are stiled Deputy-Governors.

To incorporate Bodies.

Incorporate Bodies are called 'Honourable,' as,

To the Honourable Court of Directors of the United Company of Merchants trading to the *East-Indies*, 'Your Honours.'

To the Honourable the Sub-Governor, Deputy-Governor, and Directors of the *South-Sea Company*, 'Your Honours.'

To the Honourable the Governor, Deputy-Governor, and Directors of the Bank of *England*, 'Your Honours.'

To

To the Master and Wardens of the Worshipful Company of *Mercers*.

It is usual to call a Baronet and a Knight, ‘Honourable,’ and their Wives ‘Ladies.’

To the Honourable *A. B.* Baronet, at *C.* near *D.*
Sir, Your Honour.’

To the Honourable *A. B.* Knight, at *C. Surrey*,
Sir, Your Honour.’

To *A. B.* Esq; at *C.* or to Mr. *D.* at *E.* ‘Sir.’

To Men of Trade and Professions.

To Doctor *A. B.* in *Bloomsbury-square, London*,
‘Sir, or Doctor.’

To Mr. *A. B.* or Esq; Merchant, in *Tower-street, London*, ‘Sir.’

But the Method of addressing Men of Trade and Business is so common, and so well known, that it does not require further Examples.

It may be necessary to observe, in regard to the Form and Superscription of Letters, particularly of the politer Sort, that when you write to a Person of Distinction, let it be on gilt Paper, and, without sealing the Letter, inclose it in a Cover, on which you are to write the Superscription, and which you are to seal over it.

Begin your Letter about two Inches below the Top of your Paper, and leave about an Inch Margin on the Left-hand; and what Compliments, or Services you send in the Letter, insert them rather in the Body or Conclusion of it, than by Way of Postscript, as is too often done, but is neither so affectionate nor polite; for it not only favours of Levity to your Friends, but has the Appearance of having almost forgot them.

In directing your Letters to Persons who are well known, it is best not to be too particular, because it is lessening the Person you direct to, by supposing him obscure, and not easily found.

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16 *The Art of Letter-Writing.*

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Whenever you direct to Persons who are Honourable, either by Family or Office, it is more proper, as well as polite, to direct without the Title of Esq; than with it, for Instance; To the Honourable Mr. ——, not to the Honourable *Thomas* ——, Esq; which would be ridiculous.

Of the Subscription and Date.

The Subscription closes the Letter, and, in writing to Superiors, should be conceived in very respectful Terms, as ‘Your most humble and most obedient Servant, or, Your most obliged and humble Servant.’ To Equals, ‘Your humble and affectionate Servant, or Your Friend and humble Servant.’ To Inferiors, ‘Your Servant, or ready to do you a Service.’ The Subscription to Persons of Rank and Quality, should begin with ‘My Lord, or My Lady, or, Your Lordship or Ladyship, Sir, Madam, or Miss, in a Line apart. When Relations of unequal Condition write to each other, it should seem that the greater might better express the Degree of Parentage in the Beginning, and the other in the Subscription.

It is usual among the Polite, to sign their Names at a considerable Distance below the Conclusion of the Letter, and thereby leave a large vacant Space over their Names ; which, tho’ customary, is much better avoided, because it is putting it in the Power of any one who has your Letter, to write what he pleases over your Name, and to make you in all Appearance sign a Writing you would by no Means have set your Hand to.

As to the Date, it is a Matter of Indifference whether it be set at Top or Bottom of the Letter, though it is reckoned more polite to give it a Place opposite, or under the Subscription, especially when we write to Persons of Quality.

To

To these little Formalities, in a great Measure necessary to the Perfection of Letter-writing, it may not be quite foreign to our Purpose to add some orthographical Directions for writing more correctly, and when to use capital Letters, and when not.

Let therefore the first Word of every Book, Epistle, Note, Bill, Verse, begin with a Capital.

Let proper Names of Persons, Places, Ships, Rivers, Mountains, &c. begin with a Capital; also all appellative Names of Professions, Callings, &c.

It is esteemed ornamental to begin every Substantive in the Sentence with a Capital, if it bears some considerable Stress of the Author's Sense upon it, to make it the more remarkable and conspicuous.

None but Substantives, whether common, proper, or personal, may begin with a Capital, except in the Beginning, or immediately after a full Stop.

Qualities, Affirmations, or Particles, must not begin with a Capital, unless such Words begin, or come immediately after a Period; then they ought to begin with a Capital.

If any notable Saying or Passage of an Author be quoted in his own Words, it begins with a Capital, tho' not immediately after a Period.

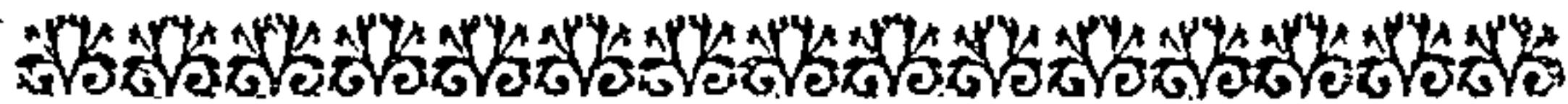
Let not a Capital be written in the Middle of a Word among small Letters.

Where Capitals are used in whole Words and Sentences, something is expressed extraordinary great. They are also used in the Titles of Books, for Ornament-sake.

The Pronoun I, and the Exclamative O, must be written with a Capital.

The Letter *q* is never used without the Letter *u* next following.

The long *s* must never be inserted immediately after the short *s*, nor at the End of a Word.



C H A P. III.

Of the Matter of Letters in General.

TH E Matter of Letters are all Things that may be discoursed of, without any Exception. For every Thing that can be said by Word of Mouth to a Friend present, may be written to him when he is absent. It must, however, be understood, provided Prudence permits it, as all know that it is not advisable to confide a Secret to Paper, which may be lost, and fall into other Hands.

This Matter varies according to the Diversity of Letters usually written, whether of Business or Compliment.

Letters of Business are those that treat of important Matters. They are of several Sorts, as Letters of Advice, Counsel, Remonstrance, Command, Request, Recommendation, Offer of Assistance, Complaint, Reproach, Excuse, and the like.

Letters of Advice are for letting our Friends know what passes, as well in our own Affairs as theirs, or those of another.

This Kind of Letters being the most common, is likewise the most simple of all. As it carries its Matter along with it, there will be no Occasion for the Labour of the Mind to invent it. All that is necessary, is to relate Things as they are, and as they may be told by Word of Mouth; yet, with this Reserve, of not writing inconsiderately any Thing that may give Offence, or may prejudice ourselves or our Friends, if it came to be known. In which, we should be particularly on our Guard, in speaking of the Great and of State-Affairs.

Letters:

Letters of Counsel are of two Sorts ; according as they are written to those who require to be counselled, or to those who do not.

The first does not stand in Need of much Art. We may begin with some slight Excuse of our Insufficiency, and say, that others more intelligent would give better Advice. However, as asking ours is an Honour done us, we are very willing to give it. Afterwards, declaring what we find necessary to be done, we should corroborate what we have said with Reasons drawn from what is honest, useful, and agreeable ; taking care that these Reasons are suitable to the State and Condition of the Person in Question. It will be proper to conclude by a Wish, that whatever is resolved on may succeed to his Welfare and Satisfaction.

In the second, we may nearly follow this Method. First, we must excuse our Intrusion in giving Counsel without being required, and say that our Friendship obliges us to it. That, though we place great Confidence in the Prudence of our Friend, yet, knowing how deeply he is interested in the present Affair, we believed it would be a Pleasure to him to disclose to him our Sentiments in regard to it : That we would not behave so to another we esteemed less, but that we are certain he will take our Liberty in good Part, considering it proceeds from a Heart intirely devoted to him. This done, we may enter upon our Matter, and support the Advice we have proposed with substantial Reasons. The Virtuous and Persons of Quality are more affected than others by the Consideration of Honour ; whereas those of meaner Condition have an Eye to their Profit. Young People are influenced by the Motives of Pleasure, but the Old have scarce a Relish for any Thing that does not coincide with their Interest. Afterwards, we may add, especially if we write to greater Persons than ourselves, or to one whom it is incumbent on us to shew Respect to, that we leave it to his Discretion to follow such Advice as

may

may seem best to him ; that it is not with the Intent of prescribing any Thing that we lay open to him our Thoughts, but that by comparing them with those which his Prudence may suggest to him, or with the Advice of his other Friends, he may the more easily resolve upon what to do. The Letter will conclude not improperly with a Prayer or Wish,---That God may bless and prosper his Resolution. But in writing to an Inferior, or a familiar Acquaintance, he may be exhorted to abide by the Counsel given him, and even urged to it, by shewing him that if he rejects it, he may involve himself in some Trouble or Misfortune by his Neglect or Obstinacy.

Letters of Remonstrance or Admonition are written to him who has been guilty of some Fault, in order to oblige him to acknowledge, or induce him to make Amends for it.

These Letters do not require so much Invention, when one has some Authority over the Person reprimanded, or is regardless how he receives the Censure passed upon him. Then we may proceed openly, and, in describing and exaggerating his Fault, represent to him how grievously he has offended God, and what Injury he has done his Reputation : Lastly, we may admonish him to relinquish the vicious Course of Life he is engaged in, or to make Reparation for the Scandal and Offence he has given his Neighbour, and the like.

But these Letters require more Art and Precaution, when we are desirous to check the Vices of our Friend, but so as not to incur his Displeasure. This Method would be then advisable. First, let us Praise the good Qualities of our Friend, and assure him how much we esteem them. In the next Place, we may say, that, as nothing is perfect in this World, so the Lustre of his Virtues is greatly obscured by the Vices he is addicted to : Or, if we fancy this too harsh, and dare not speak to him so openly, we may say that

it is the Judgment his best Friends pass upon him, being very sorry to observe the Irregularities he has given into. After this, we may add, that, if it was another we did not love so well, we should not have said a Word to him ; but that our Friendship for him obliges us not to keep concealed from him the ill Reports that are spread about concerning his Misconduct ; being sensibly concerned to hear that the Praises given him are accompanied with Exception to this or that reputed culpable in him. We may also say, that we hope, in the like Case, he will take the same Liberty with us, and that we shall be particularly obliged to him for it, as finding thereby that he loves sincerely if he does not flatter us. Having thus far expostulated with him, we may impute the vicious Practices we observe in him, either to his Age, or the Company he keeps, satisfied, that he would not otherwise have been guilty of them. We may conclude, by representing the Honour and Benefit that will accrue to him by avoiding Vice ; that God will restore him to Favour for it, and good Men esteem him : And, by saying, that we are persuaded he will yield to our Remonstrances, and take them in good Part, and withal that we hope to hear soon of a signal Change wrought in him for the better.

Letters of Command, are written only to those over whom one has some Power, as Children, Servants, and the like.

There is no Necessity to prescribe Rules for them. The most simple are the best. It is sufficient to let them understand, that what they are ordered they must do or let alone. There will be no great Occasion to have Recourse to Reasons for persuading them ; because the Authority of him who speaks stands for a Reason. But if sometimes a Reason is thought proper, the Facility and Equity of the imposed Command may be represented, with the Addition of Promises of Reward if they obey, and Threats of Punishment if

if they persist in the contrary. The Conclusion may be, that it is hoped they will do their Duty, and give sufficient Reason for being satisfied with their Behaviour.

Letters of Request are those, wherein some Favour is asked of a Friend, either for one's Self or for another. They take Place in all States and Conditions; no Person being of such elevated Rank and Authority, as not to want the Assistance of another, or at least not to have an Occasion to intercede for some of his Friends.

There are two Sorts of Request, one direct and open, the other indirect and oblique. The first is used in regard to a Thing which is manifestly honest to be asked, and in the Place of a good Friend. We must begin by a Testimony of our Confidence in his Friendship: Then represent the Facility of the Thing asked for, and, if necessary, shew by what Means he can oblige us. A Promise of due Acknowledgment for the expected Favour, will be a proper Conclusion.

We have Recourse to the second, when the Thing we ask is not very becoming, or when we are not assured of the good Will of him we make Application to. Thus circumstanced, we must try what Insinuation can do, first excusing our Boldness in being troublesome to a Person we never, perhaps, yet rendered the least Service to; and, then intimating, that, notwithstanding, we flatter ourselves with Hopes from his extreme Good-nature, as hitherto he has taken a singular Pleasure in obliging every one, and has frequently granted, to Persons of less Consideration than us, Matters of much greater Consequence, than what we now desire. If we have received any Favour from him before, we may say, that, being already indebted to him, we desire to be more so. But if we have laid him under an Obligation, it will be sufficient to hint it in a Word or two by the Bye, lest he should think we had a Mind to exact from him the like, in Form

of a Debt. Afterwards, we may represent to him that what we intreat him for, is just and honest, and that it is as easy for him to grant it, as it is useful and necessary to us. If the Necessity be pressing, we may endeavour to move him to Compassion by a lively Picture of our Misfortunes, which he alone, among all our Friends, has it in his Power to deliver us out of. In concluding, we may promise to remain always obliged to him, and that we shall use our best Endeavours to acquit ourselves soon of the Obligation ; but that, if we fail in the Power or Opportunity of doing so, we shall at least eternally preserve the Remembrance of it in our Heart ; wishing, withal, that he may be always so happy as never to stand in Need of a like Return.

We write Letters of Recommendation, when we are willing to recommend a Person, or his Affairs, to the Favour or Care of another.

In the Recommendation of a Person, we should first declare what induces us to recommend him : For Instance, that he is our Relation or Friend ; that we are under considerable Obligations to him, or his ; and that he is worthy of our Recommendation by his Virtue and Probity, which are well known to us, otherwise we would not have spoken in his Favour. We may then say, that, whatever Favour is shewn him, we shall repute it as done to ourselves, and shall acknowledge it on a like Occasion. It will not be amiss to conclude by praying our Friend to behave so, as that the Party recommended may find that our Recommendation has not been without Effect ; or, that we have so good an Opinion of his Friendship, that we do not fear being frustrated ; or even, that we are sensible he will do more than we require of him.

But when an Affair, abstracting from the Person, is recommended, it is sufficient to shew its Justice, or some easy Method for putting it in Execution, and

the Honour and Benefit that will redound from taking proper Care of it.

Letters offering Assistance are those written to a Friend, when it is known he is in some Necessity, in order to make a Tender to him of what he wants : For we must not wait to succour our Friend till he asks us, but rather spare his Shame, and anticipate his Request.

We may begin these Letters, by declaring how sensibly we are concerned to see our Friend in Necessity or Danger, and that we heartily wish we could have shewn him our Affection in better Circumstances : But that, since he is reduced to such a State as to be in want of the Help of his Friends, we are willing to convince him that we are of the Number ; that there may be Richer and more Powerful, but not more Affectionate ; that the Time is come to make some Return for the Obligations we are under to him and his ; that he need only acquaint us in what, and after what Manner, we can be of Service to him ; and that he shall find us ready to employ our Means and Credit to extricate him from his Difficulties.

Letters of Complaint are written to those from whom we have received Offence, either to make them acknowledge their Fault, or to upbraid them with their Ingratitude.

Herein, we must behave differently, according to the Quality of the Person and Offence. If we have a Mind to expostulate with a Friend, with whom we have no Design to break, and whose Offence is not heinous, it would be advisable to intermingle Complaints and Praises, and say, we are sorry he has not behaved towards us as Friendship might require. However, we are inclined to believe that he bore us no Ill-will ; that it is probable what he did was thro' Inadvertency, or that he was over-persuaded to it by some officious Person that did not wish us well ; that, notwithstanding

notwithstanding, we are ready to forget the Injury, provided he makes appear his Concern for it; and that then he will find us as much disposed to serve him as we had ever been.

When the received Offence is grievous, it is allowable to complain somewhat louder, but not to exaggerate Matters immoderately, or proceed to injurious Expressions. We may begin by saying, that we have long dissembled, with great Patience, some Things we had just Reason to complain of; chusing rather to bury them in Silence, than to seem desirous of seeking a Quarrel. But since he persists, and it is even to be feared he may do worse, we can no longer be silent. However, we have thought it more proper to appeal to himself, than carry our Complaints to a third Person. That we make himself Judge, if Passion has not yet intirely blinded his Reason, of the ill Usage we have received from his Hands; that we never gave him any Cause of Offence, but always behaved friendly to him; that he must make adequate Satisfaction, else we cannot help accusing him publicly. But, if he makes us due Reparation, we are contented to submit all to him, and to reckon him for the future our Friend.

Letters of Reproach are written to an ungrateful Person, who has returned Evil for Good. In such Case, we must first make him pass in Review the Favours and Services we have from Time to Time obliged him in; we may even aggravate Circumstances, if the Matter seems to require it; adding, nevertheless, that we regret what we do, as being contrary to our Humour; but that we are, as it were, necessitated to it by his Ingratitude. And, hereupon, we may call his Conscience to witness, if what we upbraid him with is not true. We may afterwards make a short Digression to shew how infamous that Vice is, and unworthy of a Man of Honour. To this may be added, that we hope the Remembrance of our Bene-

factions will serve as a *Stimulus* to awake the Sentiments of his Friendship. But that we now perceive we have sown in an ungrateful Soil, and that the only Recompence we have met with from him is very unfair and injurious Dealing, and neither more nor less than if we had been Enemies. That we wish at least he would open his Eyes, to see how much he has forgot himself.

Letters of Excuse, for the most Part, are Answers to those of Complaint or Reproach. They must be couched differently, according to the Intention of denying or acknowledging the objected Fault. If it be a Falshood, we may first complain of calumniating Tongues, which, by wrongfully accusing us, have prejudiced our Friend against us. We may next say, that we did not think he would have given so much Credit to them ; and that we hope he will also let our Justification take Place. That we pray him to believe, that the Reports raised to our Disadvantage are mere Calumny ; and that he may find they are so, by attending to such and such Circumstances. That we always esteemed his Friendship at too high a Price, to harbour the least Thought of offending him. That we earnestly intreat him to rid his Mind of the unjust Suspicions he has conceived of us, and to hold us for the future, as we are in reality, as his best and most faithful Friends.

But, if the Accusation be true and well grounded, an Excuse may be thus formed : That there is no Person in the World of such consummate Wisdom as not to fail sometimes ; that, as Men, we cannot say we are exempt from the Infirmities all others are subject to. That this once we have been surprised into a Fault, and are very sorry for it. That notwithstanding we promise ourselves so much from the Goodness of our Friend, that we firmly hope he will forget this Offence ; that we never intended to injure, or do any Thing to displease him ; and that, resolved to be
more

more circumspect for the future, we shall endeavour to atone for our Fault by all Sorts of possible Services. If we have to do with any Person of high Rank, whose Resentment we may have just Reason to dread ; we must implore his Mercy, and propose to him, if necessary, the Example of God, who is ready to pardon, as soon as he sees us touched with Repentance. We may likewise say, that his Clemency will be one of the most glorious Acts of his Life ; that it will acquire for him the Love of all ; and that the Sense we have of it, shall for ever inspire us with the most grateful Remembrance.

Letters of Compliment are for contracting Friendship, or for agreeably entertaining and amusing. They are of different Sorts ; as, besides procuring Friendship, of Visits, Congratulation, Consolation, Thanks, Raillery, and the like.

Letters for insinuating ourselves into a Person's Friendship should begin by declaring whatever induces us to seek the Honour of his Acquaintance, and for this Purpose we should make honourable Mention of the Virtues, which are said to adorn his Life, as his Humanity, Courage, Knowledge, and the like, using a prudent Variation, according to the Persons addressed, and praising them so as that no Flattery may be perceptible. Afterwards it may be said, that, if he vouchsafes to receive us into the Number of his Friends, he will, perhaps, not find us unworthy ; and on this Occasion we may praise ourselves a little, but modestly and with Reserve. We may conclude, by assuring him, that, if we obtain this Happiness, which we have great Hopes of, we shall endeavour to cultivate his Friendship by all Sorts of Duties and Services, that he may never have Room to repent of the Honour done us.

Letters of Visit serve to maintain Friendship between those who are absent, and are instead of Visits which might be paid Friends, if we lived near them.

In writing them we may say, that we have not a more sensible Pleasure than corresponding by Letter with them, since our Distance does not permit us to do it by Word of Mouth: That we ardently desire to know how they do, and in what Situation their Affairs are; and, not doubting but that they may have the same Curiosity in regard to us, we are also willing to inform them of all the News worth mentioning in our own Family. That we are all over Desire to have soon the Pleasure of their Company; that the Days we are without seeing them seem to us Years, and the Years Ages, especially when we receive no Letters from them. That we conjure them to write frequently, as they cannot do us a greater Pleasure. That, on our Side, we shall do the same, so that very probably they will have greater Reason to complain of our Importunity than Neglect. A Protestation of inviolably maintaining the Friendship subsisting between us will be a good Conclusion; saying, withal, that neither the Distance of Place, nor Length of Time, shall efface it in our Mind; that we hope to make it appear rather in Deeds than in Words, whenever it should please them to put it to the Test. And that we promise ourselves the same from them, to whom we wish all sorts of Prosperity.

Letters of Congratulation are written to Friends, to rejoice with them for some good Thing that has happened to them, as a Post or Dignity to which they have been promoted; a good Match they have met with; some great Danger they have escaped; a severe Fit of Illness they are recovered out of, and the like. On Account of this great Diversity of Subjects, each of which may require to be treated in a particular Manner, it will be difficult to prescribe Rules equally suitable to all; so that it need only be observed, that we should signify our Pleasure for our Friend's Happiness, by saying that we are as much interested in it as if it had happened to ourselves, and that our long

long established Friendship, or the Ties of Parentage, oblige us to it. That even the Public, seeing Men of Reputation and Honour advanced to Dignities, are rejoiced, and with good Reason, because the Happiness is not so much conferred on them, as on the State, which thereby has been provided with worthy Men, and of distinguished Abilities.

In the next Place, to shew that we have just Reason to rejoice at our Friend's good Hap, we may expatiate upon its Excellence and Value, and say, that it is not of the Nature of such as pass away in a Moment, but that he will find the Effects of its Utility and Pleasure during his whole Life. That it is an Honour that will immortalise his Name. That it had been diligently sought after by many, but obtained by few; that neither Chance nor blind Favour threw it in his Way, but that it is a Reward due to his Merit. We may conclude, by wishing that his Felicity may be perpetual to him, and not only succeed to his particular Satisfaction, but even be conducive to the public Welfare. Sometimes we may exhort him to make Use of the Opportunity of surpassing himself as much for the future, as others hitherto, and of increasing daily in Virtue and Probity.

If we felicitate our Friend on some Danger he has escaped, we may insert in our Letters, that God saw he was still useful to his Family and the Public, and that he preserved him for their Service: Or, that God, who loves him, was not willing to take him out of this World by a sudden and unprovided Death, but has given him a Respite to think of his Conscience. That he should therefore think seriously to employ the Life he has received a-new, to the Glory of him who gave it.

Letters of Consolation serve for mitigating the Misfortunes and Adversities of our Friends, which, being of different Kinds, cannot be all cured by the same Remedy. In general, if the Misfortune is not

great, we may tell them they have no Reason to afflict themselves to such a Degree; that the Thing does not deserve it; that they ought to shew more Courage; and that they do harm to their Reputation. Some few Touches of Raillery may be also introduced, provided we are certain that the Party addressed will not take Umbrage at them. We may afterwards give them Hopes that their Trouble will not be of any Continuance; that they will soon see a happy Issue to it, and that the Remembrance of a safe Riddance will hereafter fill them with Joy and Pleasure.

But, if some heavy Calamity has happened to our Friend, we may say, that we are under the deepest Concern for his Affliction; and, taking so great a Part as we do therein, we do not think ourselves so fit for unbending his Mind by Words of Comfort, as for Condoling with him. Notwithstanding, as our Parentage, Friendship, or the Obligations we are under to him, require our applying some Lenitive, we are willing to try whether we can. That we do not design to advise him not to mourn and afflict himself; that so doing would be a Degree of Cruelty or Inhumanity, having sustained so great a Loss, as a Wife, a Father, a Mother, an only Child, or the like: But that, however, he should moderate his Grief, and shew some Fortitude by supporting courageously what he cannot correct, and making, as it is said, a Virtue of Necessity. That, in reality, such an Accident must quite deject a Person of less Courage; but that, knowing his Constancy, we are sensible he will not suffer himself to pine away in unnecessary Regrets, and that he will soon moderate his Mourning. That the Time now is to shew the Advantages he has reaped, perhaps, from the Study of Philosophy, or *Christian* Resignation; that it is not reasonable Nature should change her Course, and exempt him from the Laws all the World is subject to; and that he should submit without Murmuring to the Will of God. That, though,

though the Affliction, at present, is exceeding painful, it may turn to his Benefit; that God, who finds Remedies and Issues where there seem to be none, will convert it into Joy when he has tried him; that there is nothing so disastrous but may be surmounted by Patience and a firm Resolution; that Numbers, to whom the like Accidents have happened, have proved themselves courageous, particularly such and such of his Acquaintance. In the End, we may pray God to comfort him by the Gifts of his Spirit.

Letters of Thanks are written to those from whom some Favour has been received, and ought to be prudently adapted, both to the Nature of the Benefaction, and the Quality of its Author. They commonly begin by commemorating the received Favour, which may be exaggerated, to shew how sensible we are of its Value; adding, that we are not worthy of it, having never given Occasion to our Friend to honour us in so extraordinary a Manner; or, that, if at any Time we have done him some little Pleasure, he has now repaid us in a very ample Manner. That obliging us at the present Time was very seasonable, as wanting it; that, when we were abandoned by others, he assisted us; that he defended us by his Credit; that he opened his Purse for us in our Necessity; that he endangered or exposed himself to the Hatred of others, to extricate us from Difficulties. That we heartily wish he may never be reduced to such a Condition as to need a like Return; but, in Case it might so happen, we shall use our best Endeavours to testify our Sense of the Obligation. And, if the received Benefit is so considerable that we have it not in our Power to make ever a proper Return, we may say, that we pray God to be the Rewarder of it; promising to retain always the Remembrance of it engraved on our Heart, and to acknowledge the same by all Sorts of Services. We may use the same Compliment, if the Person who has conferred the Favour on

us, is of such elevated Rank as to require no other Payment but Thanks.

Letters of Raillery have Place only among intimate Friends. No Precepts can be given for writing them, because Nature must contribute most to their Beauty ; and to lay Nature, herein, under a Restraint, would be a ready Way to be guilty of great Improprieties. We need only attend to the Decency of Raillery, carefully guarding against giving Offence, and the indiscreet Behaviour of those who would rather lose a Friend than a Pun. The Circumstances of Things and Persons will furnish out sufficient Matter for Raillery. It may be also not amiss to observe, that Raillery does not properly constitute a particular Species of Letters, being chiefly used, where applicable, as a seasoning Ingredient in them.

Mixt Letters, treating of different Matters, whether of Business or Compliment, are not likewise a new Sort, as they only join together some of the preceding. They are the most common of all ; for Letters are seldom confined to one Subject, and Letters of Business begin or conclude generally by Compliments. There will be therefore no Occasion to assign particular Rules for them. Whoever can write a Letter on any distinct Subject, will not be embarrassed in composing them : The more abundant the Matter is, the more easily it will admit of being displayed in suitable Colours.

Lastly, it will be necessary to observe, that, though the foregoing Instructions principally regard such Letters as are written first, without any Inducement to write from those of another, yet it is easy to fit and apply them to Letters of Answer ; so that there will be no Occasion to treat of them separately. The Letters we answer prescribe the Subject-matter, and nothing more seems requisite than to satisfy each Point as Prudence may direct.

In Letters of Business, no Particular, deserving an Answer,

Answer, should be passed over; but, in those of Compliment, it is not necessary to be always so exact, provided we neither trespass against Decorum, nor violate the Laws of Friendship. However, in both Dispatch is commendable, as by it we make appear how much we esteem him we write to, by losing no Time in answering his Letters: Otherwise we might justly incur the Censure of Contempt or Indolence. And, if the Nature of the Business we are to send an Answer about, requires some Delay, it would be advisable, in order not to keep our Friend too long in Suspense, to send him before-hand a Note or Message, promising to remeber his Request. When we are also to answer Letters which have given us Offence, it would be advisable to delay a little, as well not to suffer ourselves to be hurried away by Resentment, as to give our Friend Time to recollect himself, and by so doing not to break too precipitately the Bonds of Friendship.

ഒരുപാടം പ്രസിദ്ധ ലഭ്യമായ പ്രശ്നങ്ങളും പരിഹരണ വഴികളും ഉൾക്കൊള്ളുന്നത്

C H A P. IV.

Further Instructions on the Matter of Letters ; with regular Examples.

W E shall divide this Chapter into several Parts or Articles, according to the Diversity of Subjects we design to treat of in it.

Instructions for writing Letters of Praise.

If the Subject of a Letter obliges us to bestow direct Praise on those we write to, we should endeavour to execute it in a refined Taste and concise Manner. Nothing is more fulsome than a prolix and graceless Elogium. Several, no doubt, must be offended with the Stuff that is usually crowded into panegyrical Letters,

ters. Those they are addressed to, are treated as Persons of little Modesty. It is true, that, in regard to Ladies, it is allowable to extend Flattery much farther: They are so accustomed to receive Incense, that to offer it with a sparing Hand would be held a signal Affront. The Great may in some Measure be treated as Ladies, as it happens but too frequently that they require also to be fed with Smoke.

There are several Sources from whence Topics of Praise may be drawn. We may consider whether a Person be of illustrious Blood, and is born with the Advantages we call Gifts of Nature. These Gifts consist in being distinguished by an elevated Soul, firm, and full of Probity; by an upright, generous, tender, and grateful Heart; by a sublime, extensive, ready, and piercing Wit; by a happy Memory, solid Judgment, nice Discernment.

We may next proceed to examine whatever is commendable in exterior Qualities; as Beauty in Women, Comeliness in Men; in both, upright Stature, free and easy. The Countenance noble, devoid of Affectation, yet replete with certain inexplicable Charms, expressive of the Air and Manner of a well-born Person. It must more especially be observed, whether a good Education has accompanied good natural Parts. Whether Success has made appear, that the Parties are possessed of great Virtues, and that these Virtues are suitable, according to their Sex, Age, and Profession.

It is granted, that Praise may be given on Account of the Gifts of Fortune. It is to Fortune that the Generality believe they ought to attribute Riches and Dignities, together with all prosperous Events. If some, say they, are descended from an illustrious Family, it is in a great Measure to Fortune that they are indebted. Nature gives Birth to us only as Men, but Fortune is pleased that certain Men, among numberless Wretches, should be born great Lords.

As

As the Beauties and Endowments of the Mind are the most considerable, and as Piety is the Foundation of other Virtues, it is by it we should properly begin.

Example for the Piety of a Lady.

"Her Devotion is not as that of other Women, the Result of Education and Custom. It is influenced by good Sense and solid Reasoning, which are the Ground-work of *Christian* Perfection, without Ostentation and Superstition. Earth and Time cannot be productive of sufficient Praises for a Virtue that seeks only for a Reward in Heaven ; and as true and unfeigned Piety is an Enemy to Shew, keeping itself concealed in the Bottom of the Heart, Men, who see nothing but the Exterior of Things, cannot pretend to praise it but by Veneration and Silence."

A Lady of Quality may be praised for her Wit, Memory, and moral Virtues.

"We may judge of her extensive Wit, by considering that her Capacity for great Things does not hinder her Application to little Concerns, when it is necessary for her to take Care of them in her Family, or to speak of them in Conversation. The Sprightliness of her Genius receives an additional Lustre from her being conversant with the best Books, and her Memory is so happy, that she never forgets any Thing she has read. She can write with Ease on all Sorts of Subjects, and nothing can exceed the Elegance of her Style. Her Modesty is a speaking Pattern to her Sex ; her Reputation without Blemish. Her Liberality may be said to equal that of Princesses in the Magnificence of her Presents, and surpasses it in the Choice of the Persons they are bestowed on, who alone can speak worthily of her Benefactions."

Elogium of a great Minister of State.

He was a Man, greater by his Genius and by his Virtues, than by his Dignities and by his Fortune :

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Always employed, and always above his Employes; capable of regulating the present, and foreseeing the future; of improving prosperous Events, and repairing bad: Vast in his Designs, sagacious in his Counsels, judicious in his Choice, and fortunate in his Enterprises. A Servant without Passion and Interest; a Favourite without Insolence and Arrogance; a Minister, whose Hands were clear of Rapine and Blood; whose Heart never conceived Revenge, nor Mind Jealousy and Deceit: Who never worked upon the good Disposition of his King to sinister Purposes, nor used his Credit but with a View to universal Beneficence; who kept all Classes of Men to a strict Observance of their respective Duties, yet all in a well-regulated Liberty, where there never appeared any of the wretched Symptoms of Servility or Oppression. The more powerful, as during his Life he never supplanted any one: The more opulent, as, having enriched the whole Nation, contenting himself with what his Condition brought him. To say all in a few Words, he was replenished with those excellent Gifts God grants to certain Souls which he created to govern others; and to be the moving Force of those Springs Providence adopts to raise or pull down, according to his eternal Decrees, the Fortune of Kings and Kingdoms,

Extract from M. Flechier's Elogium of Marshal Turenne.

Marshal *Turenne* was wise, modest, liberal, disinterested, devoted to the Service of his Prince and Country, great in Adversity by his Courage, in Prosperity by his Modesty, in Difficulties by his Prudence, in Perils by his Valour, in Religion by his Piety. He shewed and possessed an even Temper, whether he was to prepare or decide Matters, seek for Victory with Ardour, or wait for it with Patience; whether he undertook to prevent the Designs of the Enemy by some bold Attempt, or to dissipate the Fears and Jealousies

lousies of the Allies by Prudence ; whether, in fine, he thought it necessary to use Moderation in the Successes of War, or keep himself from being dejected amidst its unprosperous Events. His Virtues may be said to assume different Appearances, according to the various Shiftings of Fortune ; for he was happy without Pride, unhappy with Dignity, his Conduct being almost as admirable, when with Judgment and Bravery he saved the Remains of the Troops beaten at *Mariendal*, as when he beat himself the *Imperialists* and *Bavarians*, and with triumphant Troops obliged all *Germany* to ask of *France* the Peace of *Munster*.— He endeavoured to subject the Enemy, and not to destroy them : He often wished he could attack and defend without hurting, and that he could reduce those to right Reason and Justice, whom his Duty made it incumbent on him to use Violence against. He had formed, for his own particular Instruction, a Kind of military Morality. He had no other Passions, than an Affection for the Glory of the King, a Desire for Peace, and Zeal for the public Welfare : He had no other Enemies than Pride, Injustice, and Usurpation. In short, he had accustomed himself to fight without Anger, to conquer without Ambition, to triumph without Vanity, and to observe no other Rule for his Actions than Virtue and Wisdom.

Of the Epistle Dedicatory.

We often see a Profusion of Praise in Epistles Dedicatory ; and, indeed, it is principally in this Species of Letters that the Precepts just given may be properly applied : The following Example is from a late elegant and ingenious Performance, intitled, “ The Life and Opinions of *Bertram Montfichet, Esq;*” and dedicated to the Earl of *Chesterfield* :

“ My Lord,

An Author can never be at a Loss to work up the Materials of a Dedication, when he has so fertile a Subject

Subject as your Lordship to enlarge upon. What a Diversity of Lights, all resplendent with the most engaging Charms, all truly characteristical of the accomplished Man, has not your Lordship appeared in? The Patriot, the Statesman, the Philosopher, the Orator, the Poet, all united and perfected in your Person, afford us an illustrious Specimen of the Force of Nature, when nurtured and cultivated in her proper Soil. But these bright Qualities are not the only that reflect Dignity on your Lordship: A thousand others, though not so commonly magnified by the Applause of Mankind, command our Esteem. What shall I say of your Virtues in social Life? Your friendly and humane Disposition has at all Times attracted Hearts; not in the Spirit of Adulation, but with the Warmth of Sincerity. Good Wishes, and frequently realised by their Effects, for promoting the Cause of Letters, have brought over the whole Tribe of Authors to your Side. They justly celebrate you as the only *Mæcenas* of the Age, and repute it a more than adequate Reward of the Pains they have taken, to be honoured with the Patronage of the Earl of *Chesterfield*; a Patronage fully sufficient to bring into Request their Productions. How happy would they be, could they lay in a permanent Claim to it? But, alas! the Ravages of Time on the human frail Vessel abridge the Prospect of such fine Hopes: And, what is equally discomfiting to them, they despond, with good Reason, that, when the Gold Branch is cropped, a succeeding Shoot will not be able to display such vivid Rays of pure Lustre: Yet, your Lordship's Memory will ever be dear to them. Yes;

————— *manibus date lilia plenis,*
Purpureos spargam flores,

You are the Pride and Admiration of the present Age, and you will be the Glory of the future. None will hesitate

hesitate to join in these Sentiments of your superior Excellence with,

My Lord,
Your Lordship's
most obliged,
most obedient, and
most humble Servant,
THE AUTHOR."

It would be advisable to order a Dedication, so as there might appear a Sort of Analogy or Agreement between the Subject-matter of the Book and the Elogium of the Person it is presented to. Of this we have a very famous Example in a little Book, intitled, "The Death and last Words of *Seneca*," written and dedicated by Monsieur *Mascaron* to Cardinal *Richelieu*:

" My Lord,
I offer these last Words of one of the greatest Men of Antiquity to Him, whom it can represent but imperfectly by its most excellent Examples, and the most noble Death past Ages have exhibited, to a noble Life, the Glory and Ornament of ours. *Seneca*, who never suffered himself to be tempted by the Charms of the *Roman* Court, finds Sweets in yours, which Philosophy permits him to have a Relish for ; and, since Virtue has made over to you a just Claim to Glory, you shall, my Lord, be the Witness and Arbiter of his. This great Man has himself inspired me with the Discourse I here make bold to lay before your Eminence, when he says, that the Struggles of a great Soul against adverse Fortune are a Spectacle God can look down upon with Pleasure. Take therefore a View of his Conflict ; it is worthy of your Attention ; I say worthy, because you are one of our Tutelary Deities ; and set aside for a Moment your high Occupation of deliberating concerning the Increase and Decay of Empires to see Him die, who was formerly engaged in the same Cares, but unhappily, with little Success..

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I have made Choice of for him the Spectator he has desired, your Genius, by procuring the Tranquillity of the State, by watching to maintain it, and by making Justice reign, being as God, the universal Cause of Good, and deserving by Resemblance a Name that belongs to him by Nature. This Discourse must not offend your Modesty ; you cannot refuse a Name which the Divine Oracles give to all the Faithful*, and, without finding Fault with the Artificer who has graved his Image on your Soul, it cannot be found amiss if I say that this Soul resembles him.

In former Times Flattery presumed to wish the *Romans* Gods like unto their Prince, and the Senate applauded this Manner of Speech, than which there cannot be a greater Impiety : But, my Lord, speaking as a *Christian*, and without honouring the Earth at the Expence of Heaven, might not it be said that your glorious Life follows and adores its Example, and imitates its Perfections ? The most intelligent Minds acknowledge that God has imparted to you some Rays of that inaccessible Brightness wherein he has chosen his Abode ; that you are encompassed with a Light, not less conducive to the Good of others than your own. That your Prudence dissipates not only the Clouds that keep natural and moral Truths hidden from us, but that it also penetrates to the Bottom of human Thoughts, whose Secrets are known only to him who keeps the Key of the Abyss. This Knowledge in you is neither idle nor unfruitful, and, by the Wonders it displays before our Eyes, imitates, in as great a Degree as the human Condition can allow of, the eternal Productions of Wisdom and Love in the Bosom of the Divinity. But it bears a much nearer Relation to the Effects Providence operates outwardly in governing the Universe : You have, as Providence, Ways unknown to and Means hidden from human Wisdom, which deceive the Forecast of the most Circumspect,

* *Ego dixi Dii glis*, Psal. lxxxi.

cumspect, or at least surpass their Thoughts and Hopes. If we have seen that the Conquests of Foreigners have been, by your wise Counsels, nothing more than pleasing Dreams in regard to our Enemies, and a new Subject of Triumph to your Master ; the Reason is, that in serving him you copy the Manner of Divine Administration, which draws Good out of Evil, and converts Loss into Gain.

The great God, who may have, if he pleases, Lions to cultivate the Earth, the same Way as he has Gnats and Flies to infest it, makes his Creatures easily productive of Effects, which exceed, or are contrary to their Nature : And it is also no uncommon Wonder, in your Conduct, to make Designs succeed by Means seemingly contrary to their End ; as they appear, we despair of Success ; but you have taught us to suspend our Judgments, and we fail not to be agreeably surprised. I do not speak of those astonishing Works*, which have curbed Rebellion, and braved Nature ; to which the one opposed its Fleets, as vainly as the other its Tides : I am not likewise surprised to see Laurels spring up among Ice, and that of the *Alps*, which refuse an Abode to Men, you have made a Field of Victory for our Armies. But, my Lord, to make sure of their Passes by abandoning them, to make this Day a Town important, to see it the next with greater Security, and to take it by Treaty more gloriously than by Force ; is in Appearance to throw some Jewel into the Sea, to pick it up on the Shore, and to shew notwithstanding that Heroes, in their Thoughts, as well as in their Actions, in their Politics, as well as in their Morals, always surpass Nature. The Nations, which have so often quitted their cold Climates, to over-run all *Europe*, and which have kept it from Desolation the Moment you procured their Alliance, do not they make appear that Causes desert their natural Inclinations, to follow

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your

* The Dyke of *Rechelz*.

your Motions, whenever you set them to Work ? You have employed, for restraining Injustice, those who were thought to be capable of doing nothing but Acts of Injustice, for supporting the Right of those who never knew Right but with a View of violating it ; and their Prince †, whose Predecessors had oppressed the Liberties of the most distant People, after you had gained him over to *France*, generously fought and lost his Life for that of his Neighbours. In whatever Respect God may embellish in you his Image, nothing can be more precious and glorious than the Advantage he has given you of sharing with him the Heart of the greatest King of the Earth, and of inspiring by your Counsels him whom he rules by his Commands.

I stop short, my Lord, and the Echo that does not answer to the Rattling of Thunder, informs me that what Gods do, cannot be expressed by Men. My Pen had taken too adventurous a Flight, and, without considering my Subject, or my Abilities, I laid my Hand on those rich Materials at which the best Workmen cannot help Trembling. Silence and Astonishment are the best Rules of Eloquence for so sublime a Subject, and those who fancy to succeed therein, howsoever great their Genius may be, resemble thirsty Travellers, who sometimes think they cannot find Water enough in Rivers to quench their extreme Thirst, and yet see, after having drank their Fill; that they have not even diminished the Flow or Quantity of Water they believed they should have exhausted. We have not Words equal to your Actions ; our Strength fails us in Proportion as your Wonders increase ; and as it was formerly said of a valiant Man, that he could receive no more Wounds but on the Scars of those he had already received, so you cannot be praised but by Repetition, because Truth, which is circumscribed by Limits, has said for you all that Lyes, which know no Bounds, have invented for others..

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†. *Gustavus, King of Sweden.*

It is not therefore without Reason that *Seneca* desires to die in your Presence, and to have Him for Spectator of his last Efforts, whose single Voice is better than all public Acclamations. You receive him favourably, my Lord, because he deserts, to follow you, the Interests of his Nation, to the ambitious Deligns of which you oppose so much Judgment and Generosity : His Name makes him worthy of a Reception mine is not deserving of, and, if he gains your Esteem, it will be rather by the Lustre of his Virtue, than the Ornaments of my Pen. I know notwithstanding that he would not die satisfied, unless he first eased his Mind of a Thought, and acknowledged that he sees in you without Jealousy the great Advantages your Virtue has over his, except that which you possess in the good Graces of a Prince, who is not less worthy of your Services, than you are of his Affections. *Seneca* deserved undoubtedly a better Age than that of *Nero*; but you could not have found a better than that of *Lewis the Just*, and Heaven adverse to him in that Respect was favourable to you. He had the Mortification to have brought up a Monster, who violated all Laws, and dishonoured Nature. And you, the Satisfaction of serving a Monarch, who is the Miracle of our Days, and of whom the Fruits surpass the Hopes. *Seneca's* Cares chanced to light upon a Disposition that had a Repugnance to the doing of Good, and pursued Evil by Inclination ; whereas you have the Pleasure to labour for a Prince, to whom nothing is agreeable but what is permitted, and whose Soul is influenced by such regular and generous Motions, that it never sees Good without practising it, whatever Interest may otherwise oppose his Resolutions, or Difficulties he may have to conquer.

Pardon me, my Lord, if, speaking of you as one of our visible Gods, I have touched upon Things which should seem foreign to my Design ; but do not our most religious Duties represent the Invisible under the

Form of a Man, and is not the Most High satisfied with that Image he has given us ? Reason which receives nothing but through the Channel of the Senses, cannot produce any Thing that is not tinctured with their Weakness : That which has its Origin in Heaven, forms its Ideas on Earth, where it cannot find more exalted than those it may conceive of you. Still, my Lord, I am accountable to the Public for the precious Time I abuse by a Discourse that has nothing good in it but its Matter, and I perceive that you more desire my last Words than those of *Seneca*. I am, however, ashamed, that, having spoken so imperfectly of the Wonders of your Life, I should speak so much to my own Advantage as to say, that I am Your Eminence's most humble and most obedient Servant.

Familiar Letters, or of Friendship.

This Kind of Writing, as already intimated, requires a plain and easy Style, and the more natural our Thoughts are, the greater the Impression will be on the Mind of those we write to. All that need be added is, that Familiarity should not make an Allowance for writing all Sorts of Trifles.

E X A M P L E S.

Dear Sir,

Though I was not to receive a Line from you, I should not be the less convinced of your Friendship. Some, however, say, that none can be silent in Regard to their Friends, without forgetting them. My Opinion of the Matter is that People loved before Writing was in Fashion, and that, since they knew how to write, more Lyes have been told than Truth. How now should we suffer ourselves to be amused by such doubtful Signs ? Is it not the Heart that must testify Affection ? I am willing then to believe, that, when you do not speak to me, you are thinking of me : So it is that I interpret your Silence, and do Justice to your Friendship. Treat mine the same Way, and

and believe that no one has a more sincere Regard for you than, &c.

NO, Sir, I have not forgot you, and I can say that I never shall, because you still remember me. But have you any Affection still left for me, or must I guard against the flattering Strain of your Letter? Tell me, I pray you, lest I should take false Measures, and feed myself with chimerical Notions. A few Years ago I was held as a Favourite in your Family; but New-comers, no doubt, more deserving than I am, supplanted me. I should be glad notwithstanding to resume the Post, but I cannot do it without your Assistance. Stir up only in your Heart the Inclination that was formerly so strong for me, and, on my Side, I will not fail to renew the Sentiments of Respect and Gratitude I owe you.

Letters of Consolation.

In this Sort of Letters, as was mentioned in the general Instructions, the Heart must appear touched, and must speak without the Assistance of the Mind. On these Occasions let us shew ourselves less witty than sensible, making Choice of tender and natural Expressions, and rejecting Thoughts either flashy or too much studied.

There is not a more laudable Custom than that of consoling one another in Affliction. Fortune makes us miserable so many different Ways, that we should repute it inhuman if we were not comforted in this Manner. When the Person we write to is overwhelmed with an Excess of Grief, instead of stopping the Flow of his first Tears, we may tell him we mingle ours with them. We may speak of the Merit of the Friend or Relation that is lost, yet, shewing there is nothing extraordinary in that Death, as may be seen by more surprising Examples the afflicted Party is not unacquainted with.

If we address Persons of some Distinction by their Courage or Wit, we may express our Sentiments in a bolder Manner, and represent to them that such excessive Lamentations are not the Way to support their Character. We may shew the Injustice of pretending, in a Law condemning us all to Death, that there should be an Exception in our Favour which the greatest Potentates never obtained.

It is chiefly in Letters of Consolation we are allowed to use moral Sayings and Maxims, or Sentiments of Piety, which notwithstanding must suit the Age, Humour, and Profession of him that writes, or the Person written to. But it is necessary to set aside these Quotations and strong Arguments, when we write to Persons who have greater Reason to rejoice than be afflicted on Account of the Death we speak to them of: However, we are not even in this Case allowed to adapt our Discourse openly to the secret Sentiments of the Heart; Decency forbids us to do it, and Judgment will have us cut it short on such Occasions. When the Matter stands otherwise, we may enlarge more on the Miseries inseparable from the human Condition. And, indeed, what Disquietudes and Heart-burnings are not even People of Quality liable to in making good their Interest at Court? To what Fatigues and Dangers are they not exposed in War? What Calamities, generally speaking, is not every one subject to in Life? Indigence makes some labour from Morning till Night. Riches are attended with inconceivable Anxieties both in acquiring and keeping them, and there is nothing less new, nor less common, than to see Tears shed for the Death of a Parent or Friend. Let us proceed to Examples, and produce different ones, according to the Diversity of Persons that take upon them to comfort, or stand in Need of being comforted. A Man, celebrated for his Wisdom and Erudition, may expatiate in such Manner as he thinks proper on the Subject. He may write,

as it were, a Kind of Entertainment, insert Maxims of Morality, and even add Counsels, if the afflicted Party places any Confidence in him.

E X A M P L E S.

Letter to a Man of Quality, on the Death of his Son.

The News of the Loss you have sustained has sensibly affected me, and I doubt not but your Affliction is very great. I am well acquainted with your Tenderness ; I know the Merit of the Person you regret, and I confess that nothing can be better founded than your Grief. I will even tell you, if necessary, that I always placed a great Difference between the Friendships we contract in the Commerce of Life, and those arising from the Sentiments of Nature. The first may be established by some favourable Opinions, yet are easily destroyed by a slight Injury or simple Suspicion. The same cannot be said of the Affections that are deeply rooted in the Heart. Thus it is I judge of what you suffer, and cannot condemn your Tears. But, after all, though you should, by the Excess of your Grief, reject every Thing that might contribute to your Consolation, do you think Time must not obtain from you what you are not willing to grant your Reason ? It seems to me, that, considering only your Experience and Wisdom, you ought to moderate your Affliction. Your Loss is great, I confess, but what Right have you to hope of never meeting with such ? I have heard of several Persons born fortunately, and who have received extraordinary Privileges from Heaven ; yet you cannot say that God has granted them that of not dying. I beg of you to pass in Review all the illustrious Families you know ; believe me, you will not find one of them but has had a like Subject for Tears and Distress. Death is not the Enemy of one only People or Family, but of Mankind in general. I grant, that, by the Order of

D Nature,

Nature, the Father should die before the Son ; but will Death, continually busied in destroying Nature, be subject to her Laws. Let us not complain, that Death attacks us sooner, it seems, than it ought to do. The Duration of Life is neither short nor long, but as it pleases him to whom we owe it. Sometimes he crops the Fruit in its green State, and sometimes he waits till it is ripe ; but, whatever he does, we ought always to believe with Submission that he does nothing but very justly. He neither offends those he takes to himself young, nor those he suffers to become old. To ask, why he acts by this Diversity of Ways, is a Question we shall not see cleared up but in a World where the Light will be greater than in this. The Depths of the Sea can be sounded, but not the Secrets of God : Examine not into them ; receive with Veneration what has happened to you, and you will calm the Uneasiness of your Mind. You have done your Duty to the Memory of the Son you have lost, think of those that remain to you. They are Branches grafted on the same Stock, and give you the same Hopes. Take the same Care of them, live to succour them in the same Manner. I conjure you to it by the Affection you have for them, and by that you feel for an illustrious Spouse, whom you should set all Sorts of good Examples. Shew her how she should conform to the Will of God. If she sees you inconsolable, if she sees you bent upon afflicting yourself, it is to be feared, that, being of a weaker and more tender Sex, it may do her infinite Prejudice. You always loved Glory, and, in Time of War, who has signalised himself more than you ? Must I now ask you what is become of your Courage ? Let us not flatter ourselves, the Victories we gain over our Enemies are not intirely our's. We are indebted for a great Part of them to Fortune, or other Means ; but what lawfully belongs to us, and in which no Person has a Share, are the Advantages we have over our Passions, when, in spite

of their Violence, we keep our Souls in their proper Situation, or can possess them in Tranquillity, after a few Moments Trouble. I say nothing but what you know better than I do ; but the Esteem you have always shewn for me, obliges me to contribute to the mitigating of your Sorrows, and testifying to you with what Zeal and Gratitude I am, &c.

Sentiments of Piety are properly inserted in Letters of Consolation, particularly those addressed to Ladies remarkable for their Devotion and Charities.

Letter to a Lady of Quality, on the Death of her Daughter.

MADAM,

If, in the Condition you are in, you can admit of Consolation, I see none but God can give it you. To lose nothing, we must offer up unto him whatever we lose. This is the Way to deprive Fortune of her Right, and to despise the Power of Death. Believe me, Madam, make an Offering of the Subject of your Grief ; I assure you it will change its Nature, and become a Matter of Merit to you. This Kind of Consecration will render a Creature more perfect, whom Time had not yet put the finishing Hand to, and whom you will possess in God more securely, than you did in herself. God is faithful ; he will keep what you have given him ; your Gift will be a Deposit which you cannot lose any more ; you will find it with him in whom all Things are found. The Philosophy I here propose to be followed, is not too sublime for so elevated a Soul as your's. You know better than I can tell you, that there are more Remedies in the *Christian Religion*, than Misfortunes in our Life. Your Piety in this Manner may anticipate the Assistance human Reason is ready to furnish you with. I could wish a different Opportunity had offered, to

renew to you the Assurances of Respect of one that is, &c.

To a Lady, on the Death of her Husband.

MADAM,

Not one will say, that the Cause of your Tears is not just and reasonable ; you have lost a Husband universally esteemed ; but permit me to tell you, if God does not condemn a well-grounded Affliction, he will the Excess of it, if continued. This would be to find Fault with his Conduct, and to oppose the Orders of his Providence. A Sorrow that will leave no Open for Comfort, is a Kind of Revolt against Heaven, and *Christian* Piety enjoins us to be submissive to its Will. It finds Advantages in all Things, and even turns to some Account those which are lost ; so that, the Object of your Tenderness being out of this World, you should not fail to follow it by Thought, and to seek a closer Union with God. Make a willing Sacrifice to him of the Loss you have sustained, and you will obtain Strength to bear up against it. We deal safely with God, and though we are to expect no real Joy, but in a better World than this, I dare say he will not leave you without Consolation, which I wish you from all my Heart, and am, &c.

Eulogium, by Pericles, of the Athenians who were killed at the Beginning of the Peloponnesian War.

Our Valour has opened a Passage for itself through Lands and Seas, and has every-where left Monuments of our Friendship or Hatred. It is for so glorious a Country that the Citizens, whose Memory we celebrate, have not feared Death ; and I doubt not but that those who remain, are of the same Sentiment. They see that the Companions they have lost, have neither been enervated by Pleasures nor Riches ; they shewed themselves willing to abandon the Enjoyment of them, to pursue earnestly their Duty,

ty, and they generously exposed themselves to Perils, uncertain as to the Event, but certain as to Glory.

A longer Life than their's may be wished for, but not a more honourable Death ; for, by immolating themselves for the Public, every one of them has acquired eternal Praise. Their Courage has erected a superb Monument to them, not only in this Place, where their Bones rest, but in the Memory of all Men. We shall never forget their immortal Actions ; we shall celebrate them every Time we may have an Occasion to imitate or to speak of them. The whole Earth is the Tomb of illustrious Men ; their Name is known in all Parts where their Glory is spread.

Consolation to a sick Friend.

If I told you, I did not share with you your Illness, I should not have told the Truth. Your Pains are mine, and such only as perfect Friendship can excite in a tender Soul. Alas ! how replete is our Life with Miseries ? The Prosperity of the most happy is not pure. How then must we behave ? The best Way I know of for our Comfort is to seek out for some Amusement to deceive Melancholy, though not one may be found capable of curing. How i could wish that it was in my Power to furnish you with some of these deceiving and diverting Objects, or that my Letters could in some Measure resemble them. If so, I should write to you so often, that you could not help being persuaded that I am, with all Sincerity of Heart, &c.

Letters of Congratulation.

Congratulation differs according to the Difference of Persons and Subjects. In writing to the General of an Army on the winning of a Battle, or the taking of a Place, the Style should rise according to the Importance of the Action. The Glory of the Victor is celebrated, his Courage and Conduct are praised, and the Advantages some Nations are likely to reap from

such a signal Success, are pointed out. But we speak with less Magnificence, and more Openness of Heart, in writing to a Friend, to testify our Joy for his Happiness, either by Marriage, or the Birth of a Son, or his Success in a Law-suit, or the Recovery of his Health ; or, in fine, his Preferment to some Post of Honour or Importance.

E X A M P L E.

To a great Man, on his being re-instated in Favour at Court.

SIR,

I should be an Enemy of the public Welfare, if I did not like the good News which I had from good Authority within these few Hours. My Veneration for Virtue, and not because I am under infinite Obligations to you, fills me with Joy to see you returned where every one wished you. It may be said, however, that the Distance you have kept for some Time from Court, to say nothing of your Disapprobation of its Measures, is one of the finest Passages in your Life, as by it you have made appear that you are the same in both Fortunes. I myself can witness, that not a Word was spoken by you unworthy of your distinguished Character ; yet that rare Virtue had the Misfortune to be pent up, as it were, in a Corner ; where it was thought it could not exert its powerful Influence ; where, it was fancied, it must content itself with the Satisfaction of laudable Intentions, and the Applause of a few Friends. In the mean Time, your Enemies triumphed : But could they disguise from Strangers the Sicknes of the Constitution, could they palliate, with plausible Reasons, the Injustice of your Disgrace ? Now, as a better Season is ushered in with more favourable Aspects, and as all Things are in their Place, it is Time to rejoice for your Return. The Repose you enjoyed was not useful to the State ;

for,

for, whatever we undertook, it did not succeed so well, as when you was, unbiased and uncontrolled, its moving Spring. Every one has seen, that you have sat at the Helm of Affairs with a pure Mind ; that is, you have directed its Guidance by that Part of the Soul which is separated from Matter, and detached from Passions. If I believed you was only capable of abstaining from Evil, I would praise nothing more in you than the Beginning of Virtue ; but I go farther, and am certain, that neither the Dread of Disgrace, which you have so nobly despised ; nor Complaisance, that passes over the best Counsels, to follow the most agreeable ; nor Interest, that considers itself before the Public, will ever hinder you to undertake and execute great Things. This is so true, that none can be with greater Veneration than I am, &c.

Letters of Persuasion or Counsel.

Letters, calculated for the Purposes of Persuasion or Counsel, require great Care and Circumspection. To succeed in them, the strongest Arguments and most insinuating Expressions are necessary. They treat of the most important Concerns in Life, whether public or private. Do not we daily see, that the Measures, concerted in the Cabinet of Sovereigns, contribute, as they are just or false, to the Felicity or Ruin of Nations ? Do not we also perceive that the Success of a Siege or Battle, resolved upon in a Council of War, may change the Face of a Kingdom ? It is not, however, of such great Matters we here intend to speak : All we want, is to examine the Means that may induce to a Resolution ; so that we may say, in a few Words, that, in order to persuade, it is necessary to be well acquainted with the Humour of the Person we write to. What is proposed may be represented to him as honest, useful, or agreeable, according as we judge he may like it : For Instance, if I design to induce one of my Friends to marry, I will let him see

his Advantage in the Settlement proposed to him, and I will endeavour to give him a Kind of Foretaste of the Satisfaction he has Reason to hope for : If I have a Mind to induce him to study, I shall write to him much to this Purpose.

E X A M P L E S.

SIR,

In what Colours shall we paint the Excellence of a Man of Knowledge ? He is one of the greatest Ornaments of the Creation : He is exalted as much above the Ignorant, as a common Man is above the Condition of Brutes. What can encourage us more to be eager in the Pursuit of Knowledge ? Nothing can contribute more to it than prescribing to ourselves, and setting apart a Time for regular Study. It seems to me, that the Morning is fitter for this Purpose, than any other Time of the Day. The Mind is then at Ease, free and purged by Sleep, from the Fumes we usually perceive after our Meals. However, I would not affect to read several Volumes, nor even to read with Avidity ; chusing rather to read less with more Application and Reflection : I would also look more to the Choice than the great Number of Books.

Letter to induce a Gentleman of the Army to read History.

SIR,

I was pleased, I assure you, to a great Degree, when I heard of your Resolution of entering upon a regular Study in the Country, and of continuing it in Town, and in your leisure Hours from Duty in the Army. But you do me too much Honour to consult me on that Sort of Reading you should chuse, being so capable of making a proper Choice yourself : Yet, as you absolutely desire to know my Sentiments on the Matter, I will not hesitate to tell you, that I prefer the Reading of History to any other. History instructs us in a very inviting and agreeable Manner.

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The greater Part of other Sciences inculcates Precepts, which the Heart usually rejects, because, loving Liberty, it disgusts whatever seems imposed as a Command. Instead of these imperious Maxims, History furnishes us only with the Means of reflecting on the Events it lays before us ; and these Events are as so many Examples, which we ought to follow or avoid. It makes us assist at the Councils of Kings, and shews how we may discern Flattery from good Advice. It describes for us Sieges and Battles, and points out the Faults or good Conduct of Generals. It gives us, in a few Years, more Experience, than several Ages could without its Assistance. In short, History is, with just Reason, called the wise Counsellor of Princes. In it, the greatest Kings have no Rank, but by their Virtues ; once degraded by the Hands of Death, they are obliged, without Court, and without Attendance, to submit to the Judgment of all Nations, and of all Ages. There it is, we discover, that the Lustre proceeding from Flattery is superficial, and that false Colours are not lasting, howsoever industriously they may be laid on. Now, I must tell you, what Historian I should prefer for Pleasure and Instruction. It is *Plutarch*, whom rigid Critics will scarce own to be an Historian. I allow, he has not written any complete History, and that he has left only some particular and detached Lives. But what Histories do we find so pleasing and instructive as those Lives ? Can we read them, without finding the most engaging Charms, and observing, at almost every Sentence, excellent Maxims of Morality and Politics ? *Plutarch* adopts them very naturally ; wherever he goes, Flowers spring up about him ; he never steps out of his Way to gather them. He paints, in genuine Colours, the very Man whose Life he writes ; he represents him such as he was at the Head of an Army, in the Government of a Nation, in his Family, and in his Pleasures. In short, Sir, I must join in Opinion with that

Author, who says, that, if he was forced to throw all the Books of the Ancients into the Sea, *Plutarch* should be the last. To hear that these imperfect Hints are of any Service to you, will be a singular Pleasure to, &c.

Letters of Diffusion.

To dissuade, we need only have Recourse to Means contrary to Persuasion ; that is, to shew that the Difficulties, attending the Execution of an Enterprise, will be great, many, or insurmountable, and the Consequences very prejudicial. Reason, and the common Occurrences of Life, will point out to us sufficient Arguments for illustrating what we intend to say on this Head.

E X A M P L E S.

Letter to dissuade a Friend from living in Celibacy.

SIR,

You have declared against Matrimony, and for no other Reason, as I can learn, than that you are unacquainted with its Sweets. If you considered that there is no other licit Means for peopling the World, and establishing a Kind of Immortality by the Production of a successive Race of Men, you would, perhaps, change your Opinion; but without confining ourselves to general Reflexions, which affect less than those of a more immediate Concern, let us see if you could not live more agreeably with a Woman, than in the single State you are resolved to make Choice of. For my Part, I should think that, if you find yourself capable of regulating a Family, of living upon good Terms with an honest Person, and of giving good Education to Children, you would find that there is nothing more comfortable than to live with a Woman, who has made a Tender of herself to you, and who is willing to discharge all the Duties incum-

incumbent on that Union. And indeed, if you examine every Thing that passes in a Family under proper Regulation, you will see that a good Woman shares with her Husband whatever may happen ; endeavouring to increase his Joy by her Satisfaction, and to alleviate his Pains and Sorrows by the Part she bears in them.. Though the first Transports of Love should suffer some Abatement, yet the virtuous Woman will still be her Husband's best Friend.. They concert together the Measures they judge conformable to what they design to undertake and put in Execution.. They never act but by Agreement ; their Thoughts and Sentiments rest on the Foundation of mutual Confidence ; and the good Understanding that subsists between them, adds unspeakable Charms to their Union.. A Husband may possess himself in perfect Ease, by leaving the Care of his Family-Concerns to a frugal and good Housewife.. How sweet must it be for him to have Children, who are the Effects of his Love, and who will be hereafter the Support of his Old-age ? But it is a much more sensible Joy, to see that these Children grow up in Goodness, by the Education given them.. Single Life, in Man, can no where find the real Consolation and Assistance that are met with in the Society of a Woman : You know, that it is in Quality of Help-Mate that God has given so amiable a Half to Man ; and that, therefore, the Scripture says, ‘ It is not good for a Man to be alone.’ You might even have seen in History, that the *Romans* expelled their City those that persisted to live in the State of Celibacy, as being useless to the Republic ; and, for aught I know, it may be of Service to our Government to lay a Tax upon all Bachelors. But it would be better to lay upon yourself the Injunction of engaging in Matrimony, which, no doubt, will be more agreeable than you have hitherto thought of.. You will take, I hope, in good Part, the Ad-

vice I here presume to give you, and believe that I am, with all Sincerity, &c.

To dissuade a Friend from thinking of Marrying.

SIR,

I can scarce imagine that you have written in earnest to me, and that a Man whom I always thought so wise, was on the Point of being guilty of a Folly, which he will surely repent of: So it is I call the Resolution you have taken of Marrying. Not that I am an Enemy to Matrimony, having induced several of my Friends to engage in that State; but their Health was much better than your's, and their Affairs in a far better Situation. Have you examined what a Man ought to prepare himself for Suffering, when he renounces his Liberty for his whole Life? The Sacrifice he makes is terrible, and all the Reward he receives by it, is to be continually tormented by his Wife's Caprichios. If handsome, she is usually a Coquet or haughty, and one or other is not very agreeable to a Husband. If of illustrious Birth, she is every Moment descanting upon her Ancestors, and tiring out your Patience with a Recital of their fine Actions, and the honourable Posts they filled. If richer than you are, she despises and regards you as a Wretch, subsisting only on the Fortune she brought you. If ill-favoured, or remarkable for any Deformity, you are perpetually teized and haunted with her jealous Notions. If you are old, she will hardly dissemble the Disgust she at Times conceives against your Age; and, if she be an honest Woman, you may find her still more insupportable by that Virtue, than the other Qualities I have enumerated. You may now judge what Vexations a Man must undergo by a Woman's Faults, if her Perfections are attended with so much Uneasiness. That ancient Author had good Reason to say, that a Man is never free from perplexity when he has a Ship or a Woman to govern.

But

But do you think there is less Trouble in rearing Children, than governing a Wife? When they are little, they are full of Whims and Humours a Father cannot see without Regret; and, when they are of more advanced Years, they appear every Morning before him as importunate Creditors, who must have Money for necessary Expences, and very often for trifling Occasions. In short, if you consult me on what you ought to do, I will answer you as one of those Wise-men of *Greece*, who said that it was not yet Time to marry when he was young, and that the Time was over when he was old. I should, however, be sorry if my Advice displeased you, and still more if you refused to follow it. Pray, examine it, and consider it comes from one, who has intirely your Interest at Heart.

Letters of Expostulation.

We need not say much on this Head, the Purport of this Sort of Letters (which may be seen more amply discussed, where we have discoursed of the Matter of Letters in general) being to remind a Person of something we apprehend amiss in his Conduct, or to remonstrate to him in what Respect we find him blameable, in order that he may correct himself, or make Amends for his Fault.

*E X A M P L E.**An Expostulatory Letter to a Person for not keeping his Word.*

SIR,

Is it possible that the Complaints, just now made to me, are well grounded, and that you are fallen off from that Word and Promise you have so solemnly given for settling Matters in an amicable Manner? You may remember in what an odious Light you was pleased to consider with me all Cheats, and how much you

you detested Perfidy. But though you seem forgetful of such Sentiments, which indeed your Behaviour shews you pay little Regard to, yet you must own with me, that there is nothing more pernicious for the Commerce of Life, than not keeping one's Promise. What Security would there be in the Society of Men, and where should we hope for any Thing solid and substantial, if every Thing was to be under the Influence of Change and Uncertainty? It is on Promises that all is founded, that Artisans work, that Seamen expose themselves to the Perils of the Sea, and that the Soldier shews Alacrity in fighting. It is on the plighting of mutual Faith, that the Foundation of Leagues and Peace is built. Every Thing, in fine, would succeed prosperously, if Sincerity reigned among Men, as, on the contrary, every Thing runs into Confusion and Disorder, whenever it is wanting. The Chiefs deceive their Soldiers, and the Soldiers abandon their Chiefs. What might not be said on a Subject abounding with such a Multiplicity of Reasons? But you know, at least as well as I do, that there is nothing better than a due Observance of Promises, and that it is impossible for Men to do without it, and be at the same Time happy. Give me Leave to add a Thought which is just come into my Head: Man is the more obliged to keep his Word, as of all Animals he is the only one capable of practising so laudable a Maxim. Other Qualities are by Instinct or Constitution in Animals. Fidelity is found in Dogs; Turtle-Doves are constant in Love; and we observe, amongst all Kinds of Beasts, that the Sires and Dams love their Young. If you permit me to add still a few Words, I will say, that the Lion is generous, the Serpent prudent, the Elephant ingenuous, and the Ant provident, and an Economist: But none except Man can promise and perform. He prescribes to himself what he intends to do, and at the same Time imposes on himself an indispensable Necessity.

ecessity of making good what he has promised. In short, Sir, I should never have done, were I to enter into a Detail of every Thing that ought to induce us to keep faithfully our Word. I shall therefore conjure you to revoke what you have inconsiderately done, more especially as your own Quiet as well as mine is interested in deciding, as you promised, with Honour and Integrity, the Affair between us. Consider, I pray you, that Law-suits ruin Families, as War lays waste whole Countries. Not to mention the lasting Animosities they create, the Event is always uncertain, and the Ruin of the Parties infallible. Their Substance soon passes out of their Hands ; Lawyers take Possession, and know how to keep it. If you are not affected by these Reasons, I must leave you to the Obstinacy of your Temper ; but, on my Part, I shall not cease complaining that you have dealt very ungenerously with, &c.

Letters of Prayer or Supplication..

Letters that pray and tend to obtain some Favour, may be considered as a Kind of Request or Petition.

E X A M P L E.

Letter to a Gentleman to beg he would pardon an Offence..

SIR,

I must confess he is a Man of nothing, a worthless Fellow, whom you never disengaged, that has dared to asperse your Character ; and I am informed that you are tempted to make Use of an Opportunity, that now offers, of revenging yourself, and making him repent for what he has done. But, Sir, where is that generous Soul, and that Heart so a Master of its Passions, which have acquired for you so much Esteem ? It is true, we find many very industrious in fucking up the Poison of Envy and Malignity, and venting it, wherever they come, like troublesome Insects : Yet, though

though we exterminate Insects, we must spare Men, reputing it a sufficient Satisfaction to despise the Malvolent, and to consign them over to the Remorse of Conscience. By so doing, Sir, you will soon conquer yourself ; and what can be more glorious than such a Conquest ? You will be better satisfied with yourself, and more esteemed by your Friends, for pardoning than obliging one so far beneath your Notice to make Reparation. You have been often heard to admire one of the Ancients, who thought it enough to say to one of his Slaves, whom he had detected in a considerable Fault : “ Get you gone, I would chas- tise you, if I was not in a Passion.” He spoke as a *Christian*, before the Establishment of *Christianity* : Would you then act as a vindictive *Pagan*, or should you forget that you profess a Religion which lays down and inculcates the most meek and humane Morality that ever was ? It teaches us, that God reserves to himself Vengeance, because he alone can punish with Justice, and without Passion. I imagine, you will not incroach upon his Privilege, and that you will per- ceive, even according to the Maxims of the World, that your Behaviour will be more laudable in pardoning than seeking Revenge. The proud, yet mean Spirit, says, that Revenge is sweet, and so it may be to such ; but he that weighs Things coolly in the Balance of right Reason, recommends the Charms of Clemency, and is far from ever thinking that Weak- ness may have a Share in the Sentiments Generosity alone will inspire you with.

Letters of Recommendation.

There is nothing we ought to be so cautious, so reserved, and so much upon our Guard in, as the Af- fair of recommending. Besides the Difficulty of as- certaining any Thing of another, Man is naturally subject to so many Changes, that we have always Reason to fear, unless we are long and thoroughly ac- quainted

guainted with the Party we have taken upon us to recommend. The Faults of those we have solicited Favours for, are in some Measure imputed to us, as it happened to *Xenocrates*, who had recommended a Man to *Polyperchon*, that asked him the first Day for a Talent. *Polyperchon* gave it him, and wrote at the same Time to *Xenocrates* to be more circumspect for the future in his Recommendations.

We recommend two Ways, according as the Parties are dear or indifferent to us. If we love, we praise them, and there is no Circumstance in their Merit, but we endeavour to set in the most advantageous Light. We shew how deeply we are interested in every Thing regarding them, and we promise to be accountable for all the good Offices rendered them. We even pray more than once, and this Kind of Repetition, whereby the Style would flag on other Occasions, makes the Expression more lively, as enforced by the Sentiments of the Heart.

Our Letters are not animated with the same Ardour, when written only through mere Civility and Complaisance. We then content ourselves with recommending in a cold Manner, which shews that we do not make a formal Request but because we have been importuned to it, and that we shall neither be very grateful, nor full of Resentment, if what we ask is granted or refused — See the Instructions on this Head in the Chapter of *the Matter of Letters in general*.

E X A M P L E.

SIR,

It is Friendship that here intercedes, and not the Desire of others. The Gentleman I presume to recommend to you for the Favour it lies in your Power to grant, is my particular Friend, and well known for a Person of great Merit. I intreat you to deal so by him, that I may not have the Displeasure of proving useless to him, or of paying him off with nothing more

more than good Intentions, on an Occasion, when he hopes for much more from my Credit. I write to you with as much Earnestness as if my whole Fortune was depending on the Success of his Affair. You see that the Thing has changed its Nature, and that it is no more his Business I recommend to you. In short, it is my own Interest I commit to your Care, and pursue under a different Name. I most humbly beg you to support it : You shall find none more grateful than, &c.

Letters of Thanks.

We should always endeavour to testify our Gratitude according to the Obligation we are under. Let us never be wanting to examine the Favour received, and the Merit of the Person who conferred it. If a Friend hat been of Service to us, we may thank him familiarly ; but we must thank in very submissive Terms a great Lord, to whom we are indebted for a settled Condition of Life, or some considerable Present. Whatever may be the Quality of the Benefit and Benefactor, it is necessary we should seem sensible of it, and withal exaggerate its Circumstances, making appear the Utility or Honour that has accrued to us from it, and protesting, in concluding our Letter, that we shall preserve it in perpetual Remembrance.

E X A M P L E S.

Letter of Thanks for a Seal.

The Seal you sent me is the prettiest Thing I ever saw, and I am vexed I cannot praise it sufficiently. But, let me tell you, that the Poet who would fain seal up his Mistress's Mouth, because not very reserved in keeping his Secrets, ought to have had such an agreeable Seal, to be worthy of so nice an Application. The most excellent Engravers are Botchers to your's ; nay, I may say, *Apelles's* Pencil never delineated any Thing with the Art and Delicacy of your Figures.

Figures. But as I do not so much regard your Present as a Master-piece in its Kind, than as a Pledge of your Friendship ; I cannot thank you enough for it, nor express to what a Degree I am, &c.

Letter of Thanks to a Friend.

You are never tired in obliging me. My Letters are always troublesome to you, and your's are ever doing me some Good. It is an Intercourse I continually gain by, and you lose. You might employ your Time better, and consider that my trifling Concerns are not worthy of the Care you take of them. But what is there that can put a Stop to your generous Disposition ? You are always willing to add good Offices to good Counsels. All I can say to you, is, that I am truly thankful for them, and that none can be with more Sincerity your Friend, than, &c.

Letters of Accusation.

In Matters of Accusation, we must carefully guard against being reputed Slanderers. There are true Accusations attended with good Effects ; but Calumny is always malignant, as it attacks Innocence, and supposes Crimes. Informers are justly held as public Plagues, and it seldom happens they escape condign Punishment. On the contrary, Accusation aims at nothing more than particular Crimes, and the Tyranny of the Great ; it may hinder the Continuance of Disorders, and become useful to the State. To obtain so laudable an End, the Accuser should never appear envious nor obstinate, but rather moderate, and willing to give up the Point, when he perceives himself mistaken in his Conjectures. Otherwise, far from gaining Esteem, he will draw upon himself the Indignation of those he writes to. If he attacks a Crime, let him spare the Person, especially if this Person's Reputation does not suffer in other Respects. Let him be clear and exact in his Narrative of what has happened, and

and strong in his Proofs. However, it will not be amiss to make known, that he does not say all, that he may not be suspected as an Enemy, and that the Accused may appear more culpable. But when the Crime is heinous, and particularly concerns the Person that writes, he may exceed the Bounds of the prescribed Moderation: For it is not probable he would complain in cold Blood, if a Poignard was held to his Breast, and there was still a Design of taking away his Life.

Those who undertake to accuse one of a considerable Fault, often begin their Letters with the good Qualities of the Person they intend to blame. This Artifice makes them appear sincere, whereas, if they were thought prejudiced by Aversion, they would not persuade so easily. Such is the following Example, accusing one Lady to another of a strong Disposition to Slander:

MADAM,

I have been now upwards of a Week at ——, and, though in the Time I have neither consulted Papers nor Books, yet, I dare say, I have never studied so much, nor reaped so much Advantage from my Study. The Lady of the Place has been the principal Subject of my Application, and perhaps I have not ill succeeded in the Design, by your Orders, of knowing perfectly her strong and weak Side. I say nothing to you of her Person; you know better than I do, that she is quite handsome and agreeable. All her Actions have a peculiar Grace, and, if Nature has left some slight Blemish in her Face, she is ingenious enough to repair or cover it by some particular Charm. Her Wit is not less solid than brilliant. It conceives readily, and thinks with Justness. It seldom fails to hit the Mark, though it does not seem to take Aim. It discovers whatever is nice and pretty in all Things, without the Trouble of searching. Her Humour is gay without Levity, and serious without Moroseness.

She

She is free without Indiscretion, and complaisant without Meanness. Her Air is so natural and open, that nothing stiff, sullen, or forbidding, can ever be remarked in it. She chuses her Friends with wonderful Discernment, and has a tender and lasting Affection for them. But, amongst all these excellent Qualities, I am obliged to tell you, Madam, that I have discovered a Fault, which in a great Degree must tarnish their Lustre. This amiable Woman, whose Conduct appears so wise and regular, believes easily the Slander she is told, takes Pleasure in publishing it, and even aggravating it by Circumstances to make it probable. There is not a Vice I detest more than this calumniating Humour. It robs us of Honour, that Honour every one is so careful to preserve, which excites the Brave to expose daily their Life to a thousand Dangers, and induces so many others to a wilful Renunciation of the Sweets of Rest, and the Charms of Pleasure. If my Substance is stolen from me, I am not deprived of the Means to recruit my Losses; but Reputation does not return in this Manner. Once lost, it is scarce ever recoverable, and the Wounds made in it are seldom closed. I have sought after the Cause of the Pleasure she takes in these malign Aspersions, but could not find any one that seemed satisfactory. Does she imagine the good Name she deprives others of, will turn to her Advantage? Rather, must not she think, that others will make Reprisals on her? There are few Tongues but meet with favourable Ears, when intent upon spreading false Reports. However, I am willing to believe, that the Lady's Intention is not entirely criminal, as meaning only to make herself agreeable in Company; but cannot a Woman, with such a Variety of Charms, please innocently, without disobliging? Cannot she laugh without a Crime, cannot she divert without a Tincture of Malice, cannot she be witty without Scandal? Our Morals must be greatly depraved, if nothing but Obloquy should please!

please! Your Character is quite the Reverse, Madam: Every Day you are seen to attract the Attention of the politer Sort, by reasoning judiciously on public and private News, by relating Histories, and making elegant Descriptions. In all your Discourses you mingle the Agreeable and Serious in so ingenious a Manner, that no Entertainment of any Kind can be so pleasing and interesting. You revive and quicken Conversation in its languishing State, by ingenious Questions, and by Disputes, wherein none of the Heat of Altercation appears, but only a decent Warmth for keeping them animated; and, if you add some Raillery, you are always sure to play it off with the most delicate Touches. In short, Madam, no hidden Malignancy is observed in your Expressions; on the contrary, your Imagination, remarkable for its Purity, is industrious in adorning its Powers with all Sorts of beautiful Ideas. Let me desire you to persist in this Course; you will be more wise and virtuous by it, and you will live more happy, more revered by the World, and better satisfied with yourself. I could add, if it was a Thing deserving of your Attention, that I am, with all possible Respect, &c.

Letters of Apology.

When a Person undertakes to defend himself or another, it will be advisable first to shew the Necessity of answering Accusers. This would be a great Advantage, if Persons of Note were interested in the Cause. It is easy to speak in Favour of Innocence against Calumny; but it seems the Confidence, arising from Right and Justice, should not exceed the Bounds of Moderation. We may observe, that in the primitive Church the great Men who undertook the Defence of Christianity, protested to the Emperors, their Tyrants, that, except in Matters of Religion, they were always obedient to their Orders: They even assured them, that

they

they daily offered up fervent Prayers for their Health, and the Prosperity of their Empire.

In refuting the Reasons alledged against us, we may answer every particular Head of Accusation, or only the stronger, in order to shew that we despise the Weakness of the rest.

St. Evremont's Apology, at the Request of a Lady, for the Philosopher Epicurus.

MADAM,

You desire to be informed, whether I would chuse to write an Apology for *Epicurus*, of whose Sect, you think, I profess myself. Here is a Sort of Apology for, or rather the truest Idea I could form to myself of that Philosopher. The Word ‘Pleasure’ recalls him to my Mind, and makes me confess, that, of all the Opinions of Philosophers concerning the Sovereign Good, none appears to me so rational as his. It would be to no Purpose to alledge here the Reasons, that have been given a hundred Times by the *Epicureans*, that the Love of Pleasure, and the Avoiding of Pain, are the first and most natural Motions, observed in Men : That Riches, Power, Honour, and Virtue, may contribute to our Happiness ; but that the sole Enjoyment of Pleasure, is, to speak all, the ultimate End to which our Actions tend. It is a Thing clear enough of itself, and I am fully persuaded of it. At the same Time I don’t well know what this Pleasure of *Epicurus* was, for I never found learned Men so divided about any Point, as about the Morals of this Philosopher. Philosophers, and even some of his own Scholars, have exclaimed against him, as a sensual and careless Person. All Sects are opposite to his. Magistrates have looked upon his Doctrine as prejudicial to the Public. *Cicero*, so just and wise in his Opinions, and *Plutarch*, so much esteemed for his Judgment, have not been favourable to him. And, as for the *Christians*, the ancient Fathers have made
him

him pass for the greatest and most dangerous of impious Persons. Thus I have shewn his Enemies ; now let us see who his Friends were. *Metrodorus*, *Hermacius*, *Menæceus*, and many others that used to dispute with him, had as much Veneration as Friendship for his Person. *Diogenes Laertius* could not write his Life with more Advantage to his Reputation, than he has done. *Lucretius* was his Adorer ; *Seneca*, as much an Enemy as he was to his Sect, hath mentioned him with Praise. If some Cities have expressed an Aversion for him, others have erected Statues in his Honour.

Now, if I am unwilling to receive all that his Enemies have published of him, so I do not easily believe what his Defenders say. I cannot think that he had a Design to introduce a Pleasure more severe than the Virtue of the *Stoicks*. This Jealousy of Austerity seems to me extravagant in a voluptuous Philosopher, take his Pleasure in what Sense you please. A pretty Mystery this, to declaim against a Virtue, that divests a wise Man of his Senses, to establish a Pleasure that affords him no Motion ! The wise Man of the *Stoicks* is a virtuous Insensible, that of the *Epicureans* a voluptuous Immoveable. The first bears Afflictions, without Afflictions ; the second tastes Pleasure, without Pleasure.

But now, some one will say to me, What think you of *Epicurus*? You believe neither his Friends nor his Enemies, his Adversaries nor his Defenders. What then is your Judgment of him? I am of Opinion, that *Epicurus* was a very wise Philosopher, who, according to different Times and Occasions, loved Pleasure in Repose, or Pleasure in Motion ; and that this different Pleasure has occasioned the different Reputation he has found in the World. *Timiscrates* and his Enemies have charged him with sensual Pleasures ; those that have defended him, talk of nothing but of spiritual Pleasures. Both these Assertions may be

be well grounded. *There is a Time to laugh, and a Time to weep*, according to *Solomon*; a Time to be sober, and a Time to be sensual, according to *Epicurus*. Besides, a voluptuous Man is not equally so all his Life. In Religion, the greatest Libertine is sometimes the most devout. In the Study of Wisdom, the most Indulgent to Pleasure is sometimes the most severe. As for me, I look otherwise upon *Epicurus* in Youth and Health, than in Old-age and Sickness.

Indolence, Tranquillity, and the Happiness of idle sick Persons, cannot be better expressed, than they are in his Writings. Sensual Pleasure is no less explained in that formal Passage, which *Cicero* expressly alledges. I know, indeed, that all imaginable Care has been taken to destroy its Credit, and to invalidate it; but are mere Conjectures to be compared with the Testimony of *Cicero*, who was so well acquainted with the Philosophers of *Greece* and their Opinions? It were much better to ascribe this to the Inconstancy of human Nature and to the Inequality of our Minds. Where is a Man so uniform, as to have nothing unequal and contradictory in his Actions? *Solomon* deserves the Name of Wise, at least as much as *Epicurus*, and was equally mistaken in his Opinions, and in his Conduct. *Montagne*, when he was a young Man, believed, that our Thoughts ought to be eternally fixed upon Death, that we might be prepared for it. When he came to be old, he tells us, he altered his Mind, and would have us suffer ourselves to be sweetly biassed by Nature, which will sufficiently teach us to die.

Mr. *Bernier*, that great Favourer of *Epicurus*, has confessed, that, after a Study of Philosophy of fifty Years, he has doubted even of those Things he believed to be the most certain. All Objects have different Faces, and our Minds, which are in continual Motion, -look upon them as they turn: So that, if I may be allowed the Expression, we have nothing but

new Aspects, while we think we enjoy new Discoveries. Besides, Age brings great Alterations in our Humour ; and, by the Alteration of Humour, is very often introduced that of our Opinions. To this we may add, that the Pleasures of the Senses sometimes make us disrelish the Satisfaction of the Mind, as too jejune and naked ; and that the nice and refined Satisfactions of the Mind despise in their Turn the Pleasures of the Senses, as too gross. So we ought not to be surprised, that, in so great a Diversity of Prospects and Motions, *Epicurus*, who wrote more than any Philosopher, should say the same Thing in a different Manner, according as he might have different Thoughts and Notions of it. What Occasion is there for general Arguments to shew, that he had no Aversion to all Sorts of Pleasure? But, if he loved the Enjoyment of them, he managed himself prudently ; and, as he was indulgent to the Motions of Nature, so he disliked any Violence offered to them ; not always reckoning Abstemiousness a Virtue, but always accounting Luxury a Vice. He would have Sobriety and Economy regulate the Appetite, and the present Pleasures never to hurt those that were to succeed : “ *Sic præsentibus voluptatibus fruaris, ut futuris non noceras.* ” He disengaged Pleasures from the Disorders that precede, and the Distaste that follows them. When he fell into Infirmities and Pains, he fixed the chiefest Good in Indolence ; wisely, in my Opinion, if we consider the Condition he was then in ; for the Cessation of Pain is the Happiness of those that languish under it. As for the Tranquillity of Mind, which composed the other Part of his Happiness, it is nothing but an Exemption from Trouble : But he that can no longer have agreeable Motions, is happy, if he can preserve himself from the Vexations of Pain.

I now conclude, that Indolence and Repose ought to make the chiefest Good of *Epicurus*, when he was infirm

infirm and languishing: But for a Man that is in perfect Health, for a Man that is in a Condition to taste Pleasure, I am of Opinion, that Health shews itself by something more lively than a bare Indolence, and that a good Disposition of the Soul requires something more animated than a peaceable State.

We live in the Midst of an infinite Number of Goods and Evils, and with Senses capable of being affected with the one, and tormented with the other. Without very much Philosophy, a little Reason will make us relish good Things with all the Satisfaction, and instruct us to bear the bad with all the Patience we can. Such are the Lessons, Madam, of the *Epicurean* Philosophy; and, if liked by you, as coming from one who has a singular Esteem for you, nothing will be a more sensible Pleasure to, &c.

Letters of Complaint and Reproach.

The Complaints of Friends are usually more moderate than those inspired by Love or Jealousy; not but Friends may reprimand severely for a Breach of Faith; but, when betrayed, they more frequently proceed to an open Rupture. Complaints of the Remissness of Friends, whether they have neglected to write, or to acquit themselves of some Commission, require a natural Turn of Expression, free from all Affectation. Those intended as Accusations of Crimes, are best set off with solid Sense and Sincerity; so that of Course they exclude Witticisms, and all Sorts of Pleasantry.

Reproach is of a similar Nature to Complaint. In the Form of Accusation, it ought to strike home, like a bitter Invective; yet some Measures should be kept, when Persons of Consideration are addressed. When Tenderness is its moving Spring, it ought rather to appear animated by the Emotions of the Heart, than pointed with the Subtilties of sententious Wit. Examples of either will be here unnecessary, because every

one, without any great Art, may shew and inforce his Reasons for Complaint, or Reproach.

Letters of Morality, Science, &c.

Man, in his Infant-state, is ignorant of what he is, from whence he is, and for what End he is created. Nature, it is true, has implanted in him the Desire of knowing the primitive Truth, and of acquiring the Habit of Science. This is the natural and common Inheritance of all Men ; for, since the Beginning of the World to the present Time, the human Mind has always endeavoured to discover the easiest Way for dissipating the Darknes of the Understanding. But Truth, which is hidden in a Well, as Pythagoras said, has not appeared in a visible Form to human Reason. Sometimes it may present itself to View at a Distance, or under the thick Veil of a thousand Errors ; and though Reason may labour hard to refute some of those Errors, and confound the rest, yet, not finding her Researches successful, she must call in the Help of Curiosity. Then it is, that, excited by the Motive of Knowledge, and animated by the Resolution of being informed, she will reach the Source of Arts and Sciences, as may be seen more amply in the following Dissertations, treated in the Form of Letters. But it will be first proper to know to what Persons these Letters ought to be written, and what ought to be the Style of them.

It seems, that, as to Letters of Morality, Science, and Curiosity, they ought to be written to those only whom we believe they would be acceptable to. In treating them, Care should be taken not to affect a concise Style, for Fear of introducing Obscurity in Things which are but too obscure of themselves. When they are addressed to polite Persons, but not versed in the Study of Literature, whatever is harsh in Terms of Art may be softened, and made more intelligible by a Kind of Paraphrase ; but these Rules need

need not be observed in writing to some learned Man by Profession : Far from having Recourse then to Circumlocution, in order to be understood, the Manner of speaking that suits best Sciences, besides being the more proper, will be a Testimony how great our Opinion is of the Learning of those for whom we explain and discuss Things in so brief a Manner. It seems also that a Choice of Sciences should be made according to the Taste of Persons ; for it would be not less ridiculous to propose Questions of Philosophy, or Problems of Geometry and Algebra, to a young Lady, than to ask of a grave Doctor the Difference of Women's Head-dresses. Whatever is most instructive in Morality, agreeable in History, and amusing in Relations of Things in foreign Countries, may furnish proper Subjects of Entertainment for Ladies ; so that, before writing these Sorts of Letters, it will be very necessary to consider the Condition, Sex, Humour, Age, and Profession of the Person to whom we are obliged to write.

E X A M P L E S.

To Mr. ——, on VULGAR OPINIONS.

SIR,

I agree with you, that there are but few popular Opinions I would chuse to approve of ; but I must also confess, that I do not condemn them all indiscriminately. You find strange what is usually said, that a Child, too witty for its Age, cannot live long. I am willing to believe, that the Loss of such a Child, as attended with a more sensible Concern, is more remarkable. However, it may be said, that several great Men are of the Opinion you call vulgar. Consider *Quintilian's* Reflexion on this Head. After having mentioned the good Qualities of a Son he had lost : “ We usually see, says he, that that which ri-

pens too soon, soon corrupts, and that it cannot last as long as we wish it would. There is I know not what Sort of Envy in the Destiny that cuts short the great Hopes we have conceived. It might seem as if it feared that Man would rise above his Condition, and exceed the Bounds prescribed to him." *Seneca* speaks much to the same Purpose, where he consoles *Marcia* : " What, *Marcia* ! When you considered that your Son, in early Youth, was possessed of a consummate Prudence that seemed to have been ripened by a long Course of Years ; when you saw that he despised Voluptuousness, that he governed his Passions, that he loved Riches for no other Reason than to dispense them in Liberalities, and that he tasted of Pleasures without Irregularity and without Excess, could you believe that he would have remained long with you ? Did not you represent to yourself, that whatever is arrived at its last Degree of Perfection, is ready to fall ? That a consummate Virtue vanishes in a Moment from before our admiring Eyes, and that early Fruits wait not for a later Season ? A brisk and clear Fire dies away in an Instant ; that which is kindled in Matter not easily inflammable, and which affords but a full and gloomy Light, keeps in incomparably better. We may say the same of Wits ; the more vivid their Light is, the sooner they are extinguished : And, generally speaking, that which cannot rise higher, may be soon expected to fall. *Fabian* writes, that, in the Time of our Fathers, a Child was seen at *Rome* of the Size of the tallest Man. This Child, by not living but a short Time, authorised and verified the Prediction of all Men of Sense concerning his Death. They judged with Reason that he would never arrive at an Age which he had anticipated, and which Nature, if I may be so permitted to speak, had advanced him. This Example confirms what we have already said, that perfect Maturity is an infallible Mark of the Ruin of its Subject, and that the End of a Thing happens necessarily,

sarily, whenever the Virtue and Powers it had for Growth, are intirely exhausted."

To this it may not be amiss to add what the same Author had said before, " That great Prosperities are seldom seen to last long, and that it is only the middling Felicity that is durable, and holds out to the End. Fortune usually returns the same Way she came. She does not tarry long where she is pleased to come. Nature in like Manner hastens to take back what she has given too soon ; and, if she has too hastily made considerable Loans, she demands them before the Term she ought to have allowed. After the Testimonies of these great Authors, I have nothing more to say to you, than that I am, &c.

To Mr. ———, on FORTUNE,

SIR,

Can so sensible a Man, as you, say, that one need only be happy in the Way of the World to be esteemed a great Man ? I allow, that Fortune often enhances and spreads a Lustre upon Actions, which, without its Assistance, would lie buried in Obscurity ; and withal, that temporal Blessings may sometimes stand in the Place of Merit, and supply the Deficiency of good Qualities. But, good Sir, you must own that this is rare, and that it would be a wrong Thing to cite it as an Example. I know that Chance is productive of the Success of Things, which Art might not bring to the same Perfection ; and that it happened twice, that a Pencil, thrown away twice through Vexation and Despair, had painted admirably well the Froth of a Horse and that of a Dog. But will the throwing away of a Pencil, a hundred Times over, form a Horse or a Dog, to which nothing is wanting ? Let us therefore say, that, to execute something complete, Art and Fortune should go friendly Hand in Hand. A Warrior may, by the Impetuosity of Courage, and the Assistance of Chance, signalise himself, and gain

a great Advantage ; but, if he is not well acquainted with the Art of War, instead of being reputed a great Captain, he will commit considerable Faults, and soon lose the Reputation he had only acquired by a fortunate Event. It must be still more difficult for an ignorant Person to make himself illustrious in other Professions. Will a Statesman continue long in his Post, if he neither knows Politics in general, nor the Interests of Nations in particular ? I should even think, that, if Fortune alone raised a Man without Merit to the highest Dignities, far from making him appear virtuous, she would expose the more his Vices, as a Sculptor would make a Statue appear much less than it is in Effect, if he placed it on the Summit of a Pyramid. Let us also acknowledge, that Fortune is equally malignant and capricious, when she raises to a very high Degree those who are undeserving of her Favours. She thus draws down upon them Raillery and Contempt, shewing their Faults in a more conspicuous Light, and preparing them for a more dangerous Fall. Believe me, dear Sir, we may be at Rest, without dreading her Malice, or wishing for her Benefits. For my Part, I would not be even indebted to her for your Friendship. I am willing to acquire it by my Services, and to make myself worthy of it by the Sentiments of Esteem and Respect I shall always have for you.

To Mr. ——, on BENEFITS.

SIR,

The World, I confess, is full of ungrateful Persons ; but, do you know, Sir, that the Number would not appear so great, if we were acquainted with the real Cause of their Ingratitude. When we have examined into the Intention of those that do us Good, we often discover Motives in it, not much favourable to them, and at the same Time of little Force to bind us down to Gratitude. He who gives to me, to make it known to every one, ought to be contented, when every

every one knows of it ; he has no longer a Right to demand any Thing else. If he had left to me the Care of making known his Benefaction, he might have Reason to complain, if I had not punctually done it : But he would not trust to me, and, as he did what I ought to have done, I am quit, and may give myself no further Trouble. He has paid himself, will it therefore be just for me to pay him over again ? Let him hold his Tongue, if he would have me speak.

Again, what Obligation is one under to those who grant not till the last Extremity what they are asked for ; that is, when they can hold out no longer, and have not Strength enough to withstand the Assaults of an obstinate Besieger ? Would you commend a timid Man, incapable of an Act of Generosity, and who would not have granted you a Favour, if he had Courage enough to refuse you ? Prodigals are in no Respect more upright in their Intention, than these Dastards. Money falls through their Fingers ; they do not bestow it ; they throw it away as a Thing of no Value. Some also upbraid the Unfortunate in a very outrageous Manner with the Misery they desire to be relieved from. They sell at so dear a Rate the Favours they grant, that it may be said they strike with the same Hand they give the Alms. On the contrary, Ingratitude would be regarded as a Monster in civil Society, if it was less common, and we were less accustomed to it : But, when a Benefactor gives with an ill Grace, he spoils all, and unhinges himself of that Merit, which must be attributed to him only, who can relieve with an upright Heart and chearful Countenance.

To Mr. —————, on LYES.

You give an Account of Things just as you please in your Letter : But, to speak to you frankly, your Brother has made great Complaints to me of your in-

sincere Way of Dealing. Consider how unhappy Men would be, if they did not live in Society, and what Perplexities and Vexations they must be liable to, if those, who lived together, never spoke their real Sentiments. A Lye changes the Face of Things. It stifles Truth, far from making it appear. It forces People to be continually on their Guard. It occasions numberless Inconveniences and Disorders in Life. If Protestations of Friendship are made us at the Time real Hatred is practising its Machinations against our Welfare, can we avoid falling into the Snare that is laid for us ? Harmony and a good Understanding may more easily be maintained between Nations that do not understand one another's Language, than between pretended Friends, who disguise their Thoughts. We can discourse with dumb Persons by Signs ; their Silence, it is true, may be troublesome to Society, but it does not prejudice it to the Degree that Lying does. Now, Sir, would it not be advisable for you to relinquish the Opinion, that Deceiving artfully is the Way to be wise in some Respect, or at least to be possessed of the Wisdom of the World. Do not think that it is a Point of Prudence to contrive the Success of an Intrigue for some wicked Purpose. It is allowable in the politer Arts to deceive our Senses, and the Masters that can form the best Deception, are deemed the most ingenious. But Painters and Cheats deceive with very different Intentions. The first deceive in order to please. The Language of the others is smooth, and *flows as Oil*, according to the Expression of the Scripture ; but its Consequences are *more piercing than Arrows*. It is a Poison that lulls the Senses, but the Malignity pervades the Heart. In short, they do Evil with good Words, and kill us with perfumed and gilded Arms. Hence it is, that our vitiated Morals corrupt the Use of the best Things, and Words that may be of Advantage to us, become pernicious. God threatens the Deceitful with a * Punishment that seems pretty

strange. He says, that they *shall not see in bread Day*; that is, that God will so confound them, as to disconcert all their Politics. They will grope about at Noon, as at Midnight, and will go astray in the most frequented and easiest Roads. These subtle Persons, who pride themselves in diving into Minds, and of searching into the most secret Folds of Hearts, become in their Turn the Dupes of those they have deceived. They confide in the Sincerity of those they have abused, and whom they repute credulous; but those very Persons have opened their Eyes as they fell, and observe the Snares laid again for them. Far from exposing themselves to a second Fall, they think of nothing but Revenge, and, being well acquainted with the Artifices of their Enemies, they have Recourse to them, and dissemble, when least thought of. These, methinks, may be instructive Lessons for you, to embrace contrary Maxims to those you have hitherto followed. You know that I interest myself in every Thing that affects you, and that you cannot take the Advice of one who wishes you better than, &c.

From an Uncle to his Nephew, on Good CONDUCT.

DEAR NEPHEW,

Doubt not but it is with Pleasure I see the Success of your Undertakings, and therefore you may think I wish to see you maintain in Prosperity the Conduct that has contributed to your Fortune. The good Things of this Life usually flatter us to such a Degree, that it is with great Difficulty we can preserve ourselves from Remissness in our Duty. I will explain to you what I say in a more sublime Manner, if you are willing I should borrow the Words of the Emperor *Galba* in *Tacitus*, on his adopting *Piso*: “Hitherto, said he, Fortune has persecuted you, and you have sustained her Efforts with an unshaken Constancy; but remember that Prosperity has its *Stimulus*, which tries our strong and weak Side much more

powerfully than Adversity. The chief Tendency of Felicity is to corrupt and emasculate the noble Vigour of our Souls ; but Miseries, being nothing more than Burdens that threaten to crush us by their Weight, we stiffen up against them, and call in all our Might to make them recoil. Yet, I doubt not, but you will preserve, in this Change of your Fortune, that upright Conduct, that Truth and Sincerity, that friendly Disposition, you have always made appear. They are, indeed, the finest Endowments and most valuable Advantages of the human Mind : But, consider, I pray you, that all those who may have Access to your Person, will strenuously endeavour to weaken and enervate in you all these excellent Qualities. Flattering Words, base Complaisance, will force their Way to unman your Heart ; and not only to unman, but to poison in it all virtuous Sentiments."

Let me add a Comparison, which, perhaps, will not displease you. Fortune's Favourites are as Fountains of Water, which it is very difficult to keep fair. The Ambitious and Covetous thirst after them too much, not to run thither in Crouds ; and they seldom fail to trouble and infect them. I may say also, that these great Sources are like unto Rivers, which swell with so many Streams, that they threaten to overflow, and cause great Ravages, unless curbed and kept in by strong Banks : That is, our Morals must be subject to the Restraint of Laws, and the Desire of a good Reputation. All Things in the World must meet with Opposition. Elements have their Contraries, and so have States, to circumscribe our Actions within the Bounds Virtue alone perhaps could not. So long as *Tiberius* lived under the Authority of *Augustus*, and in Competition with *Germanicus* and *Drusus*, he artfully concealed his most vicious Inclinations, and preserved the Appearance of his primitive Virtues. His Government was afterwards a Mixture of Good and Evil under his Mother ; and, whilst he loved or feared *Se-*

janus,

janus, if he was guilty of great Cruelties, at least his Debaucheries were kept secret. But, when neither influenced by Fear nor Shame, he followed the Bent of his natural Disposition, abandoning himself without Reserve to all Sorts of Crimes and Impurities. This Prince notwithstanding was brave, and had distinguished himself by the Greatness of his Soul ; and it is certain, that a Man of Virtue, who lived under his Reign, attributed chiefly the Depravation of his Morals to supreme Authority. He says, that Independence had altered the Constitution of his Mind, and robbed his Heart of its native good Qualities. We see indeed, that his Successors did not better resist the same Violence. They were almost all borne down by the Torrent of their Prosperities. *Vespasian* was the first that became better, on becoming the Master of others. It is true, that his Son *Titus* was the Admiration and Delight of the *Roman* People ; but, if he preserved his Virtue unblemished, he lived so short a Time, that we cannot avouch for his persevering in the same virtuous Sentiments, if his Reign had been longer. The Change that had been observed in *Nero*, might have made it apprehended. In short, dear Nephew, why may we not compare Fortune to those tender Mothers, who spoil their Children by too much Indulgence ? Few can speak as *Montagne* : “ Prosperity does not hurt my Sight ; on the contrary, I see clearer in fair Weather.” Not that Prosperity is always an Obstacle to Moderation, otherwise we should be obliged to keep at a Distance from all Sorts of Felicity, as if we were striving to avoid some dangerous Precipice. If there be Weakness in not making a good Use of Riches and Honours, if Persons of slender Capacities, and narrow Views, suffer themselves to be inebriated by them, yet are there not wise Men, at the same Time, who can be sober in Affluence ? They are not intirely addicted to the gratifying of their Appetites ; they eat not more at a Feast than at a common

mon Meal. I fancy you will behave in the same Manner, and that it was not necessary to moralise so much to persuade you to it: I am, with all good Wishes for your Improvement in Moral Beauty, &c,

Letters of Science and Criticism.

To Mr. ———, on the TOWER of BABEL.

SIR,

Ask me as many Ecclairssements as you please, without fearing to importune me. You tell me your Friend does not believe, that the Design of those concerned in building the Tower of *Babel* was to secure themselves from a second Deluge. You maintain the contrary, and chiefly on the Authority of *Josephus*, and some *Jewish* Antiquities; to which you add the Probability, after a general Inundation, of seeking Precautions for guarding against the Impetuosity of the Watery Element. But, dear Sir, have you considered the Circumstances that may make void your Conjectures? If those arrogant People, who designed to raise so high the Building they had begun, had no other View than procuring for themselves a Place of Refuge beyond the Reach of Water, would they have quitted the Tops of Mountains they inhabited, to build in a Plain? Would they have chosen a Place situated between the *Euphrates* and *Tigris*, two very broad and deep Rivers, and very subject to overflow the adjacent Country? Did they distrust God's Promise of not drowning the Earth a second Time? Could they forget a Thing the Rainbow was so often to put them in Mind of? You see, that the best Authors do not always think with Justness. Some are more mistaken than *Josephus*, and yet imagine they can see farther into *Nimrod*'s Intention. They assure us, that his sole Motive for building so high a Tower was to secure himself against the Effects of Lightning, without considering, that the highest Places are most exposed to it. Others, in order to appear more religious

gious and exact, take in a literal Sense the Terms of the Scripture, imagining, that *Nimrod* and his Adherents intended to make the Top of their Building reach the Heavens, because *Genesis* says so. But this is a figurative Manner of speaking, often used for making Expressions appear more sublime and magnificent. *David* makes Ships ascend into the Skies, and afterwards descend into the Abyfs, though neither can happen, howsoever furious a Storm may be. But, after all, we need only read the Scripture Text, to discover the real Intention of the *Affyrians*. “ They said one to another, * let us build us a Tower, whose Top may reach unto Heaven, and let us make us a Name, lest we be scattered abroad upon the Face of the whole Earth.” They were therefore willing to become illustrious, and, in some Respect, to immortalise themselves, by that prodigious Mass of Stone, as the Kings of *Egypt* by their Pyramids. This Opinion, besides being plausible, is corroborated by the express Words of the Scripture. Should you have any Dislike to it, I will take another Opportunity to satisfy you to the best of my Abilities.

To Madam ——, on ECLIPSES.

MADAM,

I wish it was in my Power to satisfy your Curiosity in all the Points you want to have cleared up concerning Eclipses. I am neither a sufficiently good Astronomer, nor able Philosopher, to decide a Thing that has been always spoken of so differently. However, ready to comply, in some Measure, with your Request, I have endeavoured to throw together the following Animadversions.—All agree, that an Eclipse is a Privation of Light, occasioned by the Interposition of an opaque Body. There are two great Luminaries, according to the Scripture, one to give us Light by Day, and the other by Night. When we are deprived, in an extraordinary Manner, of their Irradiations,

* Gen. Chap. xi. Ver. 4.

tions (permit me to use this great Word) we call it a Defection, or Waining, and the *Greeks*, Eclipse. Philosophers consider these Appearances to a Degree of Admiration : They examine their Nature, and inquire into their Causes and Effects. Astronomers proceed still farther in Regard to this particular Object of their Science ; and, as by the Observations they have made, they have discovered the Revolutions of the Heavens, the Conjunctions of Constellations, their Distances and Approaches, they have often seen the natural Effects that may result from them. At least, they precisely specify the Times of Eclipses, and determine the Years, Months, Weeks, Days, Hours, and even Minutes. Astrologers would fain extend their Predictions farther ; but their pretended Science is almost universally exploded, or, at best, is but downright Folly. Judge whether they can, by Eclipses, speak exactly of future Events, which depend on the Free-will of Men : Whether they can predict Rebellions, Conspiracies, Wars, Marriages, Law-suits, and the like. I allow, that their Science may extend to foretel Plenty, Scarcity, Sickness, Drought, and Things of the Kind. All Historians have regarded Eclipses as Events they were obliged to take Notice of. They have written with Care whatever preceded and followed them. I should tire out your Patience, were I to give you a Detail of my own Observations on this Head. I shall therefore content myself with acquainting you, that Physicians are of Opinion, that there will be epidemical Diseases when these Defections are of long Duration, and particularly if it is the Sun that is eclipsed. They consider the Sun as the Soul and Parent of Nature. And, indeed, when he acts on Things here below, and communicates to them his Influences, his Light and his Heat, does not he seem to inspire with Life the Objects he looks down upon ? But, if his Light and Rays are obstructed, we lose their salutary Irradiation. If

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the Course of the animal Spirits were stopped by some cold Humour, occasioning an Obstruction, would not all the lower Parts of the Body suffer? Must not the huinan Body undergo some Alteration, when the Moon hinders the Influences of the Sun to affect it? Several, notwithstanding, say, that an Eclipse is a natural Effect, productive of neither Good nor Harm; and that the Rays of the Sun may be turned from us, and his Light obscured, without our having Room to dread any ill Consequences. They add, we do not perceive, that the Clouds which hide the Sun from us cause Disorders. Nevertheless, frequent Experience convinces us, that natural Things subject us to many Indispositions. Tempests, Storms, Thunder, Earthquakes, and their infected Vapours, are commonly attended with pernicious Effects. If some robust Constitutions have resisted the Malignancy of Eclipses, some weak ones have suffered by it. When contagious Maladies reign, all Persons are not equally suscepible of the Infection of the Air. If the Clouds that hide the Sun from us, cause less Alteration in our Health than Eclipses, it is, that, being less rare, we are more accustomed to them. But, if they lasted long, they would infallibly occasion great Disorders. We should see Fevers multiplied, Gouts return, and Humours ferment. Perhaps even Apoplexies may be dreaded ; but, as to Megrims, Head-achs, and Tooth-achs, Numbers would be afflicted by them. I shall beg Leave to corroborate what I here advance by two remarkable Instances in the celebrated Dr. *Mead's* Theory, concerning the Influence of the Sun and Moon : A Lady of Quality of his Acquaintance happened to be struck blind with a ‘*Gutta Serena*,’ during the great Storm which happened on the 27th of *November*, 1703. The Doctor accounts for the Misfortune by saying, that the Moon’s Action, vastly increased by the Concurrence of the Storm, was capable of obstructing the Passage of the animal Spirits

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to the optic Nerves in a tender Constitution, as effectually as if these Nerves had been cut through, and consequently of giving Rise to the ‘*Gutta Serena*.’ This Case is immediately followed by another. It is an Account of the Death of *Oliver Cromwell*, which, as is well known, and he observes, happened during another most violent Storm, the 3d of *September*, 1658. “ As we have no Journals of the Weather for that Year that ever came to my Knowledge, says the Doctor, I can say nothing of the preceding State of the Air. But this is remarkable, that the Storm happened near the Autumnal Equinox, and about the Full Moon; which Concurrence of Causes is very well adapted to stir up great Commotions in the Atmosphere. However that be, continues he, it is to be observed, that the Distemper of that great Man was of that Kind, which we have shewn to be particularly under the Moon’s Influence. For it is upon Record, that he died of a Fever, accompanied with Grief, from the unhappy State of his domestic Affairs; and it is very certain, that Grief disposes the animal Spirits to be easily affected by Causes of this Nature.” — If the Inconveniences above-mentioned do not afflict certain Northern People, who are deprived one Half of the Year of the Light and Influence of the Sun, it is because they are accustomed to this Privation, and naturalised to these Climates. As Cold dries up the Body, and concentrates natural Heat, the Inhabitants of those Parts are usually robust, and able to resist the Grossness of Vapours. I will not speak to you of that wonderful Eclipse, which was seen at the Death of the Son of God. You know that it was supernatural and miraculous. It happened in the Full Moon, lasted three Hours, and was universal. You have heard what *Denys, the Areopagite*, a great Philosopher and Mathematician, remarked concerning it. He was then in *Egypt*, and, having observed that this Eclipse happened contrary to the Order of Nature, he spoke these remarkable

markable Words : “ Either the God of Nature suffers, or the whole Machine of the World is ready to dissolve.” I shall enlarge no farther on a Subject I am not well versed in ; and I even would not have hazarded this Answer, if I was capable of refusing you any Thing. But I am, Madam, &c.

To Mr. ————, who desired to know what Sciences a Gentleman should apply himself to.

SIR,

You ask my Opinion, What are those Sciences, to which a Gentleman should apply himself ? I will give it you very impartially, without pretending to determine any Man’s Judgment by mine, because I do not pretend to speak to you profoundly on those Things, which I have but cursorily examined, and upon which I have made but slight Reflections. Divinity seems to me very considerable, as it is a Science which respects Salvation ; but, in my Judgment, it is become too common ; and it is ridiculous, that even Women should dare to dispute on Questions, which ought to be handled with a great deal of Mystery and Reverence. It is sufficient for us to be obedient and submissive. Let us leave this Doctrine wholly to our Superiors, and follow, with Respect, those that have the Care of guiding us. Not but that our Doctors contribute to ruin this Deference, and lend their helping Hand to start nice Curiosities, which insensibly lead us into Errors. There is nothing so well established by the Consent of all Nations, but they submit to the Extravagance of Reasoning. By this Means they confound Men of weak Understandings, and cause a Suspicion in the Distrustful : By this Means they arm the Furious, and permit them to find out pernicious Arguments, whereby they combat their own real Sentiments, and the true Impressions of Nature. I will say no more, but only wish, that our Directors would treat of Matters of Religion with more Moderation,

ration, and that those, who ought to submit to them, would have less Curiosity.

As Philosophy allows us a greater Latitude in thinking, I have cultivated that a little more. At that Part of my Life, when we are fittest for the Pursuit of Knowledge, I had a great Desire to comprehend the Nature of Things, and my Presumption presently persuaded me, that I was acquainted with them. The least Proof seemed to me a Certainty, and a Probability passed for a Truth. I cannot express to you with what Contempt I looked down upon those whom I imagined to be ignorant of those Things, which I supposed myself to know. At length, when Age and Experience, which unhappily come together, had caused me to make serious Reflections, I began to lay aside a Science always contested, and about which the greatest Men have had different Sentiments. I found, by the universal Consent of Nations, that *Plato*, *Aristotle*, *Zeno*, and *Epicurus*, had been the most celebrated Men of their Age ; yet there was nothing so contrary as their Opinions. Three thousand Years after, I found them equally disputed, Partisans on all Sides, but nothing certain. Then a Science, which I suspected long ago, appeared too vain, for me to enslave myself to it any longer ; I broke off all Commerce with it, and began to admire how it was possible for a wise Man to pass his Life in unprofitable Inquiries.

The Mathematics have, indeed, much more Certainty ; but when I consider the profound Meditations they require, and that they draw us from Action and Amusements, to employ us intirely in Speculation, their Demonstrations seem to me very dear, and a Man must be very fond of Truth, to search for it at that Price. You will tell me, that we have but few Conveniences and Ornaments of Life, but what we owe to this Science : I freely own it ; and there are no Commendations which I will not bestow upon great Mathematicians, provided I am not one of their Number.

ber. I admire their Inventions, and the Works they produce ; but I am of Opinion, that it is enough for Gentlemen of good Sense to know how to apply them well ; for, in Truth, it is more our Interest to enjoy the World, than to know it.

There are no Sciences, in my Opinion, that particularly deserve the Care of Gentlemen, but Morality, Politics, and an Insight into human Learning. The first has a Relation to Reason, the second to Society, the third to Conversation : The one teaches us to govern our Passions ; by the other we are instructed in Affairs of State, and how to regulate our Conduct in the World ; the last polisheth the Mind, and makes us nice and agreeable.

Persons of Quality among the Ancients took a particular Care to instruct themselves in all Things : Every one knows, that *Greece* has obliged the World with the greatest Philosophers and the greatest Legislators : And we cannot deny, but that other Nations have borrowed from them all the Politeness they can boast of. The Beginnings of *Rome* were ignorant and savage. However, that wild Virtue, which would not let them pardon their own Children, was of Advantage to the Commonwealth. As their Reason began to be more refined, they found a Way for the Motions of Nature to consist with the Love of their Country. At length, they joined Graces and Ornament to Justice and Reason. In the latter Times, there was no Person of Consideration, but addicted himself to some Sect or other of Philosophy ; not with a Design to comprehend the Principles and Nature of Things, but to fortify the Mind by the Study of Wisdom. As for Politics, it is scarce to be believed, how early the *Romans* informed themselves of all the Interests of their State ; and, with what Vigour they applied themselves to the Knowledge of their Government and Laws, so as to render themselves capable of the Affairs of Peace and War, even before they had made

made any public Trial of their Abilities. Amongst a hundred Examples, which I could alledge, I will content myself with that of *Cæsar*, and the single Authority of so great a Man will justify my Assertion. Of all the Sects then in Repute, he chose that of *Epicurus*, as the most pleasant, and most conformable to his Nature, and Pleasures ; for there were two Sorts of *Epicureans* ; the one lived a retired studious Life, pursuant to the Precept of the first Institutor ; the other, who could not approve the Austerity of too rigid a Philosophy, suffered themselves to be influenced by more natural Opinions. Of this last Class were the greatest Part of the ingenious Men of that Time, who knew how to distinguish the Gentleman from the Magistrate, and apply their Cares to the Republic, in such a Manner, that there was Time enough left, both for their Friends, and for themselves. It would be to no Purpose to tell you, how well versed *Cæsar* was in Affairs of State, or to enlarge upon the Purity of his Style, and Politeness of his Conversation : But this I will add, that he was able to dispute the Prize of Eloquence with *Cicero* ; and, if he did not affect the Reputation of it, no one can deny, but that he wrote and spoke infinitely better, than *Cicero*.

To Mr. ———, on TRAGÉDIES.

SIR,

I agree with you, that the *French* excel us in Dramatical Compositions ; and I think I may prefer *Cornéille's* Tragedies far before our's, or those of Antiquity. I know the ancient Tragedians have had Admirers in all Times ; but I am not so sure, that the Sublime, which is ascribed to them, is built upon a good Foundation. To believe that *Sophocles* and *Euripides* are so admirable, as we are told they are, one must fancy greater Matters, than can be conceived by reading them in the original *Greek*, or any Translation, however accurate ; and, in my Opinion,

on, Language and Expression ought to have no small Share in their Beauty. Throughout all the Praises, which their most zealous and celebrated Advocates give them, methinks one may perceive, that Greatness, Magnificence, and, above all, Dignity, were Things they little understood : Wits they were indeed, but cramped by the Frugality of a small Republic, where a necessitous Liberty was all they had to boast of. When they were obliged to represent the Majesty of a great King, they made horrid Work with a Grandeur that was unknown to them, because they saw nothing but low and mean Objects, to which their Senses were in a Manner enslaved. It is true, that their Poets, being disgusted with these Objects, did sometimes raise themselves to what was sublime and great ; but then they brought so many Gods and Goddesses into their Tragedies, that hardly any Thing human was to be found in them : What was great, was fabulous ; what was natural, was mean and contemptible.

In *Corneille*, Grandeur seems to have attained the last Perfection. The Figures he employs, when he would embellish it with any Ornament, are proper and suitable ; but, for the most Part, he neglects the Pomp of Metaphors, and does not plunder the Heavens to enrich that, which is considerable enough upon Earth, with its Spoils. His principal Aim is to explore the Nature of Things, and the full Image he gives of them, makes that Impression which pleases Men of Sense. Indeed, Nature is to be admired wherever we find it, and when we have Recourse to figurative Ornaments, with which we think to embellish our Subject, it is many Times a tacit Confession, that we know not what is proper for it. To this are owing most of our Figures and Comparisons, which I cannot approve, unless they are rare, and altogether noble and just ; otherwise it is nothing else but a Trick in the Author to drop a Subject which he does not understand.

derstand. How beautiful soever Comparisons may be, yet they suit much better with Epic Poetry, than Tragedy. In an Epic Poem, the Mind seeks to please itself out of its Subject : In Tragedy, the Soul, full of Thoughts, and possessed with Passions, does not care to be interrupted by vain flashy Similes. But, to do Justice to the Ancients, let us acknowledge, that they have much better succeeded in expressing the Qualities of their Heroes, than in describing the Magnificence of great Kings. They could not be imposed upon as to Courage, Constancy, Justice, and Wisdom, of which they had daily Instances before their Eyes. Their Senses, being weaned from Pomp in a mean Republic, gave their Reason a greater Latitude to consider Men in themselves. Thus nothing took them off from the Study of human Nature, and from applying themselves to the Knowledge of Vice and Virtue, Inclinations and Tempers. Hence it is that they learned to paint their Characters so well, that juster cannot be desired, considering the Time they lived in. If they thought it sufficient to know Persons by their Actions, *Corneille* thought it not enough to make them act ; he hath dived to the Bottom of their Soul, to find out the Principle of their Actions ; he hath descended into their Heart, to see how their Passions are formed there, and to discover the most hidden Springs of their Motions. As for the ancient Tragedians, either they neglect the Passions, by applying themselves to an exact Representation of the Incidents, or else they make Speeches amidst the greatest Perturbations, and amuse you with moral Sentences, when you expect nothing but Confusion and Despair from them. *Corneille* takes Notice of the principal Events, and exposes as much of the Action as Decency can allow ; but this is not all : He gives the Thoughts all the Extent they require, and leads Nature, without constraining or abandoning her too much to herself. He has banished from the Theatre

of the Ancients all that was barbarous ; he has sweetened the Horror of their Drama, by some tender Passions of Love, judiciously interwoven. But then he takes Care all along to preserve our Fear and Pity for tragical Subjects that deserve them, without diverting us from real Passions, to whining tiresome Scenes of Love, which, tho' an hundred several Times varied, are for all that still the same.

There are but few of our *English* Tragedies that can be called good ; in these too, several Things ought to be retrenched, and with that Reformation might be made admirable Plays. In all the rest you see nothing but a shapeless and indigested Mass, a Croud of confused Adventures, without Consideration of Time and Place, and without any Regard to Decency, where Eyes, that delight in cruel Sights, may be fed with Murders, and Bodies weltering in Blood. Should our Poets palliate the Horror of them by Relations, as it is the Custom in *France*, they would deprive the Spectators of that Sight which pleases them most. Those of better Breeding among us condemn this Custom, through a Sense of Humanity perhaps ; but an ancient Habit, or the Humour of the Nation in general, prevails over the Delicacy of a few Persons. To die is so small a Matter to the *English*, that they want Images more ghastly than Death itself to affect them. Hence it is, that the *French*, upon very good Grounds, object to them, that they allow too much to their Senses upon the Stage. The *French*, in their Turn, must bear with the Reproach of passing to the other Extreme, when they admire Tragedies for the little Tendernesses of Passion, which make not an Impression strong enough upon the Mind. For this Reason being sometimes dissatisfied with a Passion that is worked up ill, they expect a fuller Emotion from the Action of their Players. And sometimes they would have the Actor, more transported than the Poet, lend Fury and Despair to an ordinary Agitation and common F Grief.

Grief. The Truth is, what ought to be tender, is with them always soft; what ought to form Pity, scarcely amounts to Tenderness; Emotion serves them instead of Surprise, Astonishment instead of Horror. Their Thoughts have not Depth enough; and Passions, when they are not thoroughly touched, only excite imperfect Motions in our Souls, that neither leave them wholly to themselves, nor transport them out of themselves.

To Mr. —————, on COMEDIES.

Comedy, which ought to be the Representation of the Actions of common Life, is now in almost all polite Nations made to run chiefly upon Gallantry, not considering, that the Ancients made it their Business to represent Man's Life according to the Diversity of Humours. I grant, that the Comedy of the Ancients might have had a more noble Air with somewhat more of Gallantry too; but this was rather the Defect of those Ages, than the Fault of the Authors. Now-a-days, most of our Poets know as little what belongs to the Manners, as in those Times they knew what belonged to Gallantry. One would think, that there were no more Misers, Prodigals, soft easy Tempers, no more surly Moroses to be found in the World; and, as if Nature herself were changed, and Men had laid aside these various Dispositions, they are always represented under one and the same Character; for what Reason I cannot tell, unless it be, that the Women of this Age think all the Men ought to be Gallants. There is no Comedy, in the main, more conformable to that of the Ancients, than the *English*, as for what relates to Manners. It is not a pure Piece of Gallantry, full of Adventures and amorous Discourses, as in *Spain* and *France*: It is a Representation of the ordinary Way of living, according to the various Humours and different Characters of Men. It is an Alchymist, who, by the Illusions of his

his Art, feeds the deceitful Hopes of a vain *Curioso*: It is a silly credulous Coxcomb, whose foolish Facility is continually abused: It is sometimes a ridiculous Politician, grave and composed, starched in evry Thing, mysteriously jealous-headed, that thinks to find out hidden Designs in the most common Intentions, and to discover Artifice in the most innocent Actions of Life: It is a whimsical Lover, a swaggering Bully, a pedantic Scholar; the one with natural Extravagancies, the other with ridiculous Affectations. These Cheats and Cullies, these Politicians, and other Characters, so ingeniously devised, are carried on too far in the Opinion of the *French*; as those which are to be seen on their Stage, are a little too faint to the Relish of the *English*; and the Reason of that perhaps is, because the *English* think too much, and the *French* commonly think not enough.

The *French*, it seems, being zealous to copy the Regularity of the Ancients, still drive to the principal Action, without any other Variety than that of the Means that bring them to it. It is not to be denied, but that the Representation of one principal Event ought to be the sole Scope and End proposed in Tragedy; for we cannot, without some Violence and Pain, find ourselves taken off from what employed our first Thoughts. The Misfortune of an unhappy King, the sad and tragical Death of a great Hero, wholly confine the Mind to those Objects, and all the Variety it cares for, is to know the different Means that contributed to bring about this principal Action; but, Comedy being made to divert, and not to busy us, provided Probability be observed, and Extravagance avoided, Variety then, in the Opinion of the *English* Taste, is an agreeable Surprise and Change that pleases; whereas the continual Expectation of one and the same Thing, wherein there seems to be no great Matter of Importance, must, of Necessity, make the Attention flag. So then, instead of repre-

senting a signal Cheat, carried on by Means all relating to the same End, we bring upon the Stage a notable Rogue, with several Cheats, each of which produces its proper Effect. As our Poets scarce ever stick to the Unity of Action, that they may represent a principal Person, who diverts them by different Actions; so they often quit that principal Person, to shew what various Things happen to several Persons in public Places. *Ben Jonson* takes this Course in his *Bartholomew-Fair*. We find the same Thing in *Epsom-Wells*; and, in both these Comedies, the ridiculous Adventures of those public Places are comically represented. There are some other Plays which have in a Manner two Plots, that are interwoven so ingeniously the one into the other, that the Mind of the Spectators (which might be offended by too sensible a Change) finds nothing but Satisfaction in the agreeable Variety they produce. It is to be confessed, that Regularity is here wanting; but the Generality of our People are of Opinion, that the Liberties which are taken for better Pleasing, ought to be preferred before exact Rules. It is true, Rules are to be observed for avoiding Confusion, and good Sense is to be followed for moderating the Flight of a luxuriant Fancy; but Rules must not so constrain the Mind, as to fetter it; and a scrupulous Reason ought to be banished, which, adhering too strictly to Exactness, leaves nothing free and natural. They who cannot attain a Genius, when Nature hath denied them one, ascribe all to Art, which they may acquire; and to set a Value upon the only Merit they have, which is that of being regular, they employ all their Interest to damn any Piece that is not altogether so. For those, who love Ridicule, who are pleased to see the Follies of Mankind, who are affected with true Characters, they will find some of our *English* Comedies as much, or perhaps more to their Relish, than any they have ever seen.

To My Lord ——, on OPERA's.

I have long had a Desire to tell your Lordship my Thoughts of Opera's. I confess, I am not displeased with their Magnificence ; the Machinery has something that is surprising ; the Music, in some Parts, is charming ; the Whole together seems wonderful. But it must be granted me also, that this Wonderful is very tedious : For, where the Mind has so little to do, there the Senses must of Necessity languish, after the first Pleasure that the Surprise gave them is over. The Eyes are taken up, and at length grow weary of being continually fixed upon the same Object. In the Beginning of the Concerts, we observe the Justness of the Concords, and, amidst all the Varieties that unite to make the Sweetness of the Harmony, nothing escapes us. But it is not long before the Instruments stun us, and the Music is nothing else to our Ears, but a confused Sound, that suffers nothing to be distinguished ? How now is it possible to avoid being tired with such an Entertainment, where there is nothing in the Music to charm, nor in the Words to please ? The Soul, fatigued by a long Attention, wherein nothing is found to affect it, seeks some Relief within itself ; and the Mind, which in vain expected to be entertained with the Shew, either gives Way to idle Musing, or is dissatisfied that it has nothing to employ it. In a Word, the Fatigue is so universal, that every one wishes himself out of the House, and the only Comfort left to the poor Spectators, is, the Hopes of seeing the Shew soon over.

Another Reason, my Lord, why commonly I soon grow weary at Opera's, is, that I never yet saw any, which appeared not to me despicable, both as to the Contrivance of the Subject, and the Poetry. Now it is in vain to charm the Ears, or to flatter the Eyes, if the Mind be not satisfied ; for my Soul, being in better Intelligence with my Mind, than with my Sen-

ses, struggles against the Impressions which it may receive, or at least does not give an agreeable Consent to them, without which, even the most delightful Objects can never afford me any great Pleasure. A Representation, set off with Music, Dances, Machines, and Decorations, is a pompous Piece of Folly; but it is still a Folly. Though the Embroidery is rich, yet the Ground it is wrought upon is such wretched Stuff, that it offends the Sight.

There is also another Thing in Opera's so contrary to Nature, that I cannot be reconciled to it; and that is, the singing of the whole Piece from Beginning to End, as if the Persons represented had ridiculously agreed to treat in Music both the most common and most important Affairs of Life. Is it to be imagined, that a Master calls his Servant, or sends him on an Errand, singing; that one Friend imparts a Secret to another, singing; that Men deliberate in Council, singing; that Orders in Time of Battle are given, singing; and that Men are melodiously killed with Sword, Pike, and Musquet? This is the downright Way to lose the Life of Representation, which, without doubt, is preferable to that of Harmony; for Harmony ought to be no more than a bare Attendant; and the great Masters of the Stage have introduced it as pleasing, not as necessary, after they have performed all that relates to the Subject and Discourse. In the mean Time, our Thoughts run more upon the Musician, than the Hero in the Opera. The Mind, not being able to conceive a Hero that sings, thinks only of the Composer that set the Song.

I pretend not, however, to banish all Manner of Singing from the Stage; there are some Things which ought to be sung, and others that may be sung, without trespassing against Reason or Decency. Vows, Prayers, Praises, Sacrifices, and generally all that relates to the Service of the Gods, have been sung in all Nations, and in all Times. Tender and mournful Passions

Passions express themselves naturally in a Sort of querulous Tone ; the Expression of Love in its Birth, the Irresolution of a Soul agitated by different Motions, are proper Matter for Stanza's, as Stanza's are for Music. Every one knows, that the Chorus was introduced upon the *Grecian* Theatre ; and it is not to be denied, but that with equal Reason it might be brought upon ours. This ought to be the Distribution in my Opinion : All that belongs to Conversation, all that relates to Intrigues and Affairs, all that belongs to Counsel and Action, is proper for Actors to repeat, but ridiculous in the Mouth of Musicians to sing. The *Grecians* made admirable Tragedies, where they had some Singing ; the *Italians* and the *French* make vile ones, where they sing all.

Would you know, my Lord, what an Opera is ? I tell your Lordship, it is an odd Medley of Poetry and Music, wherein the Poet and Musician, equally confined one by the other, take a World of Pains to compose a wretched Performance. Not but that you may find agreeable Words and very fine Airs in Opera's ; but you will more certainly find at length a Distaste of the Verbes, where the Genius of the Poet is so cramped, the Spectator cloyed with the Singing, and the Musician spent by too long a Service.

Did I think myself capable of giving Counsel to Persons of Quality, who delight in the Theatre, I would advise them to take up their old Relish for good Comedies, where Dances and Music might be introduced, that would not in the least wound the Representation. Thus enough might be found to satisfy both the Senses and the Mind, wanting neither the Charms of Singing in a bare Representation, nor the Beauty of Acting in a long-continued Course of Music.

The *Italian* Singing is either feigned, or, at least, forced, for Want of knowing exactly the Nature or Degree of the Passions. They burst out into Laughter, rather than sing, when they would express any

Joy ; if they sigh, you shall hear violent Sobs formed in the Throat, and not Sighs which unawares escape from the Passion of an amorous Heart ; instead of a doleful Tone, they fall into the strongest Exclamations ; the Tears of Absence are like the Mournings at a Funeral ; Sadness becomes so sorrowful in their Mouths, that they roar, rather than complain ; and sometimes they express a languishing Passion as a natural Fainting.

As to Machines, they may satisfy the Curiosity of ingenious Men that love mathematical Inventions ; but they will never please Persons of good Judgment in the Theatre. The more they surprise, the more they divert the Mind from attending to the Discourse ; and, the more admirable they are, the less Room they leave in us to be touched and charmed with the Music. The Ancients made no Use of Machines, but when there was a Necessity of bringing in some God ; nay, the Poets themselves were generally laughed at for suffering themselves to be reduced to that Necessity. If Men love to be at Expences, let them lay out their Money upon fine Decorations, of which the Use is more natural and more agreeable than that of Machines. Antiquity, which made the Gods no Strangers to the Poets, and expos'd them even in their Chimney-corners ; Antiquity, I say, as vain and credulous as it was, expos'd them, nevertheless, but very rarely upon the Stage. Now the Belief of them is gone, the *Italians*, in their Opera's, have brought the *Pagan* Gods again into the World, and have not scrupled to amuse Men with these ridiculous Vanities, together with a confused Assembly of Shepherds, Heroes, Inchancers, Apparitions, Furies, and Devils, only to make their Pieces look great by the Introduction of that dazzling and surprising Wonderful.

In fine, my Lord, the Constitution of the Opera must appear very extravagant to those who are true Judges of the Probable and the Wonderful. Nevertheless,

less, one runs a Risque of having his Judgment called in Question, if he dares to shew it. But should not we resolve to strike in with good Sense, though so much forsaken ; and to follow Reason, though in Disgrace, with as much Zeal as if it were still in Vogue ; and if for no other Motive than that Opera's tend to ruin the finest theatrical Exhibition, I mean the Drama, than which nothing is more proper to elevate the Soul, or more capable to form the Mind ? I hope your Lordship will not take it amiss in me for censuring with so much Freedom your favourite Recreation ; but, in all other Respects, believe me to be, &c..

Satyrical Letters.

It is unnecessary to prescribe Rules for this Sort of Writing. Our Inclination is so strong for it, and we are so well pleased to hear any Thing of Satyr, that Art has no great Occasion to lay down Maxims for succeeding therein. However, a Man may be decrided for the Obscurity of his Birth, his impolite Air and Manner, his avaricious Temper and Cowardice, the same Way as the Lustre of his Family, his genteel Address and Behaviour, his Liberality and Valour, may be made the Subjects of Panegyric. If nice Expressions set off an Elogium to Advantage, Satyr may be said to require a still more delicate Turn. Hence, it should with Reason exclude all opprobrious Obloquy, all low and common Invective, since, otherwise, the Language of *Billinggate* would be preferable to that of the most polite Persons. But, as nothing shews the Exquisiteness of Taste so well as the forming of little Complaints, seasoned with ingenious Rillery, we may think that this is all we ought to aim at in Satyrical Letters, for which the following may be a sufficient Example.

**LETTER from DEAN SWIFT, to a Young Lady, who
had married above herself, grew vain, and despised her
Husband.**

MADAM,

Give me Leave to speak my Mind to you a little ; sure you will, because you know whatever I shall say, proceeds from my Value for you. Consider, that a Surgeon must probe a Wound, if he would make a perfect Cure ; and give Pain, to give Health. Would a Person in his Senses, whom I should save from drowning, by pulling him out by the Hair, quarrel with me for hurting him, when he is safe out of the Water ; therefore say, Down, down, *Self*, and read what follows.

Christianity, common Humanity, and my Profession oblige me to do every body all the real Service I can ; but the Civility, the kind and friendly Welcome, which you have always received me with, more particularly oblige me to do all I can to promote your Satisfaction ; therefore let me put you in a Way to be easy in this World, and happy in the next. Do not imagine now that you are fated to be unhappy : There is no such Thing : God puts it in all our Powers to be happy ; it is We make ourselves miserable : The Reason we don't find Happiness, is, that we seek it *without* us, and woukl rather bring Things to agree with our Humour, than suit our Humours to what happens. Let us do as *Mahomet* did, when he called the Mountain to come to him, to shew a Miracle to his gaping Disciples, and the fullen Mountain did not stir : He said to them, with all the Chearfulness in the World, Since the Mountain will not come to *Mahomet*, *Mahomet* shall go to the Mountain ; and so, climbing up, he pleased the People, and was perfectly satisfied himself. Since therefore Happiness is to be found only *within*, give me Leave to draw your Picture, by setting the Mirrour of Truth before you ;

which, if you view attentively, and without Partiality, you will find your Happiness, and lay Hold of it : I don't mean your outward Form, or what flattering Fellows call Roses, Lillies, Diamonds, Pearls, Balls of Snow, and Bowers of Bliss ; should I attempt it, I might do you as much Wrong as the Painter has done : I don't mean what may be seen or felt, but what may be heard or understood : Your Inside therefore is doubly composed of *Soul* and *Self*, which God having made, united together like Man and Wife : Now they can never be parted from one another whilst Life continues ; and yet they often jar by the Devil's subtle Arts, who continually endeavours to set them at Variance ; in which, when he succeeds, he makes a Person miserable : But when *Soul* and *Self* go Hand in Hand, *Soul*, like a good Husband, by his strong Reason, governing with easy Sway, and *Self*, diffident of her own Strength, gladly submitting to be governed ; how blessed are both ! Guardian Angels attend to protect them, and nothing from without can disturb their Happiness : But if *Soul* happens to be pusillanimous, or tyrannical ; or if *Self* gets it in her Head to wear the Breeches ; then all the Guardian Angels leave *Self*, and the Devil sends *Evil Genii* to take Possession, and stir up all the Passions to become Tormenters of *Self*, which, before that, were all Servants, very submissive and useful, when *Soul* helped to keep them under. On the other Hand, the *Evil Genii* are so continually contending with harrassing *Soul's* Guardians, that they grow tired, and soon sleep, regarding of their Charge ; then does Unhappiness fill the whole mortal Frame ; then it is we feel all the Racks, and Tortures possible ; and, if we are now and then easy, it is when we are in most Danger ; it is then the *Black Genii* have put on the Apparel of the sleeping Angel, and make us mistake Evil for Good : This is my poor Friend's Case at present ; but *Soul* has still Force enough to overcome *Self*, and Reason to bring

it to a right Temper, if we can but rouse *Soul's* Guardians to our Assistance, which we will do, by drawing *Self's* Picture, as it is at present; but I am afraid you'll scarce know or own it, on Account of its Deformity: But, if you do know it, and bring it to an *Examen*, a little Conversation with *Soul* will strangely mend it, and then Reason will make the Colours have a quite contrary Effect to Sir Godfrey Kneller's; for they will brighten and beautify by Time, and the Picture which was shocking, will become the Admiration of all Beholders. I have been thus long before I begin to draw, to prepare you; and, in order to make you read with Patience, I promise you that *Soul's* Picture which follows after this, will please better:

First then, *Self* is plaguy forgetful; she does not remember that she was ever younger or handsomer; she does not remember that she was ever worse in Circumstances, and much unhappier than she is at present; she does not remember the Time when she was much less respected than she is at present; she does not remember that she was taught, and should believe, that Religion is the most useful Thing in Life; and I am afraid poor *Self* has forgot to say her Prayers.

Secondly, *Self* is very vain and arrogant; for *Self* does not attribute her good Success to the Blessing and unbounded Mercy of Providence, but fancies that all is owing to Wit and Beauty, and a fine Voice; but, to shew you how much *Self* is mistaken, though you may have these Qualities, remember, that all is a Gift from Heaven: It is a Sign of too much Arrogance in *Self*, to let the World and every new Acquaintance see, that she manages All, by too often exposing the Weakness of her Confort; for, tho' some may praise that Spirit which conquers a Man, others will put wrong Constructions upon it, not only reflecting upon *Self's* Choice, which calls her Judgment in Question, but say hard Things, though very undeserved; and *Self* won't believe it, without she hears it; however, when

Soul

Soul gets the Management again, *Self* will only do it in Cases of Necessity, and before particular Friends.

Thirdly, *Self* is very short-sighted, and a little Dust, called *Praise*, thrown into her Eyes, makes her quite blind ; for otherwise she would not do the very same Thing she blames and dislikes in others. *Self* will often swallow down a Heap of Flattery offered by Sneerers, drink Poison because sweetened with Honey ; and believes the Givers to be sincere, though the next Moment they expose the Credulity of the Person whom they here have been praising : If they call her a Goddess, she believes herself divine, and expects to be worshipped ; if the next that comes pays no Homage, but is more sincere, and giyes Advice or Reproof, he is called an Enemy, or at least said to be very ill-bred ; and, if any comes to mortify her with direct Contradiction, she would crush him to Atoms ; and, if she has no Power to hurt him, she will tear and pinch her own Flesh. Though it was ridiculous in *Teague* to say, “ Arra’ Faith, my Master was my very good Friend and a Man of Sense, and I am a very honest Man ;” and in somebody else to say, “ Do you know what it is to affront one of my Character ? I am a _____ ;” yet, if *Self* could remember, she often says the very same Things in other Words. But, when *Soul* teaches, *Self*, even as a Dart thrown from an Enemy that wounds, may be made useful ; if the Point be taken off, it will prove a good Walking-cane to help *Self* to go upright.

Fourthly, *Self* is very passionate, and therefore cannot bear to be controuled ; she thinks him an Enemy, that does it in earnest ; and believes he can be no Friend, that does it in jest : She miscalls her Passions, not to part with them ; Rage she calls High-spirit and Courage ; and Falling in with her Humour, true Friendship ; but she is a great Coward, though she can scratch and tear : If I mistake not, *Self* is terribly afraid of *Self*, and the Thoughts of being alone

Jone is a most uncomfortable Prospect: To have one that we can unbosom to without Reserve or Fear, may be called having a Friend; but it is not natural Friendship to have one that shall love, where we love, and hate, because we hate, without any Regard to the Unreasonable ness of every Passion, or the Justice or Injustice of Affection and Resentment; this is by no Means to be called Friendship; it is only a Union of Interest; God forbid that should be called Friendship. Can Highwaymen be called Friends? Yet they do all this, they sing together, they kill together, they eat, drink, and whore together; but, as they don't act upon Principle, upon the least Jar, or Falling out, they hang one another. Friendship is a Virtue, and nothing of Crime can be consistent with it: Follies and Weaknesses we cannot be without in this Life; but a true Friendship is to pity and forgive, not to encourage them: It is having a Slave and fawning Parasite, not a Friend, to have such a one as *Self* calls so: A true Friend will advise, and reprove, and condemn *Self* for the sake of *Soul*, even to the Hazard of dis obliging *Self*: A Friend must help us to curb our Passions, refuse Assistance in Things unjust, endeavour to engage Heaven in our Cause, when just, and never let us alone, till we apply also to the Almighty Power, and make him our common Friend: In a Word, Friendship is directed by right Reason, and cannot consist without *Christianity*.

Fifthly, *Self* is a great Fop, and a great Slattern: *Soul* has given her very good Cloaths, fine Ornaments, plain and neat; but *Self* either leaves them, like a Slut, in every Corner of the House; or, when she puts them on, she does bedizen them with Lace and Embroidery, Fringes and Ruffles, Patches and Powder, that you can hardly see enough of the Gar ment, to distinguish the excellent Stuff which it is made of: *Soul* has given her a fine Gown, called *Good Humour*, whose Outside was a celestial Blue, called *Meekness*,

Meekness, lined with a white Persian, called *Humility*; what does *Self*, but throws off the Outside, saying it was foolish Stuff, and tramples the Lining under Foot, so that one could scarce know it? *Soul* had given her a Stomacher, called *Sincerity*, and charged her to wear it only on *Sundays* and *Holy-Days*, and never to put it on without Serpentine Lace, called *Discretion*, with a Charge to let other People discover it, and not do as Court Ladies commonly do by their Cloaths, that is, shew them to all their Acquaintance as soon as they get them; but the giddy Thing wears it every Day, loses her Lace, and, as Children do, cries every Moment, Who see my fine Stomacher? so that it must be a discerning Eye that knows it to be genuine: *Soul* gives her a fine Snuff-Box, in the Shape of a Heart, full of plain *Spanish* Snuff; *Self* throws it out, and fills it with Gunpowder and Hellebore: *Soul* gives her a Censer full of Balm, called *Gratitude*, charging her to turn the Pipe of it upwards, and set it on Fire twice a Day, to make the Smoke of it rise up to Heaven; assuring her, that she would then find such a Fragrancy spread around, that would cure all Distempers of Mind, and ease all bodily Pain; but poor *Self* said, there was too much Trouble in the Management of it; that she had forgot her Instructions, and the Book was too big that gave an Account of it; that there was indeed a Place where People met to use their Censers, but she had more Inclination to sleep, than manage her Censer, when she came there; and therefore thought it better to stay at Home: Since that, *Self* has never been rightly easy.

SOUL's Picture in Miniature.

S.O.U.L is honest, generous, grateful, unwilling to do, but unwilling to bear Wrong; sincere and open, but wants Help to distinguish and correct the Faults of *Self*; and has not enough been used to reason and reflect, which makes us sometimes mistake Right for Wrong;

Wrong; but let him put on Passions and Consideration, and once rouse his good Qualities, and *Self* will be reformed and re-united; the Angels will resume their Charge; Hell will be baffled, Heaven will rejoice, and Earth will honour and admire. If *Soul* will learn to forgive, he will learn to be easy; and such is the Pleasure of Victory over *Self*, in that Case, that it is worth all the Pains, and none know, but those who have felt it: It is of the Nature of Generosity, but far superior; without Forgiveness here, there is no Forgiveness in Heaven; with it there is endless Joy, and Humility is the Way to Exaltation here and hereafter. To become good, consider how many you may see excel you in Goodness, on whom Heaven has not bestowed the tenth Part of what you enjoy, to make yourself happy; nor can you murmur, when you consider how many, far more deserving than yourself, in every Respect, are infinitely more miserable than ever you was in your Life. I don't doubt but the good Sense you are Mistress of, will make you know, when you read, and consider what I have said; and I hope you will believe I wish you as well, and am as much your Friend, as any one living. I am, Madam, Your, &c..

LETTERS, giving an Account of some extraordinary NEWS; or ADVENTURE.

The Way of writing these Letters is best learned by reading them in good Authors, where one seldom fails to meet with all the Beauties of Narration. We have made Choice of an Example from St. Evremont; which, it is presumed, will prove sufficiently entertaining.

To Monsieur —————, at Paris.

SIR,

A Man of your Taste will, perhaps, find the Account, I here send you, equally curious and interesting. Your Ambassador, Monsieur de Comminges, was

not

not long settled at *London*, when a Physician, who was said to be an *Irishman*, drew upon him all of a sudden the Attention of the Public. He passed for a great Philosopher, and a great Worker of Prodigies, according to the Opinion of the Credulous, and his own Persuasion ; and the Manner of his curing the Sick made him suspected in several Places as a Magician.

Some Persons of Quality having intreated Monsieur *de Comminges* to invite him to his House, that they might see some of his Prodigies, he was willing to grant them that Satisfaction ; and, indeed, as much with the View of gratifying his own Curiosity, as through Complaisance for them.

This Piece of News had scarce got Wind, when the Ambassador saw his House filled with sick Folks, who came from all Parts in full Confidence of being cured.

The *Irishman*, for some Time impatiently expected both by the Sick and Curious, at last arrived. His Countenance was grave, but simple ; so that nothing of the Cheat appeared in him. Monsieur *de Comminges* thought to examine him strictly, but could not do it ; for the Croud became so great, and the Infirm pressed so hard to be cured first, that with Threats and even Force they could scarce be brought under any Regulation.

The *Irish Doctor* attributed all Distempers to Spirits, and all Disorders and Indispositions were, in his Opinion, Possessions. The first presented to him was a Man afflicted with the Gout and certain Rheumatisms, it was impossible for him to get cured of ; which our Wonder-worker observing, “ I have seen,” said he, long ago, this Sort of Spirits in *Ireland*. “ They are aquatic Spirits, that bring Cold and Chilliness, and excite Inundations of Humours in these poor Bodies. Thou wicked Spirit ! Thou that hast left the Abode of Waters to afflict this wretched Body,

" Body, I command thee to desert thy new Habitation, and return to thy old one." This said, the Patient retired, and another came in his Place, who said he was tormented by melancholic Vapours.

He was, indeed, one of those called Hypochondriac, and sick by Imagination, though they are so but too much in Reality. " Aerial Spirit ! said the Doctor, " begone ; return into the Air, to exercise your Trade for Storms, and raise no more Winds in this poor and distressed Body."

This Patient made Room for another, disturbed, as the Doctor said, by nothing more than a common Imp, who would not have Power enough to resist one Moment his Word of Command. He fancied he knew him very well by certain Marks that did not appear to us ; and, smiling at the Assembly, " This Kind of Spirit, said he, is little troublesome, and is almost always very diverting."

To hear him, he was ignorant of nothing belonging to Spirits. He knew their Number, their Order, their Names, their Employments, and all the Functions they were destined to ; and he withal boasted, that he was much more intelligent in the Intrigues of Demons than the Affairs of Men. You cannot believe how great his Reputation was in a very little Time. All Sects and Parties flocked from all Parts to have his Advice ; and you would have said that the Power of Heaven was consigned over to him, when an unexpected Accident made him forfeit the good Opinion the Public entertained of him.

A Man and Woman from the Country, who had been some Time married together, came to beg his Assistance against certain Spirits of Discord, which constantly disturbed, as they said, their Family Peace. He was a good-looking Gentleman, about Five-and-forty Years of Age, and was not without some Opinion of his Birth and Substance. I think the Lady is still present to my Mind. She was about Thirty Years old,

old, and seemed well made ; but it might be seen by her Face, that she had formerly a much more agreeable Delicacy in her Features. I named the Husband first, by Reason of the Dignity of his Rank ; the Wife, however, would fain speak first ; either that she believed she was more tormented by her Spirit, or was only incited by the natural Desire of her Sex for Speaking.

“ I have a Husband, said she, the honestest Man living, whom I vex and tease a thousand different Ways, and he in his Turn is not less troublesome to me. My Intention would be to live upon good Terms with him, and I would do so always, were it not for a strange Sort of Spirit, which, by seizing me at a certain Moment, makes me so haughty and insupportable, that it is not possible to bear me. My Agitations over, I return to my natural good Temper, and I then forget no Care or Point of Complaisance, in order to please my Husband : But the Mischief is, his *Demon* comes to take Possession of him, when mine has left me ; and the Husband, so patient amidst my Transports, grows quite outrageous in my State of cool Reason. Alas ! I suffer not less from him, than he does from me.” Here the Wife held her Tongue, in all Appearance very sincere ; and the Husband, who was not less so, began his Discourse in the Manner following :

“ Whatever Cause I may have to complain of this Devil of a Wife of mine, I must do her at least this Justice, that I have not taught her to lye ; and I must confess, that she has said nothing but what is very true. All the Time she is flying out into her Airs, I am as patient as Job ; but, so soon as her Spirit leaves her at Rest, mine begins to disturb me ; and, with new Courage and new Strength, whereby I find myself animated, I make her sensible, in as great a Degree as I possibly can, of the Dependence

“ Dependence of a Wife, and the Superiority of a Husband. Thus our Life is spent in doing or enduring Evil ; which makes our Condition the worst that can be imagined. These are our Torments, Sir ; and, if it be practicable to find any Remedy for them, I beseech you would use your best Endeavours for delivering us. The Cure of so extraordinary a Disease, as ours, will add surprisingly to the great Reputation you have already acquired.”

“ These are neither Imps nor Hobgoblins, said the *Irish* Doctor : They are Spirits of the first Order, and of the Legion of *Lucifer* : Proud Demons, great Enemies of Obedience, and very hard to be driven out. You will not take it ill, Gentlemen, added he, turning to the Assembly, if I should look a little into my Books ; for I want Words, which must be something more than common.” Hereupon he withdrew into a Closet, to turn over his Books and Papers ; and, after rejecting a hundred Forms, as ineffectual against such potent Enemies, he hit at last upon one capable in his Opinion of confounding and expelling all the Devils in Hell.

The first Effect of his Incantation was on himself ; for his Eyes began to roll in his Head with so many Grimaces and Contorsions, that he might well appear to be the Patient to those that came to seek after his Advice. After turning about his wandering Eyes on all Sides, he at last fixed them on the good Couple, and striking them both with a Wand, which you must think was not without its Share of Virtue : “ Get you gone, Devils ! said he ; go, Spirits of Dissension ; exercise Discord in Hell ; and, by your Departure, let that happy Union be established, which you have wickedly broken.” Then drawing near softly to the Ear of the pretended Possessed, and raising his Voice a little, “ I hear you grumble, Devils ! at the Obedience you are forced to render me : But,

“ if

" if you were to burst, out you must go : Go, I say,
" go. And you, my Friends, go now and taste, a-
" midst Joy and Pleasure, the Peace you have been
" long deprived of. All's over, Gentlemen ; I pro-
" test to you, the Resistance of these obstinate Devils
" has made me sweat from Head to Foot. Let me
" see, I have had to do, in my Life-time, with seven
" thousand Spirits, and all of them together have not
" given me so much Trouble as these damned Hell-
" hounds of Discord."

As after this the Doctor withdrew, the House was soon cleared of the Throng of People, and our good Folks returned to their Lodging with a more wonderful Satisfaction than the Wonder that had been operated in their Favour.

When they were at Home, every Thing seemed to them agreeable, by a Change of Spirit, that diffused a new Disposition throughout their Senses. Every Thing seemed to assume for them a smiling Air. They beheld each other pleasing and pleased, charming and charmed ; and soft and tender Words were not wanting to grace the Language of Love. But, vain Pleasures ! how little ought your Duration be confided in ; and how ill timed is the Joy of Persons born to be unfortunate, when a small Portion of Happiness falls to their Lot !

Such was their Situation, when a Lady of their Acquaintance came to compliment them on their Cure.

They answered this Civility with all the Discretion in the World ; and, all the other usual Compliments on these Occasions being paid and returned, the Husband began a very rational Conversation on their present happy State, which had succeeded one so wretched. The Wife, either with the View of increasing Admiration for wonderful Things, or for the sake of indulging a malign Humour, enlarged on the arch Tricks her Devil had inspired her with, in order to torment her Husband. Whereupon the Husband,

band, jealous of the Honour of his own Devil, or of his own Authority, let her understand, that it was speaking too much of Things past, of which the Remembrance was painful to him. He added, that, in the peaceful State they were restored to, she should think of nothing but the Obedience a Wife owed to her Husband ; as he on his Side would think of nothing but the lawful Use of his Right, to make their Condition as happy for the future, as it had been heretofore unfortunate.

The Wife, offended by the Word *Obedience*, and still more by the Order of holding her Tongue, forgot no Argument that might enforce the Equality of Marriage, saying, “ That the Devils were not so far off, but that they might be called back, in Case this Equality was violated.”

The female Acquaintance I spoke of, as discreet and judicious as any of her Sex, was very earnest in representing to her the Duty of Wives, without forgetting the complaisant and respectful Behaviour Husbands were obliged to. But her wise Remonstrances, instead of softening her, served only to irritate her the more, so that at last she became more insupportable than ever. “ You are in the right on’t, Wife, replied the Husband, the Devils were not so far off but they might be called back, or rather you have been so indeared to your Devil, that he was glad to stay with you, notwithstanding the Command imposed upon him to the contrary. I am too weak to deal alone with you and him ; so that, Madam, not able to withstand such dangerous Forces, I find it is best for me to withdraw.” “ And so will I too, said she, with the Spirit that has not a Mind to leave me. And indeed he must be very bad, if he is not more tractable than so peevish and troublesome a Husband.” Then turning to her Friend, “ Before I go, said she to her, I must tell you, Madam, very freely, that I expected quite different Matters

“ from

" from your Friendship, and the Interest you should
" have taken in that of a Wife against the Violence
" of a Husband. It is very strange to see me insulted
" by one that ought to take my Part. Farewell, Ma-
" dam, farewell ! Your Visits, you may think, do
" me great Honour; but I can easily dispense with such
" silly ones as this."

What could equal the Astonishment of the good-natured and wise Lady, now fully taught, by her own Experience, that even Wisdom has its Excesses ; and that an indiscreet Use is commonly made of Reason, in Regard to those whose Conduct shews them destitute of it ?

You may judge that she did not remain long alone in a Place where nothing was heard talked of but Devils, and nothing but devilish Pranks transacted.

The Husband spent the rest of the Day and the whole Night in his Chamber, ashamed of his past Joy, full of Vexation on Account of his present Cause of Displeasure, and perplexed with anxious Thoughts in Regard to future Disturbances.

As the Ferment the Wife had been in was much greater, it was of shorter Continuance ; so that, returned to her good Sense, she made melancholy Reflexions on the Loss of the Sweets she saw herself deprived of.

A Sort of Spirit that will admit of being composed lets few Moments pass away without Expostulating with that of Discord, for tending to the Ruin of its Interest and Pleasure. This Spirit, that reigns still more amongst Women, and particularly during the Nights they pass without Sleep, had the Ascendant over all other Considerations ; so that the good Wife, returned to pure Nature, went to see her Husband so soon as it was Day, to throw the Blame of all past Disorders on an unnatural and inhuman foreign Power.
" I am sensible, said she, in my present lucid Inter-
" val, that our Spirits have not surrendered at the
" Doctor's

“ Doctor’s Command ; and, if you believe me, my
 “ dear unfortunate Husband ! we ought to return, to
 “ beg his conjuring the Spirits out of us in a more
 “ powerful and effectual Manner.”

The poor Husband, dejected with Grief, though he could not resist an Injury, was glad to hear these soothing Words. Now, tender, and compassionate, and sensible of this Return of Love, “ Let us lament, “ dear Heart ! said he; let us lament our common “ Misfortunes : Come, I’ll go with you, whenever “ you will, to seek again for a Remedy, which per-
 “ haps will be attended with much better Effect.”

The Wife was agreeably surprised at this Discourse ; for, instead of a turbulent Devil, whose Insults she expected, she had the good Luck to find a Man in a relenting Mood, who consoled her for the Evil she did, and which he himself was obliged to bear with.

They spent an Hour or two in forming Sentiments fit for inspiring mutual Confidence ; and, having placed together their whole Hopes in the Physician’s Virtue, they returned to the Ambassador’s House. They were scarce entered, when the *Irish* Doctor perceiving them, and calling out loud enough to them to be heard by every one present , “ Come, said he, declare the “ Wonders that have been wrought in you, and bear “ Testimony of the all-powerful Virtue that has re-
 “ cued you from the miserable Slavery in which you
 “ groaned.”

The Wife, without consulting her Husband, answered immediately, and without Hesitation, That, as for the Testimony he required, they were obliged to bear it rather in Regard to the Obstinacy of the Devils than his Virtue : “ For really, venerable Father ! “ added she, since your fine Operation they have tor-
 “ mented us, as it were through Spite, more violently
 “ than ever.” “ You are Unbelievers, cried the Doctor
 “ in a great Passion, or at least ungrateful, for maliciously
 “ concealing the Good done you. Come hither, draw
 “ near,

" near, and I will convince you of Incredulity or
" Malice."

When they were close up to him, he examined exactly all the Features of their Faces : He observed particularly their Looks, and, as if he had discovered in the Sight of their Eyes some Impression of the Spirits, " You are in the Right of it, said he, (in some Confusion, and asking their Pardon) they are not yet dislodged. They were too deeply rooted in your Bodies ; and indeed they will stand their Ground, unless I drag them forth by the Virtue of the Words I am going to utter. — Quit, wicked Race ! an Abode of Rest too sweet and charming for you ; quit it, I say, and go and roar for ever in the Mansions of Horror, Rage, and Despair ! — There's an End of it ; Friends, you are surely delivered ; but do not come again, I pray you. I owe my Time to every one ; and you have had your due Share of it."

Here it was our Patients believed they saw an End of all their Misfortunes : That Day seemed to them as the first of their Marriage ; and the Night was expected with the same Impatience as formerly that of their Wedding. The so-much-wished-for Night came at last : But alas ! it did not answer their Wishes. Too much Love makes the Shame of Lovers ; the Excess of Desire cut short the Enjoyment of real Pleasure. Happily for the Husband, the Wife accused the innocent Devils ; and the Confusion was laid to the Charge of the *Irish Doctor*, who did not know how to defeat their Malice.

" It is long, said she hastily, and as if she had been inspired, that the *Irishman's Simplicity* has amused ours, and I am well satisfied that it is to no Manner of Purpose for us to expect our Cure from him ; but it is not sufficient to be undeceived ourselves, Justice obliges us to undeceive others, and to let the Public know the Vanity of those Quacks."

“ My Dear, replied the Husband, there is nothing so true but that this Night’s Misfortune is the pure Work of our Devils. The *Irishman* thought to get the better of them, but they have got the better of him and us too. You know me, and I know myself; what you know could not naturally be, and this is the Effect of his Incantations. But, my Dear, when you upbraid this fine Physician with his Folly, take Care not to mention any Particular of this Kind; and let nothing slip from you, I pray, that may bring Shame upon us. All Family Secrets should be buried in Silence; and this should be less revealed than any other.”

The Wife was ready to fly out to see herself suspected of so much Indiscretion; but, not to spoil Matters upon the Point of being made up, she promised to speak and hold her Tongue so seasonably, that none but the *Irishman* should have Cause to complain of her Proceeding.

The Night is usually sought after to hide one’s Shame, the Day appeared here to dissipate it; and these poor People, who were not yet well recovered from their Sufferings, turned with the Sun, that revives all, to the Hopes of better Success for the future. They got out of Bed with more Tranquillity than they staid in it, and after a little Breakfast and Conversation, to fortify their Bodies and reconcile their Minds, they walked in Peace and good Union towards the House where they had been twice with Confidence, and from whence they twice returned without receiving any Benefit. They learned from the Ambassador’s Servants that the *Irishman* was gone, by Desire, to St. James’s, there to gratify the Court’s Curiosity with a few of his Miracles.

Here the Blind thought they saw the Light they did not see; here the Deaf fancied they heard, and did not hear; here the Lame believed they walked straight, and the Bed-ridden found in Imagination the first Use of all their

their Limbs : A strong Idea of Health made the Sick forget their Ailments ; and Imagination, which was not less hot in the Curious than the Sick, held before the former, through the Eagerness of seeing, a false View, as it did before the latter a false Cure, through the Desire of being cured.

Such was the *Irishman's* Power over Minds ; such was the Force of Minds over the Senses ! Nothing was spoken of but Prodigies ; and these Prodigies were grounded on such good Authority, that the astonished Multitude received them with Submission, whilst some Persons who knew better dared not reject them.

Timid and submissive Knowledge respected imperious and authorised Error : The Soul was weak where the Understanding was sound ; and those who saw clearly into these imaginary Cures dared not declare their real Sentiments amidst a prepossessed and incharted Populace.

Thus it was that the *Irish Doctor* triumphed, when our Couple courageously broke through the Croud to insult him in all his Majesty. “ Are you not ashamed, ” said the Wife, to abuse as you do the simple and credulous People, by the Ostentation of a Power you never had ? You commanded our Devils to leave us at Rest, and they have still more tormented us ; you commanded them to go out of us, and they obstinately stay with us in Spite of your Orders, equally mocking our silly Credulity and your foolish Impotence.”

The Husband continued the same reproachful Language with the same Contempt ; and went so far as to refuse him the Name of Impostor ; because one must have some Wit and Cunning, said he, for being so, and this Wretch has none.

The Doctor lost his Speech in losing the Authority that made him venerable ; and this grand Power, raised on the Ground-work of a superstitious Servility of Minds, vanished into nothing so soon as there were

People bold enough not to acknowledge it. Surprised and confounded, he retired, and stole out by the back Door.

His Confusion extremely mortified the Assembly, there being nothing that the human Mind receives with so much Pleasure as the Opinion of marvellous Things, nor that it relinquishes with more Difficulty and Regret. This is the Foible of the superstitious and unthinking World ; and I know of no People that give into it more than the *English*. Besides their extreme Curiosity, they are tossed about, as St. *Paul* says, *by every Wind of Doctrine*. Who so will may preach up any Doctrine to them, and he is sure to find Proselytes ; and the most ignorant Pretender to Physic will not fail to meet with Customers for his Pills and Powders.

The whole Company now dispersed, ashamed of having suffered themselves to be so deceived, and yet vexed at having lost their Error. The married Pair enjoyed the Sweets of Victory, without thinking more of their Devils : And indeed Monsieur *d'Aubigny*, so well known for being the most agreeable Man that ever was, contributed not a little to convince them that they were their own Devils, their own Tormentors, and that they were no otherwise possessed than by a Contrariety of Humours. “ Is it possible, said he, that you really thought you had Devils ? There is no Man but sometimes is out of Humour at, and cannot endure himself. The wisest Man is tired of himself after being tired of others : And do you think that a Husband and Wife, almost always of different Spirits and different Humours, can live eternally together without Disgust, without Vexation and Disputes ? Believe me, out of a Hundred married People, there are Fourscore at least possessed, without any Devils, the same Way you are : The only Difference I find is, that they endure their Ills with Patience, and hide them with Discretion ; when you importune with yours both Heaven and Hell, accusing the innocent

“ innocent Devils of your Mishap, and going in Quest
“ of supernatural Principles, in a Thing so natural as
“ you must think your Case to be.”

To these Reflections I myself added, when this good Couple, now quite happy and joyous, were taking their Leave, with Thanks for the good Advice given them, “ That, of all the Remedies that could be applied to unhappy Marriages, there was not one surer, nor more wisely practised, than that of not believing ourselves more unfortunate than others, and of remaining in that Error; for that Man must certainly be unhappy in this World who lives without being deceived: Our greatest Enemy makes himself agreeable when he deceives us, and our best Friend seldom undeceives us without giving Offence.”

The End of the First Part.





THE
ART
OF
LETTER-WRITING.



P A R T II.

Containing Thoughts upon a Diversity of Subjects; Messages for Cards or Billets; and Letters suited to most Occasions in Life.



C H A P. I.

Thoughts upon a Variety of Subjects, intended as a Repository or Common-Place to furnish out Matter for Writing.

T happens with the Original of Nations, as with the Genealogies of private Persons, they cannot endure low and obscure Beginnings; and, as these are purely imaginary, so the former shew themselves in Fables. Men are naturally defective in many Things, and naturally vain; among whom the Founders of States, Legislators,

tors, and Conquerors, not satisfied with their human Condition, whose Defects and Infirmities they were but too well acquainted with, frequently ascribed the Causes of their Merits to something supernatural.

Though new Institutions should bring all the Advantages we expected from them, yet it frequently happens, from the Diversity of Applications, that several Things are fortunately enough begun, that cannot be brought to a happy Conclusion.

Every Thing that appears extraordinary, passes for great, if it be successful; as every Thing which is great, appears foolish, when it meets a contrary Event.

Few People could enjoy themselves, if they were hurried along in a Carriage, and knew that there was no Driver to direct it; yet many People seem content in the World, without regarding whether it is under the Guidance of Providence, and some People seem pleased with the Hope of there being no such Thing.

Learning, like Money, is not an End, but a Means; and it is as ridiculous to possess one as the other, without using it for the Good of Mankind.

No Man has a Right to be idle, who has not been busy. Let him that thinks he has a Right to live as a Recluse, ask himself, how he would be fed and clothed, if the same supposed Right was claimed by others.

If all that is called Learning was brought to the Test, and nothing retained but Truth, the largest Library might soon be read.

He that lives in a College, after his Mind is sufficiently stocked with Learning, is like a Man, who, having built, rigged, and victualled a Ship, should lock her up in a dry Dock.

He who aims at universal Knowledge, may know concerning many Things, but he will properly know nothing.

To speak well is a good Thing, to think well is better, but to feel well is infinitely preferable to both.

Refined and elegant Sensibility is a shorter Way to Rectitude than Reason.

Those who find Occasion to complain of the Age they live in, afford a thousand Encomiums to Antiquity, from which they can suffer nothing ; and those who are so morose as to censure and blame every Thing in View, make that, by the Strength of their Imagination, estimable, which really is not so. More polite Persons, indeed, who want not Discernment, knowing that all Ages have their Imperfections and Virtues, form a true Judgment in themselves of the Time of their Ancestors, as well as their own ; but they are obliged to admire with the People, and to exclaim, sometimes with Reason enough, and sometimes without it, “Our Ancestors ! Our Ancestors !” when they observe others to concur in so general an Admiration.

It is a trite Observation, that Men suffer more patiently an Imputation upon their Morals than their Understanding ; and it has always been thought strange, because in one a Man is culpable, in the other innocent ; but the Reason is, that a Fault in Morals a Man has the Power of correcting when he will, but a Defect of Understanding he must suffer for ever.

In a miserable Condition, where all Things are despaired of, a Man is more easily persuaded to confide in another, than in himself.

There is one sure Way of pleasing in Company, which is in every one’s Power to practise, by shewing a Disposition to be pleased.

It is with the Science of War, as with Arts and Politeness ; it passes from one Nation to another, and reigns at different Times, and in different Places.

Perhaps we cannot help despising those who have very mean Intellects ; but it is our indispensable Duty not to shew that we despise them ; to take Occasion of

of superior Parts, to give another Pain, is as cruel, and as base, as for a Giant to take Advantage of the diminutive Stature of a Dwarf to beat him.

Some Persons are disordered by a Multitude and Variety of Superfluities, who in Repose would taste Things convenient, and even Necessaries with Delight ; and some others, who have but a false Knowledge of Things, admire the Appearance of Moderation, when, if they had an exact Judgment, they would soon discover it to proceed from the small Extent of a confined Spirit, or the Indolence of some unactive Soul. In the Opinion of these Persons, to be content with a little rescinds rather from our Pain than our Pleasure. Besides, when it is not despicable to be poor, we want fewer Things to live in Poverty with Satisfaction, than to live magnificently with Riches.

It often happens, that those are most desirous of governing others, who are least able to govern themselves.

Men established Society out of a Motive of private Interest, imagining to live more pleasant and secure in Company, than where they were perpetually upon their Guard in Solitudes.

A single Life is but just half a Life..

Those who live magnificently, for the most Part, are the real Poor ; they contend for Wealth on all Sides with Inquietude and Disorder, to maintain the Pleasures of others ; and, whilst they expose their Abundance, which Strangers have more Advantage of than themselves, they are uneasy at Home by the Importunity of tyrannical Creditors, and by the miserable State of their Affairs, which they see tend to Ruin.

The Art of Courtship depends upon such a Variety of Circumstances, that it cannot be reduced to a regular System ; in other Words, it is impossible to court systematically.

As the Belief of a God is the Foundation of all Religion, there can be no Religion without Faith ; but, as true Religion includes Virtue, Religion cannot be perfect without Works. There is the same Difference between Faith and Works, that there is between believing a Man is poor, and relieving him ; you will not relieve him, if you do not believe he is poor ; but if you believe him poor, and do not relieve him, you may as well believe nothing at all about him. The Cause of Religion has been more injured by those who have talked and written against it, merely to gratify a Spirit of Pride, and a Singularity of Opinion, than by those who have opposed it from Principle : For the Effect of what a Man says is in Proportion to his Parts, not his Motives ; and there have been very few Men of Parts, who have been sincere in their Opposition to *Christianity*.

It happens sometimes in imminent Danger, that Persons of no remarkable Prudence are observed to take good Resolutions ; it happens, that the most interested Persons contribute largely to the public Good when, by taking other Measures, they are afraid to ruin themselves with the Public.

He, who, by the Fineness of his Conduct, can make others guilty of Mistakes, becomes himself frequently a signal Instance of the Weakness of human Nature, and cannot preserve himself from falling. He has shewn himself, perhaps, invincible in the greatest Difficulties, but not able to resist the Sweetness of his good Fortune ; he suffers himself to yield to Ease, when a little Action would have fixed him in a State of Repose for all his Life. If you enquire the Reason of it ; it is, that every Thing hath Bounds in Man. Patience, Courage, Resolution, are worn out at last.

He that affects to distinguish himself by Singularities that are hurtful to Society, gives an indubitable Proof

of a little Mind, that has no other Power of gratifying its Vanity.

Men of too delicate an Imagination make Difficulties in Undertakings, and stop themselves by Obstacles, which proceed more from the Imagination, than the Thing itself.

He that will quarrel with me for a mere Difference of Opinion, has no Reason to blame me, if I quarrel with him for the Colour of his Eyes or his Beard. Says *Tom Sophs* to *Harry Buck*, “ I hate a Fellow that holds such d—n’d Absurdities as you do, such Fools are not fit for human Society.” “ Sirrah, says *Buck*, how dare you come into a Gentleman’s Company with such a goggling Pair of grey Eyes as you have got? Get you out of the Room this Minute, or I’ll knock ’em out of your Head !”

There is a critical Minute in the Decline of States, where their Ruin would be inevitable, if a Man knew how easy it was to destroy them ; but for Want of a Sight quick enough, or a sufficient Courage, we are content with a little, when we might do more ; making either Meanness of Spirit, or Want of Greatness in the Soul, to pass for Prudence. In these Conjectures, a Man is not the Instrument of his own Preservation ; it is his old Reputation purely that maintains him in the Imagination of his Enemies, when his real Forces have abandoned him..

A Man that knows how to mingle Pleasure with Business, is never intirely possessed by Pleasure. He sets it aside, and resumes it at Discretion ; and, in the Use he makes of it, rather finds a Relaxation of Mind, than a dangerous Charm that might corrupt him. It is not so with austere Persons, whenever, by an Alteration of Temper, they come to taste of Pleasure.. They are immediately enchanted with its Sweets ; they are full of Aversion against the Severities of their past Life ; and Nature, being harrassed out in them by Inconveniences and Pains, abandons

herself to the first Delights she finds. Then what appeared virtuous, presents itself with a gross and morose Air ; and the Soul, fancying to be undeceived of an old Error, pleases herself with her new Affection for Things agreeable.

Prosperous Events strike the Eyes or Imagination of all the World : Judgment is hardly admired by any, being known only by Reflections, which few People are able to make. For, let a Man shew all the good Conduct that is possible, if the Event does not answer, ill Fortune passes for a Fault, and is justified but by a very few Persons.

To know barely how to slaughter Men, to be better skilled than others in rooting out Society, and destroying Nature, is to excel in a very fatal Science. The Application of this Science ought to be just, or at least honourable ; it should turn, if possible, to the Good of those whom it has subdued ; but always to the Interest of one's Country, or the Necessity of a private Advantage. When it is governed by a capricious Humour, and serves the Purposes of Irregularity and Fury ; when its End is to oppress the World ; then that Glory which is ascribed to it, should be taken away, and it ought to be as ignominious as it is unjust.

When Men separate their private from the public Interest, the Bonds of Society, which were once thought agreeable, seem at length to be troublesome Chains, and every one, growing uneasy under the Laws, endeavours to resume his primitive Right of disposing of himself, and in this Choice to follow the Motions of his own Will.

It is no less extraordinary than true, that the Corruptor remains a Person of Credit amongst those whom he corrupts, and acts more nobly than those who oppose the Corruption. But the Consequences are, Honour will begin to pass for a Chimera, Glory for a mere Vanity, and every one will basely pursue his own

own private Interest, while he vainly imagines he shews his good Sense and Judgment by using this Conduct.

The Love of our Country makes us abandon our Fortune, and even our Lives, for its Security ; but Ambition and Desire of Glory much more excite our Industry, than this Passion of the Love of our Country, which is always virtuous and noble, but rarely cunning and ingenious.

It often happens, that those who are possessed of a true Greatness of Mind, strive to acquire Power ; while inferior Souls content themselves by heaping up Riches all Manner of Ways.

To dispose Men aright, it is convenient to gain their Minds before Duties are exacted from them.

We pass with much Reluctance from Liberty to Subjection, and a Prince might esteem himself happy to command, in whatever Manner it is, a free People.

There are some fierce Souls, who feel but an imperfect Pleasure in being Masters, if they do not make their Power felt by others ; placing their Greatness in Force, and the Happiness of their Condition, in making Persons miserable at their Pleasure.

The Good of the State is the first Thought of a Patriot Prince, who does not understand, by the Good of the State, a vain and fantastical Name, but the real Benefit of those that compose it.

It is much better to fall naturally into the good Sense of others by one's Reason, than to make one's capricious Humours be received by Force.

To confer a Place on one that is undeserving is a Favour but to one, and an Injury to a great many. On the contrary, the Disgrace of a worthy Man is resented by all Men of Virtue, by the Compassion it gives to some, and the Alarm it gives to others.

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The Liberty of Opinion should not be displeasing, at least, in general Affairs. It is a Man's Birth-right to speak his Sentiments. Indeed, it is a Crime to pry curiously into the Secrets of one's Prince, and a Piece of Infidelity, not to make a good Use of his Confidence : But Affairs, when once they become public, ought of Necessity to be submitted to the public Judgment.

Mecænas gave *Augustus* an Advice, which is very difficult to be practised ; it was, Never to be concerned at whatever was spoken against him. “ If what is alledged of us be true, added he, it is our Business rather to reform ourselves, than for others to hold their Tongues ; but, if what is said of us be false, so soon as we shew a Concern at it, we make it suspected for Truth. The Contempt of such Discourses discredits them, and takes away the Pleasure from those that raise them. If you resent them more than you ought to do, it is in the Power of the most contemptible Enemy, of the most pitiful Rascal, to disturb the Repose of your Life, and all your Power cannot defend you from perpetual Vexation.”

As there are but few Revolutions, where we continue steady for a Time, a happy and honourable State is frequently changed into a miserable and base Condition.

The Interest of the Prince, separate from the Interest of the State, is destructive of the public Good. Then it happens, that Judgment, Capacity, Secrecy, are changed into Craft, Artifice, Dissimulation. Good and evil Actions are no longer known by themselves ; every Thing is interpreted according to some nice Intention, or judged by the Curiousness of some malicious Speculation. Every Thing is made Treason ; innocent Words are maliciously explained. Complaints, which in all Ages of the World have been allowed to the Unfortunate, for the Relief of their Miseries ; Tears, those natural Expressions of our Grief ;

Grief; and Sighs, which slip from us in Spite of our Will; nay, bare Looks at last become fatal. The Simplicity of Discourse is thought to cover evil Designs, the Discretion of Silence to conceal mischievous Intentions. If you seem joyful, it is supposed you are so, because you hope the Prince will soon die. If melancholy, it is concluded you are vexed at his Prosperity, or weary of his Reign. In the Midst of Dangers, if that of Oppression gives you the least Apprehension, your Fear is taken for the Testimony of a frightened Conscience; which, betraying itself, discovers what you are going to do, or what you have done. If you are reputed to have Courage and Resolution, you are feared as a bold Man, capable of undertaking all Things. To speak, to be silent, to rejoice, to be afflicted, to be fearful or undaunted, all is criminal, and very often incurs the most rigorous Punishments. Thus, the Suspicions of others render you guilty; but it is not enough to escape the malicious Glosses of your Accusers, the false Reports of Spies, the Suppositions of some infamous Informer; you are also to fear the Imagination of the Prince; and when you think yourself secure by the Innocence not only of your Actions, but of your Thoughts, you cannot fail of being ruined by the Malice of his Conjectures. A Man must have a great Stock of Merit, in a Time of so much Iniquity, to be a Person of Integrity, because it exposes him to so many Dangers and Hardships. That Virtue which dares appear, is infallibly lost; and that which is but guessed at, is never secure.

Some People think it a Mark of Insufficiency or Weakness to observe the Laws of their Country: Sometimes the Art of eluding them is the chief Secret of their Policy, and sometimes the Violence of breaking through them passes for true Greatness, and decent Authority.

As those, who concert Things the best, do not always adhere to the Exactness of Rules, so the most Irregular do not eternally follow the Disorders of their Inclinations and Humours. They will at least make their Temper pass for Policy. Even those, who do every Thing without Délibération, do not fail to reflect upon all their Actions; when they are over, and make that to be the Effect of Judgment, which was the pure Result of Nature.

The Government of Heroes is so agreeable, that we submit to it without Trouble. Under them we have none of those secret Repugnances, nor those internal Regrets of Liberty, which are so painful to us in a forced Obedience. We are all Duty and Submission, though their Humours are often insupportable. When they have made themselves our Masters by their Power, and are so much above us by their Merit, they are for erecting a double Empire, which exacts a double Subjection; and very often the Condition is miserable, that we must depend upon Men who are so great, that they may with Reason despise us. In the mean Time, since they do not rule in Desarts, but are under a Necessity of living among us, methinks, it should be their Interest to accommodate themselves to our InfirmitieS, and we would then justly respect them as Gods, if they would be content to live as Men.

We ought to stand upon our Guard against whatever appears to have a Design upon our Reason. With this View we are obliged to bestow our utmost Attention on different Singularities, and to examine separately each Feature of the Picture.

Prudence governs the Wise; but there are but a few of that Sort, and the most wise are not so at all Times. Passion governs almost all the World, and almost always.

In Common-wealths, where the Maxims of true Interest ought to be better pursued, we see most Things carried

carried on by a Spirit of Faction, and all Factions are passionate. Passion is found every-where : The Zeal of the best Persons is not free from it.

As Men are weary of the Troubles, Perplexities, and Dangers, which they must undergo to live always independent, they follow any ambitious Man that pleases them, and fall easily from a troublesome Liberty to an agreeable Subjection.

A Man retires, perhaps, with a general Applause, who, the next Day, finds himself the Subject of our Raillery, without knowing how he came to forfeit the good Opinion we had of him so lately. The true Reason is, because we rarely judge of Men by solid Advantages, which good Sense discovers ; but by the Fashion, whose Applause ends, as soon as the Fancy which produced it.

Industry supplies often the Place of the greatest Merit ; and the Art of making one's self valued more frequently gives us a Reputation, than our intrinsic Value.

Novelty is a Temptation, from which our Minds cannot easily defend themselves. The Merit we are accustomed to, does not fail in Time to raise our Envy ; and even Defects are capable of surprising us agreeably, in Things that we never saw. The most valuable Things, after they have appeared for some Time among us, no longer make an Impression upon us as good, but disgust us as old. On the other Side, Things that deserve no Esteem, are less rejected as desppicable, than desired as new.

When we are arrived to the Perfection of any Thing, we ought to shew our Niceness by relishing, and our Justice by always esteeming it.

In the melancholy Scene of Old-age, we impute the Defects which proceed purely from our Moroseness to exterior Objects ; and, when a pleasant Remembrance turns our Thoughts from what we are to what we have been, we attribute Agreements to many

many Things, which really had none, because they revive in our Minds the Idea of our Youth, when every Thing pleased us by the Warmth of our Temper.

To make a sound Judgment of Men, and of their Works, it is necessary to consider them by themselves, and to have a Contempt or a Respect for Things past, according to their intrinsic Worth, whatever it is. We ought not to oppose all new Things, merely out of a Spirit of Aversion ; nor, on the other Hand, to hunt after them out of a Love of Novelty ; but to reject or receive them according to true Opinion. However, we should part with our Caprichios, and the Fantasticalness of our Humour, which, after all, is a Hindrance to know Things well. The most essential Point is to acquire a true Judgment and a pure Understanding. Nature prepares us for it, but Experience and Conversation with polite Persons brings it to Perfection.

They, to whom Reason affords Repose, which Fancy takes away from us, live free from many Misfortunes, and are in a Condition of tasting the most real Good.

A Man, advanced to Greatness, who makes others find their Fortune in his, joins a great Merit to a great Happiness : He is not the more happy by the Wealth which he enjoys, than by that which he knows how to give. But he that courts all Mankind for his Interest, and will not suffer any to share Advantages with him, makes himself unworthy of common Society, and deserves to be excluded from all Conversation.

A Man is not absolutely ungrateful with Impunity ; he does not betray without Remorse ; nor is he so greedy of another's Wealth, and so tenacious of his own, without some Shame. But though one is never so composed within himself, free from internal Combats, and secret Agitations, he is still to account with

with the World, whose importunate Reproaches and troublesome Accusations he must be forced to endure.

Grandeur of Soul cannot consist with the sordid Baseness of Avarice. Besides, what can be more unjust, than to heap up that which is the Soul of Commerce, and affords us the Conveniences of Life, to make no Use at all of it?

Some are so jealous of the Honour of their own Actions, that they reject every Thing which is recommended to them by others. This may proceed sometimes from a good Principle, and be found in noble Dispositions; but, for the most Part, they are dishonest Jealousies, and false Niceties of Honour, which proceed from a real Unwillingness to do Kindnesses.

Let us suffer the Miserable to explain their Necessities to us, since we do not so much as think of them in our Abundance.

Every one fears the Ascendant of his Friends, if he receives any good Offices from them; every one takes a malicious Secret, and the Artifice of those ill Impressions that are given him, to come from a Sincerity of Heart, and a real Friendship. In this latter Case, our Caution is warrantable; it is here we may be upon our Guard with Jealousy; it is here we ought to defend ourselves from nice Insinuations, which insensibly lead us to do Ill.

Let us not be ashamed of owning the Thoughts of a good Action to another, and let us leave all Avenues free to those who advise us to do well. In the mean Time, we should think ourselves too easy, did we not shew ourselves difficult to be persuaded to what is good, while we receive what is ill with the most implicit Credulity, and believe we are Masters of ourselves.

What signifies that great Art, which rules every Line of your Face, which governs your Smiles and Frowns? To give seasonably, and to refuse with Reason,

Reason, would be more beneficial for others, and more advantageous for yourself. There is no great Merit in being able to over-reach those who have their Dependence on you.

Virtues, once established amongst us, demand our Love ; and it is impossible to make the least Alteration in them, without making us feel the Change with Violence.

Honour, which disguiseth itself under the Name of Friendship, is nothing else but Self-love, that serves itself in the Person it pretends to serve. The Friend, who acts only by this Motive, acts in Proportion only to the Increase of his Reputation. He stops short, when his Witnesses are gone ; it is a vain Dissembler, that turns his Eyes to see if the World looks upon him ; it is a Hypocrite, that gives Alms with an unwilling Hand, and pays his Tribute to God, only to impose upon Men. There are others again, who propose no other End in their Friendship, but their own Satisfaction ; this internal Law, which they lay upon themselves, makes them faithful and generous : But there is in all their Actions a stiff Regularity, that those whom they oblige cannot tell what to make of. They do every Thing by Weight and Measure. Unhappy is the Man, that has any Occasion of their Service, when they think they have discharged their Duty.

There is no Sympathy so perfect, that is not mixed with some Contrariety ; no Agreement, that can bear an eternal Familiarity. The noblest Passions become ridiculous, when they grow old. The strongest Friendships decay with Time ; every Day makes a Breach in them. Some People are for going so fast at their first setting out, that they are out of Breath in the Midst of their Journey. They weary themselves as well as others.

Into whatever Place you go, you may expect to find the World composed of two Sorts of Persons ;

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the former mind Business, the others pursue their Pleasures. The first fly from the Access of the Miserable, and are afraid of becoming so by Contagion. If one has a Mind to be introduced into their Acquaintance, he must conceal his Misfortunes, and be serviceable to them in some Respect or other. Interest is the only infallible Bait to procure their Confidence ; but Compassion signifies nothing with them ; for they are hardened, by long Experience, against the Miseries of others, and preserve a Tenderness for none but themselves. Those that give themselves up intirely to their Diversions, have something more of Humanity in them, and are easier of Access. Their Mistresses and their Confidants make good Use of those Follies, which employ them. Their Souls are more open, but their Conduct is more uncertain : Passion always carries it above Friendship, and they look upon the Duties of Life as an insupportable Burden. To live long with them, you must follow the Course of their Pleasures, confide but little in them, and know their Minds as much as you can.

A Man of Sense is always to be pitied in Adversity, and a Fop is always to be despised, whatever Condition he is in. But to hate Favourites, purely for that very Reason ; and to love the Miserable, merely out of the Consideration of their Disgrace ; is a very odd Sort of Conduct, incommodious to one's self, insupportable to others, and always prejudicial.

There are Persons enough at Court, that break with their Friends the very Moment any Misfortune happens to them, and have neither Friendship nor Aversion, but what is measured by Interest. The Man that is not useful to them, never wants Defects ; and he that is in a State of serving them, is possessed of all Perfections.

There is a just Medium between Baseness and false Generosity ; there is a true Honour, that regulates the Conduct of reasonable Persons. It is not disallowable

lowable for a Man of Virtue to have his Ambition and his Interest ; but he must cultivate them by lawful Means. He may have Art without Subtlety, Dexterity without Deceit, and Complaisance without Flattery.

Let Philosophers, let the Learned Study ; they will often find an Alteration, and now and then an absolute Contrariety in their Judgments. Unless Faith subjects our Reason, we pass our Lives between Belief and Unbelief, in endeavouring to persuade, while we are unable to convince ourselves ; the Activity of our Mind gives us Busines enough, but its Light is too dim to conduct us. Some that are in Love with their own Opinions, help their Imagination to carry on this Flattery. They think they have found what they seek for ; they triumph some Time in their Error, but are undeceived in the End. Others are mortified at their own Ignorance, every Thing stops, but nothing satisfies them ; they debate upon all Questions that are proposed to them ; more unhappy in this Respect than the former, since they have not Wit enough to deceive themselves. In short, the truest Wisdom is, if a Man is always deceived, or never disquiets himself about what is difficult ; if he thinks of the future only to reap more Advantage from the present ; and has at last brought his Reason to such a Pass, as not to dispute upon Things that God has not been pleased to submit to Reasoning ; this is all that he can desire.

Not to displease the Patrons of the Virtues of the *Pagans*, it would be advisable to believe with some great Saints, that Vain-glory occasioned more than Half of those Heroic Actions, which create our Admiration. When once we are arrived at such a Pitch, it is no longer Reason, but Passion that draws us along ; it is an Ambition to be in a better State ; it is a Vanity to die with Courage, which we love more than Life itself ; it is a Weariness of present Misfortunes ;

tunes ; it is a Hope of future Rewards, a blind Love of Glory ; in a Word, a Distemper, a Fury, that offers Violence to Natural Instinct, and transports us beyond ourselves. But a serene Mind, that examines in cold Blood this terrible Alteration, is scarce moved by reading *Plato* or *Seneca*. They may preach up, that Death is not an Evil : But, if Grace does not come to our Relief, they cannot fully satisfy us. It belongs only to the Sovereign Master of Reason to make Martyrs, to inspire us with a courageous Contempt of the Vanities of this World, and to persuade us by his Word, that he prepares real Happiness for us in another.

Conversation is an Advantage peculiar to Man, as well as Reason. It is the Bond of Society, and by it the Commerce of civil Life is kept up. The Mind communicates its Thoughts, and the Heart expresses its Inclinations. The Conversation of two Friends renders their Happiness and their Misfortunes common ; it augments their Pleasures, and lessens their Afflictions. Nothing alleviates Grief so much, as the Liberty of complaining ; nothing makes one more sensible of Joy, than the Delight of expressing it. To live then as Man, it is necessary to converse with Men ; it is fit Conversation should be the most agreeable Pleasure of Life, but it is also fit it should be regulated. We ought to enjoy it with Choice, and moderate the Use of it with Discretion.

Study is the most solid Nourishment of the Mind ; it is the Source of its most noble Acquisitions. It is Study that increases our natural Talent ; but it is Conversation that sets it to Work, and refines it. It is the great Book of the World, that teaches us the good Use of other Books, and can improve a learned Man into a complete Gentleman. In a Word, Study makes a greater Difference between a learned and an ignorant Man, than there is between an ignorant Man and a Brute : But the Air of the World makes a greater

a greater Distinction still between a polite and a learned Person. Knowledge begins the Gentleman, and the Correspondence of the World gives him the finishing Stroke.

Dependence is insupportable to a Man of Spirit, especially that of the Mind. When any one pretends to exercise a Tyranny upon the freest Part of our Soul, it is a hard Matter not to revolt against Reason, out of mere Contradiction to the Person that reasons.

It is no common Blessing to meet with a faithful, sensible, and discreet Friend: Faithful to conceal nothing from us; sensible to remark our Faults, and discreet to reprehend us for them. But to be able to believe and follow his Advice is the Perfection of Happiness: It frequently happens, that we take a Pride in following our own Conceits; like those Travellers, that lose their Way for want of taking a Guide, or enquiring for the Road.

A bad Example may serve to deter us from Evil, as a good one to excite us to what is good. Let us reap the Advantage of it from whatever Part it comes, and after whatever Manner it is given us.

It is our Business to distinguish Gold from Earth; we find it seldom pure, but it is nevertheless Gold. It is the Fault of the Workman, not the Metal.

We prefer the Discourse of an ignorant Flatterer, before the Conversation of a learned Man, when he is morose and severe. The Authority, which he usurps over us, is indeed troublesome; but is not this a Privilege acquired by Learning? If he let us partake of what he knows, is it too great an Acknowledgment to pay a seeming Deference to his Sentiments?

To be able to pass a true Judgment upon Things, we ought always to be upon our Guard against the Reputation of him that speaks concerning them. The

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Air of the Face, the Manner of Speaking, the Quality, the Time, the Place, all help to impose upon you. Admiration is the Mark of a little Genius, and your great Admirers are for the most Part very shallow People.

The Love of Women has softened the Courage of Men; the Virtue of good Men has been altered by it. The Gr^{ande}ur of a magnanimous Soul may be weakened, but true Wisdom incurs little Danger from the female Sex. The wise Man, who is above their Weakness, their Inequalities, and their Fancies, can govern them at his Pleasure. While he beholds others in Slavery, and tormented by an unfortunate Passion, he is easy and sedate, and knows nothing of those Disturbances which are not to be cured by Reason alone. Not but that he may fall into an Error; for there is no such Thing as Stability in human Nature. However, it is not long before he recovers his Way, and comes to enjoy his former Repose.

If *Homer* was now alive, he would undoubtedly write admirable Poems; but then he would fit them to the present Age. Our Poets make bad ones, because they model them by those of the Ancients, and are guided by Things which Time has altered. 'Tis true, there are certain eternal Rules, grounded upon good Sense and solid Reason, that will always last. Yet there are but few that bear this Character.

Of all Commerces, Friendship is that which most of all requires Sincerity, and generally has the least. True Greatness of Soul being no longer in Fashion, we readily pardon the Perfidious; and, as according to the Opinion of the Duke *de la Rochefaucault*, the seeming Vices of Men are nothing but Virtues concealed, those Friendships which appear to be strongest, are only Designs well laid, or Malice cunningly managed.

Man naturally desires Happiness, but knows not how to obtain it: He seldom or ever is deceived by this general Principle, that what we love is not Happiness, unless it be conformable to Virtue; but he deceives himself in the Application, and, in order to reconcile his Inclinations to his Idea of Happiness, he lays it down for a private Rule to himself, that whatever is repugnant to his Desires, can never be virtuous.

Those supple Slaves, who are such rank Idolaters of a Man in Prosperity, are the first that abandon him when he falls into Disgrace; for, as their Inclinations wholly center in Interest, they lose all their Warmth when that begins to decline, and their Friendship, which was built upon Fortune, falls and rises exactly with it.

As God is the sovereign Good, it is the Essence of his Nature to be happy without Reflection; but it is not so with Man who cannot be happy but by communicating himself. We may find People enough that are ready to lay out their Heart, but it is a Miracle to meet with a Man that deserves to receive it.

If we consider Man in civil Society, we shall find that Justice is necessary, though it is rigorous. It is for our Good, that it checks the Impetuosity of our Passions, but it is not without Constraint and Violence, that it forces the Heart to suspend its Transports. In the State of Nature, Liberty has something of Fierceness and Brutality in it, which cannot be restrained but by Efforts of Fear.

To be able to speak of Virtue is no certain Sign that a Man is virtuous. By doing it, we sometimes gain the Esteem of Persons of Probity: But we do ourselves more Prejudice than we imagine; we content ourselves with appearing to be what we are not, whereas we should desire to be what we appear.

In the most pleasant and charming Solitude, we are often disappointed of that Repose, which we hoped to enjoy there, because it depends much more upon ourselves than the Tranquillity of the Retirement. How can barely separating ourselves from the Noise and Bustle of the World appease the Trouble of our Mind, if our Reason does not come to relieve it?

We generally condemn with greater Warmth the Defects we find in ourselves, than those from which we find ourselves exempt, but in vain do we endeavour to disguise ourselves. We daily betray ourselves by something or other. It is a much greater Confinement to be at the perpetual Expence of Hypocrisy to adjust all our Looks and Motions, than to hate our Vices heartily, and in good earnest.

The Heart may be allowed to have an Inclination for any Thing that pleases, and charms at first. It has attained its End when it has found Pleasure, but then the Mind should not stop there, and nothing but Truth ought to satisfy it. For this Reason the wisest Philosophers so often advise us not to judge by the Manner, but by the Things themselves.

Let a Man's Condition be what it will, he may enjoy a true and perfect Liberty; if he never disturbs his Rest to court the Favour of great Men, and the Presents of Fortune.

All your Actions will appear at one Time or another, and nothing can continue hidden always. For this Reason, do nothing which you fear Men should know, as you ought not so much as to think of what you are afraid that God should know.

Virtue is never more safe than when it is afraid to appear upon the Theatre of the World, where it is too much exposed to Vanity; for, whereas all other Vices are propagated by Vices, Vanity subsists, and grows by the Shew we make of Virtue.

We complain of all, yet ought to complain of none but ourselves. We impute our Calamities to ill Fortune; nay, even in those Vices that are of our own nursing up, we lay all the Blame upon Occasions and emergent Accidents. However, there never happens any Misfortune to a wise Man: And, as for what relates to Occasions, they do not render a Man weak, but only discover his Weakness.

Examples ought never to pass for Laws. Men are too subject to Infirmities, to serve as Copies for others to follow. In the greatest Virtues there will be eternally some Mixture of Imperfection, and a Man is in Danger of taking his Example from the blind Side he discovers: But Reason and Justice can never mislead him.

Ill Examples cannot hurt one that makes never so little Use of his Reason. Neither the Quality nor Number of those that set them, are authentic enough to recommend them. Grandeur of Birth does not take away their Infamy, and Custom cannot permit that which is contrary to Reason and Justice. So that the most fashionable Vices are but so many Irregularities we ought to avoid, and not Laws we ought to follow.

Don't complain of another for not keeping your Secret, but first complain of yourself: How can you imagine a Stranger will be more faithful to you than you are to yourself? We have no Reason to hope that others will keep that, which ourselves first abandoned.

It is a difficult Matter to reprove a Man seasonably, and to give Advice: It is no less difficult to be reproved, and to receive Advice. To save yourself this double Pain, take such Pains to know yourself, that you may have no Time left upon your Hands to examine the Faults of others, and correct yourself in such a Manner that you may be above Censure.

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I should be well, cries one, If I had but my Health; and I, cries another, if I were but rich. But no-body says, if I lived according Reason.

We frequently seek Pleasure with more Pain than the Purchase is worth. It is frequently bought too dear.

A Man might very well wish to be of an easy Temper, if it were only to live agreeably with himself: For, when once he abandons himself to the Caprichios of his ill Humour, he cannot shake it off whenever he pleases, and he justly suffers that which he made others suffer.

There needs as much Discretion to give Advice, as Compliance to follow it: Nothing is so dreadful as a Friend, that takes the Advantage of his own Experience; that proposes all his Counsels as Laws, and with the Air of a Master; that takes from us the Privilege of examining what he says, and would force the Mind by Authority, rather than win it by Argument.

If we don't know how to despise sometimes, and be without superfluous Things, they become necessary to us at last, by Virtue of our being so long accustomed to them; we are impatient at any Thing that incommodes us, and faint under the least Necessity: We must be persecuted every Day by what they call Pomp and Magnificence, whereas other Men who do not live in this soft and delicate Manner, find Pleasure with more Ease, and enjoy their Fortune with less Pain.

It is no less a Defect to think the worse of ourselves when we have not Riches, than to think ourselves honourable, because we possess them. Though it should be our Misfortune to want the common Conveniences of Life, and upon that Score should suffer a great deal of Misery, yet we ought not therefore to look upon ourselves as infamous, any more than for being sick, or not so well made as the generality

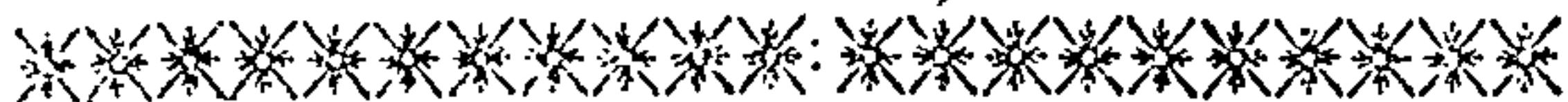
of Men are. True Merit ought never to lose the least Grain of its intrinsic Value, no more than a Diamond, which is not always set in Gold:

We scarce know any Persons well, but such as we have been long acquainted with. When we see a Man do a good Office to another, we are not immediately to pass a decisive Sentence upon him. It is very often nothing but a feigned Part which he acts. Integrity is far above such little Tricks; it takes such extraordinary Care to be regular, that it never leaves one Action either to Chance or Passion.

In the Commerce of Life the least false Step is observed. When this Misfortune happens, it is not in a Man's Power to raise himself up again as he pleases. For a Fall is like a Wound; it is almost impossible to heal it, but it will leave a lasting Scar behind.

The Wisdom of Men has its Bounds; but the Piety which God requires from us, is infinite. Charity easily persuades us to perform those Duties which Policy commands us to observe by the Rigour of Laws, and Morality prescribes to us by the severe Dictates of Reason. It teaches us to succour the Afflicted, when human Justice contents itself with only prohibiting us to do them any Mischief. When Religion has truly got the Ascendant over our Heart, no thing of Infidelity mixes with our Friendship, neither can we be ungrateful after Kindnesses received. Those Persons who are wholly devoted to their Senses, complain that Religion forbids them Pleasure: But it is Religion alone that can calm all Agitations within our Breasts, and soften whatever appears harsh to us. It captivates the Heart by the agreeable and innocent Pleasure it inspires. It leaves nothing in us which may prove injurious to our Neighbour, or vexatious to ourselves; no Passion that may be prejudicial either to him that feels, or to him that excites it. It employs all our Charity and Good-nature, all that we have sweet

sweet and tender within us, not only for our Friends, but for those that are most indifferent to us, nay even for our very Enemies.



C H A P. II.

Messages for Cards or Billets, which may be varied at Pleasure, so as to serve all Occasions.

*M*r. and Mrs. *A*'s Compliments to Mr. and Mrs. *B*, and desire the Favour of their Company *Wednesday* next, to drink Tea, and spend the Evening.

Monday Morning.

Mr. and Mrs. *B*. return their Compliments to Mr. and Mrs. *A*, and will certainly do themselves the Pleasure to wait on them.

Monday Noon.

Mr. and Mrs. *B*. return their Compliments, and are sorry it happens, that a Pre-engagement will not permit them the Pleasure of waiting on Mr. and Mrs. *A*, which they would otherwise have readily done.

Monday Noon.

Mr. and Mrs. *C*'s Compliments to Mr. and Mrs. *D*; and, if they are not otherwise engaged this Afternoon, will take the Pleasure of waiting on them.

Tuesday Morning.

Mr. and Mrs. *D*. are perfectly disengaged, beg their Compliments, and will be extremely glad of Mr. and Mrs. *C*'s agreeable Company.

Tuesday Noon.

Mr. and Mrs. D. are very sorry it so happens that they are engaged this Afternoon and Evening, but beg their Compliments, and any other Time, that shall be agreeable to Mr. and Mrs. C, will be proud of the Pleasure of their Company.

Tuesday Noon.

Miss E. sends her Compliments to Miss F, and desires to know how she does, and if well enough to see Company, and it be agreeable, will wait on her this Afternoon in the Coach, and give her an Airing for an Hour before Tea.

Wednesday Morning.

Miss F, without a Compliment, is very agreeably obliged to Miss E, whom she will be extremely glad to see, and accept of her kind Offer of an Airing in her Coach, at the Time proposed.

Wednesday Morning.

Miss F, instead of Compliments, begs Leave to return Miss E. her best Thanks, for her very obliging Card, and is extremely sorry she is not well enough to have the Pleasure of her Company, which, however, she hopes very soon for a full Enjoyment of, and to be able to accept of her kind Offer of an Airing in the Coach.

Wednesday Noon, and not up.

Mrs. G. presents her Compliments to Mrs. H, hopes she is well, and to have the Favour of her Company To-morrow Evening, with a small but agreeable Party at Whist.

Thursday Afternoon.

Mrs. H, is not so well as she could wish to be, but much at Mrs. G's Service, and will endeavour to wait on her.

Thursday

Thursday Evening.

Mr. *I's* Compliments wait on Miss *K*, to beg the Favour of being her Partner To-morrow Evening at the Assembly.

Friday Morning:

Miss *K's* Compliments, and she is engaged.

Friday.

Miss *K's* Compliments; she is not certain of being at the Assembly, and undetermined about Dancing; so Mr. *I.* must not absolutely depend on her for a Partner.

Friday Morning:

Miss *L.* is sorry to trouble Miss *M*, on so trifling an Occasion, as how to direct to her Aunt *N*, begs her Compliments, and a Line of Information by the Bearer..

Saturday Evening.

Mrs. *O's* Respects, (Compliments she has done with) to Miss *P*; and, if not engaged, her Company, as it will be extremely agreeable, is greatly desired this Evening at a Party of Whist, about four Tables in the Whole.

Monday Morning:

Miss *P's* best Services; she has the Pleasure of Mrs. *O's* respectful Message, and it is much against her Inclination, that she is obliged to say she can't possibly wait on her, having this Evening an Engagement that cannot be dispensed with.

Tuesday Morning:

If Miss *Q* be well enough, Lady *R's* Compliments. She proposes a Visit this Afternoon to Miss *S*; and will be very glad of her Company; the Coach

is ordered exactly at Four, and an Airing will not be amiss.

Wednesday Eleven o'Clock.

Miss Q. has the Honour of Lady R's Card ; she begs to return her Compliments, and is very much at her Ladyship's Service, and will certainly wait on her.

Wednesday.

Mrs. T. has a Party at Cards next *Wednesday* Se'n-night of eight Tables ; she presents her Compliments to Mr. V., and desires the Favour of his Company.

Thursday, December 5.

Mr. V. has the Honour of Mrs. T's Card, thinks himself extremely obliged in the Remembrance, and will certainly do himself the Pleasure of waiting on her.

Mr. W, after the Honour of dancing last Night with Miss X, is concerned that he is prevented waiting on her this Morning, by a sudden Call to the Country ; begs his Compliments may be acceptable, hopes this Message will find her in perfect Health, and that she took no Cold.

Friday Morning, Eight o'Clock.



C H A P. III.

*Letters suited to the most interesting Occasions
in Life.*

Letters of Compliment.

SIR,

I T is so great a Pleasure to me to pay my Respects to you, that I am always the first satisfied, every Time I acquit myself of this Duty : And this is also

what makes me so careful to seek after Opportunities for so doing, that you may never have it in your Power to accuse me of having lost one. I do not, however, intreat you to believe it, desiring to let you see by Deeds, rather than by Words, that I am, without Compliment, Sir, Your most humble Servant.

Another Letter on the same Subject.

SIR,

If you expect nothing from me but Compliments, you will never receive any ; for you may well know, by this Time, that I am a sworn Enemy of Civilities and Courtesies, in Regard to Persons, whom I honour to the Degree I do you. It will be sufficient for me to pay my Respects to them, and to take Care to do so with a good Grace. Herein lies my whole Study, and I beg you to believe, that I will omit no Opportunity to assure you of it, finding it is so much my Interest, in the Resolution I have taken, to be, my whole Life, Sir, Your humble Servant.

Another on the same Subject.

SIR,

Though I have told you a thousand Times by Word of Mouth, that I was your Servant, I am now willing that my Pen should assure you of it, till such Time as I find you in the Humour of obliging me to produce stronger Proofs of my being so. This I conjure you to do, and even to forego the Opportunity by some Command, considering the continued State of Impatience I am in of letting you know, and confessing, at the same Time, that you may have more powerful and considerable Friends, but not one more ready to oblige you, nor more faithful than, &c.

Answer to Letters of Compliment.

SIR,

I shall be so vain as to believe, since you will have it so, that you have a singular Affection for me; but it is on Condition, that you will not doubt, at the same Time, of my sincere Desire for serving you; for, as it is this alone that has merited for me the Honour of your Friendship, I should be glad you would always preserve the Remembrance of it, that you might not pass for ungrateful; and the rather, as I cannot otherwise make a Return for the Honour you do me. Continue then to love me as much as you please; but depend upon it, that none can consult your Interest more than, Sir, &c.

Letters complaining of a long Silence.

SIR,

I shall break at last with you, if you do not break Silence. Indeed, I fancy you esteem me very little, since you have intirely forgot me. But, if my Friendship is still of any Account to you, or if you still judge me worthy of yours, pray, treat me more familiarly. In the Humour I now am, I think, the Moment you blot me out of your Memory, I will blot you out of my Heart, without preserving, by pure Inclination, any Thing more than the Quality of, Sir, Your most humble Servant.

Another Letter on the same Subject.

SIR,

If you are sworn to write no more to me, send me back at least the Letters you have had from me, that I may have the Honour of receiving something from you. Silence is the declared Enemy of Friendship; and it is therefore my Friendship upbraids you with your Silence, not being able to endure, that, after so many Protestations of never forgetting me, you should

lose Sight even of the Remembrance of having made them. You will be of a quite different Opinion, when you please, if you desire to oblige a-new, &c.

Another on the same Subject.

SIR,

If I did not honour you extremely, I would be revenged of your Forgetfulness, by my Silence ; but the great Esteem your Merit has acquired in my Thoughts, together with my Inclination for serving you, by inspiring me with quite contrary Sentiments, obliges me to assure you, that, though you should even forget my Name, I will never alter the Resolution I have taken of being, my whole Life, &c.

Another on the same Subject.

SIR,

I am full of the deepest Concern, when I think of your forgetting a Person who honours you to the Degree I do. Three Months Silence has put my Mind to a Torture, that has lasted all that Time. Pray do me Justice, and let not every body complain with me of the little Regard you have for, &c.

Answer to Letters complaining of Silence.

SIR,

You oblige me with so good a Grace in your Complaints of me, that I see I must rather thank you, than find Fault with your Behaviour. Not but I may have several lawful Excuses for authorising my Silence ; but your interesting yourself in it makes me condemn it. Be assured therefore for the future, that you shall have rather Room to accuse of Importunity, than Neglect, your, &c.

Another

Another Answer on the same Subject.

SIR,

If our mutual Friendship had no other Way of being maintained but by Letters, I should be constantly employed in writing them, to give you fresh Assurances of its Stability ; but, well knowing that it is kept up of itself, and by the solid Ground-work it is built upon, I despise all the Artifices of Civility and Compliment. By the slender Acquaintance you have with your own Merit and my Humour, you may know, without being a Prophet, how much I esteem you ; and, as Science has Truth for its Object, you may have all the Reason in the World to believe, that I am truly and sincerely, &c.

Another on the same Subject.

SIR,

Your Complaints and Reproaches are so agreeable to me, that I am forced to thank you for them, being persuaded, that they proceed from an Excess of Zeal and Affection. It is true, I have kept Silence too long ; but the Illness, which still afflicts me, may plead some Excuse for it. I hope therefore you will believe I had no Inclination to forget Persons I honour as much as I do you ; and, that had it not been for the Extremity I was reduced to, I would speedily have acquitted myself of what I owe you, in Quality of, &c.

Letters of Thanks.

SIR,

I do not pretend, that my present Tender of Thanks for the Favour you was pleased to honour me with, should be deemed by you as an Acknowledgement. I only make a slender Return for your Civility by this Duty ; waiting for a more favourable Opportunity to testify by Services, rather than Words, how truly I am, in Heart and Mind, &c.

Another

Another Letter on the same Subject.

SIR,

You have indeed obliged me in so signal a Manner, that I shall be indebted to you during my whole Life. How I could wish that Opportunities constantly offered for exerting myself in your Service! Then I should testify to you, that, if your Favours are extreme, there is no Extremity but I would have Recourse to, in order, if possible, to counterbalance them. These are not Words of Compliment; my Heart dictates to my Pen all it writes to you, still assuring you, that I shall not long bear unprofitably the Quality of your, &c.

Another on the same Subject.

SIR,

I know not in what Terms I ought to thank you for the Favours your Generosity has been pleased to heap upon me: For I am so unhappy in Point of Eloquence, that I already despair of succeeding to my Wish. I hope, notwithstanding, you will not take it amiss, if I declare to you the Passion I have for your Service. Your bare Remembrance of my good Disposition will supply the Defects of my Capacity, and will rather consider the Ardour of my Zeal, than the Beauty of Discourse, in the Sentiments of Respect entertained for you by, &c.

Answers to Letters of Thanks.

SIR,

Your Thanks have purchased, at so dear a Rate, the Services I rendered you, that you have robbed me of all the Satisfaction I received from them. When I did as you desired, I only thought to clear off what I owed you, without pretending to any other Advantage. Keep therefore your Civilities for some other Person, and remember to treat another Time more familiarly, &c.

Another

Another Answer on the same Subject.

SIR,

It must be confessed, that there is much more Honour than Satisfaction in serving you. You thank me, as if I was never under any Obligation to you ; and, it seems, you forget the absolute Power your Merit has gained over me. Disuse yourself, let me desire you, to this Behaviour ; and believe with me, that the Language of Compliments is unknown to true Friends : I am of this Number, and always ready to convince you, how much I am, &c.

Letters of Request.

SIR,

The Services I am bound to perform for you, and the Friendship I have promised you, make me take the Liberty of begging you would favour with your Interest the Bearer, in what he has to desire of you. I boldly make Use of the Power you have given me to apply to you on all Occasions ; but it is on Condition you will deal the same Way with, &c.

Another Letter on the same Subject.

SIR,

If you pay as much Attention to my Request, as I shall always do to your Commands, you will now support with your Authority the Affair on the Carpet, that it may terminate to my Advantage. I make little Doubt of your Power, and still less of your Generosity ; so that my good Fortune presents you this Day, with an Opportunity of obliging extremely, &c.

Another on the same Subject.

SIR,

If you complain of my Importunity, accuse yourself for it ; if you was less generous, I would be less bold : But, knowing by Experience how much you are influenced by Civility and Beneficence, I believe you will not

not think disagreeable my present Request of softening by your soothing Words the malevolent Intentions of the Man you know against me. You will oblige us both on this Occasion ; because, by letting him know my Innocence, he will become more tractable, and make me Satisfaction. I hope for this Favour from your Goodness, in Return for which you have a just Right to expect all Sorts of good Offices from, &c.

Answers to Letters of Request.

SIR,

I have done all you required of me, and indeed with great Satisfaction and little Trouble. You may now therefore make ready some new Commands, that my Desire of serving you may not be fruitless ; and I will also shew you, by my Alacrity in obeying them, that I have not a greater Pleasure in the World, than being known in all Places to be your most affectionate Friend and humble Servant.

Another Answer on the same Subject.

SIR,

I ask Pardon for the Length of Time I have taken up in executing your Commands ; not but I used all my Care and Diligence therein : But, as the Success was in the Hands of a different Power, I could not sooner acquaint you of the Effects. However, let not the Misfortune of my Delay hinder you for the future to apply to me, as none can be more devoted to your Service than, &c.

Another on the same Subject.

SIR,

Whenever you desire I should perform any Service for you, pray consider, whether it be in my Power, that I may no more run the Risque of incurring the Reproaches my ill Success obliges you to heap upon me, for not being able to execute your Commands.

Upon

Upon any other Occasion you may command me with Pleasure; for none can be more desirous of being useful to you, than, &c.

Letters of Congratulation.

SIR,

If you knew to what a Degree the News of your good Fortune has been agreeable to me, you would doubt whether your Pleasure equals mine. Indeed, nothing can be added to it: It is the Result of the Friendship I have vowed to you, which is little common, your Merit being its Object. I would say more to you, if the Excess of my Joy permitted me. It will be therefore enough for me to assure you, that my Satisfaction cannot equal the Passion I have for your Service, as being, &c.

Another Letter on the same Subject.

SIR,

The News of your Promotion to the Post of Honour you have so long wished for, has filled me with so much Satisfaction and Pleasure, that I can only express to you a Part of my Joy on that Account. I do not put myself to the Trouble of persuading you of it by a long Discourse; your Merit and our mutual Friendship, making Amends for whatever is deficient in my Eloquence, will convince you more powerfully than my Pen, that I am always, &c.

Answers to Letters of Congratulation.

SIR,

Since you take a Part in my Satisfaction for the Happiness that has fallen to my Lot, it is just you should also partake of the Advantages of the Interest annexed to it. This I give you Warning of, that you may let slip no Occasion wherein I may be of Service to you. Forget not this Advice I give you; for I am all over Impa-

Impatience, in Hopes to make appear to you, how much I am your Friend and Servant.

Another Answer on the same Subject.

SIR,

The new Assurances you have given me of your Friendship, by such an unfeigned Testimony of Joy for my good Hap, have contributed more to my Satisfaction than my newly acquired Prosperity; and the Reason is, because I prefer the Happiness of your Affection to that I now enjoy. You have touched me in so sensible a Part, by mingling my Interest with your own, that I will never lose Sight of the Favour. All I can wish is to have an Opportunity of deserving it by my Services, because I am always, and shall be, all my Life, &c.

A Letter to ask Pardon for a Fault.

SIR,

If the confessing of my Fault can deserve Pardon, I am willing to hope for it, rather from your Goodness, than my Intention, though very innocent. It is true, Sir, I have not rendered you the Respect I ought, by my Behaviour Yesterday Evening; but, having been suddenly surprised with Anger, without reflecting on the Place I was in, I leave you to judge of my Weakness, after condemning it myself. You know that our first Motions are so sudden in their Transports, that, in Spite and Contempt of Reason, they will receive Laws only from themselves. This must make you consider, that Nature has more contributed to the Fault I have committed, than my Will, and that, if I could not have avoided it, I know at least how to repent of it. You may depend upon my Sincerity in this Respect, that my humble Request for Pardon may be acceptable to you, and the more so, as coming from, &c.

Letters complaining of Slander.

SIR,

I am told, that you have held very indiscreetly some Discourses to my Disadvantage. I desire, out of Charity, you would timely repent of them, unless you are willing I should impose harder Conditions on you. I cannot understand Raillery, unless I begin it; correct then your Pleading, or you will lose your Cause with Costs. I give you this Notice, that you may have no Reason to complain. And, when I perceive you in the necessary Submission I impatiently expect from you, I shall think, whether I ought to be again, as I was before, &c.

Another Letter on the same Subject.

SIR,

I have been credibly informed, that you often amuse yourself, when Time hangs heavy on your Hands, or for Want of other Employment, in aspersing the Character of Miss ———, my near Relation. This Occupation is the worst and most dangerous you can engage in. If your Liquor forces you into these Extravagancies, I counsel you to be more abstemious; otherwise I shall be obliged to impose upon you so long a Silence, that perhaps you will not be heard to speak for some Months together. Such is the charitable Advice, and I desire you would follow it, of, &c.

A Letter complaining of a too long Absence.

SIR,

Though true Friendship is Proof against Absence, your's has been so long, that, I fear, in forgetting me by little and little, you will at last withdraw all your Affection from me. You see I speak boldly, because my Fears are great; and you should pardon my Boldness and Fear, as equally proceeding from the Affection I have for you, and the great Value I set up-
on

on it. Return then speedily, if you desire to rid of Trouble and Uneasiness the most faithful and affectionate of all your Servants.

Letter from a Lady to her Husband at the Army in Germany.

DEAR HUSBAND,

I cannot express how much I suffered when you set out for the Army in Germany. God alone knows the Grief my Heart has been pierced with. The Hopes of Peace we were flattered with, seemed to mitigate my Anxieties, and calm the Disturbances of my Mind. The Campaign opens, the War begins a-new; and I know not where I am, nor what I am doing. You might have lived happy and contented in the Bosom of your Country, with your Family, and with your Friends. But you have preferred Troubles, Fatigues, and Alarms, to the Repose and Tranquillity of Life. What a cruel Destiny is this! How melancholy are the Reflections that weigh down my Heart! I spend the Days and Nights amidst continual Fears. Dread and Despair agitate continually my dejected Mind, and plunge me into an Ocean of Afflictions. Take Care of your Health, write to me often, love me as much as I love you; I cannot say more. Farewell, my dear Husband! I am the most disconsolate Wife living.

A. N. S. W. E. R.

THE Enemy does not give me half the Uneasiness you do, Madam! In the Name of God compose yourself, if you have any real Love for me. Misfortunes are only great in Imagination. I have happily passed through all former Campaigns; this will be attended with the same Success. Hardships and Labour are inseparable from a military Life; and it is at this Expence we must gather Laurels: Such is my State, such my Profession; I must gloriously discharge the Duties annexed to it. What are you afraid of? I am in per-

fect Health. Every Thing bodes us a favourable Campaign. We are almost sure of Victory. Cease your Alarms, my dear Spouse ! I am sensible of your Tenderness ; I love you to the Extent of your Wishes. Love, and a Husband's Fidelity, have the most engaging Charms, and afford the sweetest Consolation to your Sex. Hark ! The Drums now beat, and the Trumpets sound, *March !* Glory calls me forth. The Affections of my Heart rest upon you : It is you alone that does possess it intirely. What will you have more ? Farewell, my dearer Half ; every Thing, I hope, will succeed to the Wish of, &c.

Letter from a Lady, wishing a happy New Year to another.

MADAM,

The indispensable Law I have imposed on myself, of having Recourse to every Means, that may gain and preserve to me the Friendship of your Person, which I esteem infinitely, engages me to present my Compliments to you at the Beginning of this Year. But you must believe, that the usual Policy in such Compliments does in no wise influence this Motion. It is from the best and sincerest Heart in the World, that a thousand Wishes proceed for your perfect Health ; for the greatest Trouble that could happen to me in Life, would be to hear that any Thing was wanting to your Happiness. Save me this Uneasiness by taking as much Care as possible of yourself. You may also be assured of being possessed of the Esteem and inviolable Friendship of her, who shall be eternally, Madam, &c.

A N S W E R.

MADAM,

I was on the Point of writing to you, to wish you a happy New Year, when I received your obliging Letter. As you had the Goodness to prevent me, be pleased, Madam, to accept from me, in Return, the same Happiness and the same Advantages you have wished me :

And,

And, as I am persuaded, your Good-nature has excluded Custom from having a Share in your Wishes, I desire you would do me the same Justice, and believe, that I am as much interested in the Preservation of your Health, as you are of mine. Besides, I esteem infinitely more the Honour of your Friendship, than all that is agreeable in the World, which is nothing to me in Comparison of the Pleasure I receive, when I have the Advantage of subscribing myself, without Reserve, Madam, &c.

On the same Subject, from one Friend to another.

DEAR FRIEND,

My ardent Desire's to make you more and more sensible of the Friendship I have for you, do not permit me to defer longer writing to you, that I may wish you the Pleasures of this Time of Festivity, and the happy Beginning of a Year accompanied by every Thing that may contribute to the Completion of your Desires, and to make Life agreeable. If you are willing I should taste, without an Allay of Bitterness, the Sweets that are inseparable from our reciprocal Union, be careful of your Health, which is as dear to me as my own; and be persuaded, that I cannot have a greater Joy, nor more solid Contentment, than seeing you reckon a long Series of Years, that I may the longer have the Happiness of convincing you how much I am, in Sincerity of Heart, &c.

Letter of Felicitation from a Lady to a Gentleman newly married.

SIR,

I take the Liberty to felicitate you on your Marriage with Miss —————. You are now arrived, no Doubt, at the Summit and full Extent of your Wishes, in the Company of Her, whom you so ardently sought after. Your Constancy indeed was put to some severe Trials, and you had Reason to be sensible,

fible, that there are no Roses without Thorns; After so many Difficulties, you now enjoy the Glory of possessing a Person, whose Merit is above all Praise. Permit me, Sir, to present here my Compliments to that charming Spouse ; and believe that I am, in Transports of the most perfect Joy, both of her and you, the most humble, &c.

Letter of Complaint, from a young married Lady, to her Mother, against the ill Conduct of her Husband.

DEAR MOTHER,

You was right to tell me, that I should repent of my Marriage, by suffering myself to be too easily seduced by the Appearances of Good-nature and Behaviour in my Husband, during the Time I yet enjoyed my dear Liberty. For, having followed the Motions of my own capricious Fancy, I suffer all that can be imagined from a Husband, who spends his Time in a continued Scene of Rioting and Debauchery. His Health, which he exhausts and destroys in a Way to lay him soon in his Grave, affects me infinitely more than the Expences he is at. In this melancholy Situation I have Recourse to you, dear Mother, to beg you would write to him. I know, as he has a particular Respect for your Person, he will pay a great Deference to any Thing you shall say to him. Do not refuse me this Favour, for my Comfort. I beg also you would be persuaded that I am, with all the Tenderness and Obedience I am capable of, Your, &c.

A N S W E R.

DEAR DAUGHTER,

If your Marriage makes you uneasy, you have no Reason to complain, because you would marry, contrary to my Inclination, a young Man, too well known for his ill Conduct. I always thought that you would pass your Time very uncomfortably, and that you would not have that Satisfaction with him you imagined.

ed. I have wrote to him, to let him know, that, if he persists in his debauched Course of Life, I will certainly send for you Home. I hope my Letter will have its wished-for Effect. Torment yourself no longer. On your Side endeavour as much as possible to reclaim him with Kindness. The Way of Patience is the surest to induce him to a Reformation. Send me an Account of all that may happen, and believe, that I am, from my Heart, Your, &c.

LETTER from a BROTHER to a SISTER, with a Present sent to her.

DEAR SISTER,

Knowing that you take great Delight in Snuff-boxes, and that you often change them, I send you one of a quite new Fashion. When you are tired of seeing it round, you may reduce it into a Square. If this Form does not please you, you may lay it into a Shell, or an Oval: So that in this Box you will find the Secret of gratifying your Curiosity. You must touch the Springs very gently, for Fear of breaking them. Pray keep it for my Sake, and let no-body have it. If I had any Thing more precious, I would make you a Tender of it with the same Pleasure, and the same Satisfaction, that I say I am most affectionately, &c.

A N S W E R.

DEAR BROTHER,

I am infinitely obliged to you for your handsome Snuff-box. All who have seen it, have acknowledged it to be of a very particular Taste, and have admired the Nicety of the Miniature, the more curious, as it assumes four different Forms, without spilling the least Grain of Snuff. I wish I had something to send you in Acknowledgement of so fine a Present; but we have nothing here that can come up to the Prettiness of this Piece of Ingenuity. Accept, if you please, of

I my

my good Disposition, which, I hope, will always be the same, to entertain for you the sincere Friendship, with which I am, &c.

Letter of Condolence from one Lady to another.

MADAM,

Whatever I could mention to you in my Letter, to express my Sorrow, is not to be compared with what passes in the Bottom of my Heart; for, if on one Side, the Loss of your dear Husband afflicts me, on the other, I am not less concerned to learn, that you devote yourself to immoderate Grief, whereby you go the fair Way to follow him soon, who is the Cause of our common Distress. Spare me, Madam, this Subject of Vexation; by stopping the Flow of your Tears. Pray, be comforted, for the Sake of your Friends. The Lord has taken from you what he gave you; do not refuse him a Sacrifice that pleases him. A Moment's Reflection on the Vicissitude of earthly Things will be sufficient to calm and compose your Mind. If I knew of a more salutary Remedy, I would recommend it to you with the same Zeal, I am influenced with in being, &c.

A N S W E R.

MADAM,

I am infinitely obliged to you for sympathising with me in my Affliction, and for all the Motives you propose to me, in order to mitigate my Sorrows. I have reflected on the End of human Beings, who are born only for Dying; but what have all these Reflections amounted to? Not one was powerful enough to console me for the Loss of a Husband, who loved me so tenderly. If my Sighs admit of any Intermission, it is to oblige you not to be grieved so much on my Account. I will endeavour to use Violence against myself, that I may answer your good Intentions. Pray to God to give me Strength to bear up against the Weight of this heavy

heavy Calamity. None can have a more affectionate Regard, dear Madam, for your Kindness, than, &c.

Letter of Condolence and Consolation from a Gentleman to a Lady, on the Death of her Husband.

MADAM,

You would e're now have received a Letter from me, if I thought you in a Condition to read it. But, indeed, I hitherto reputed you so justly taken up with regretting your Loss, that I made it a Point of Conscience to interrupt you, and believed, that, without depriving you of a particular Satisfaction, I ought not to attempt making the least Diminution of your Sorrows. Now, as you are in some Measure at Leisure to restrain the Overflow of your Tears, and to collect your Spirits, which have been dissipated by the Novelty of this Accident; it is Time, that, by a Testimony of mutual Sympathy, I should make void the ill Opinion you might entertain of my Silence, and withal convince you, that, if some have been more diligent in deplored your Affliction, they have not surpassed me at least in the Reality of feeling it. I must confess, Madam, that nothing could be more agreeable to me, than to have it in my Power to do something for your Consolation. Your Misfortune stands in need of it; your Qualities invite the whole Circle of your Acquaintance to charge themselves with it; and my Esteem for you in particular seems to command it. What hinders me, is, that I believe there is not Persuasion enough in the finest Words in the World to soften so doleful a Necessity, as that you are now reduced to, of never seeing more what you formerly saw with so much Pleasure. I know, that, on such Occasions, one of the principal Reasons alledged is the happy Condition of those for whom we are afflicted. But can I make so indifferent an Estimate of your Merit, or of the Love your late Husband bore you, as to doubt, that, in the Midst even of eternal Beatitude, he does not cast an Eye upon the

Earth, and testify, with a Sort of Sigh, that the Joys of Heaven are not so dear to him, as not to look back at and remember the Glory he enjoyed in possessing you ? I will not deny, in the Company he now is, but that the Delights he tastes are infinite. But I am sensible, Madam, his Delights in your Company were incomparable. I see therefore no Probability of an Al-lay for your Distress in the Consideration of his Felicity ; and to tell you, that, in Regard to what is ordained by irrevocable Laws, the only Expedient is to dispose ourselves for suffering them ; I place you at so great a Distance from what is common, that I cannot entertain you with such vulgar Language. I lost several Things, which, perhaps, I was deprived of, to punish me, for loving them too ardently. But, all the Remonstrances that could be made to me having never been of any Manner of Service, I should be unjust to require of you a Resolution I could not obtain from myself. Time, which wears away all Impressions, and puts a Period to all Things, has been my Remedy ; and, undoubtedly, Madam, will be yours, whatever Effort your Obstinacy may contrive to hinder it. The Progress is slow, but the Success is infallible. Contribute to it as much as lies in your Power. I do not mean, that you should forget your Husband. The Obligations you are under to his Family, are too well known to me to give you so bad an Advice, and you are too wise to receive it. What I aim at is, that you would keep your Memory from dwelling upon Objects that may represent him to you. A melancholy Humour easily takes deep Root in the Imagination that entertains it. When this Humour begins to prey upon your Spirits, cast it from you, and admit only that Sort which may agreeably amuse. Especially, Madam, be careful to reap this Advantage from your Loss, that Fortune, who has surprised you, may find you better prepared for the future. You are young, and consequently may yet live a Number of Years. It is probable, this is not the last

Conflict

Conflict you will be engaged in with her. Convince her, that, if she has gained an Advantage over you, it ought not so much to be ascribed to her Strength, as to your Remissness ; and that, when you are on your Guard, her Attacks cannot be so successful. Consider in your Misfortune what you always made slight of in that of others. That Glass is not so brittle as what appears most solid and firm in the Prosperity of Mankind ; and that all the Names of Shadow, Dream, Wind, and Smoke, which we usually give to this miserable Life, are Titles too glorious, and Comparisons too elevated, to express its Instability. Here may you hold, and here will I fix you, desiring you, at the same Time, to have Recourse to the Assistance of God, which will not fail to smooth the rugged Path before your Feet, and extricate you from all your Difficulties. I implore for you this Assistance with my whole Heart ; and do intreat you, Madam, that I may always have a Place in your Esteem and good Wishes, as, &c.

*Letter to a Brother, in a foreign Country, from his Sister,
to acquaint him of their Mother's Death.*

MY DEAR BROTHER,

What shall I tell you ? How will you be able to bear the fatal News of the Death of our much honoured and dearest Mother ? Whose Loss is to me more bitter than Death, and will plunge you, I fear, into the deepest Sorrow. But the other Night she called me to her Bed-side, and, taking me by the Hand, said, " My dear Child, I am just going to leave you. A few Hours will bear me to the World of Spirits. I willingly resign you, my dear Charge, and your Brothers, if they are yet alive, to the Care of a good God, who will always befriend the Virtuous. I rejoice, you are of that Number. If you continue, as you have set out, you cannot fail of being happy. When you have an Opportunity to write to your Brothers, or shall see them, tell them, I died with them on my Heart, left

them a Mother's Blessing, and had no higher Wish on Earth, than to hear they were wise and good. I hope they will return to you, and Heaven make you happy in each other. Farewell, my dearest Child ! May Heaven preserve you wise and good, and, when you drop a Tear to the Memory of your loving Mother, be excited by it to imitate whatever you thought good in her. Oh ! Farewell — !” With these Words, the dear Woman resigned her Soul into her Maker's Hands, and smiled in the Agony of Death. Oh ! my dear Brother, Grief overwhelms me, I can add no more, but that I long exceedingly to see you : That will be my only Cordial, to alleviate the heavy Loss of your affectionate Sister, &c.

LETTER to divert a sick FRIEND from his impatient and peevish Temper.

SIR,

Shall I say that you shew too much of the womanish Mind in your Affliction ? If you was always happy, you would be placed in some Degree above the Condition of Man. Adversities are common to every body : And those who fly from them, are equally subject to them with others. Perhaps, it would be agreeable to you, if the Winter did not come in its Order, or if it brought Cold and Frost only for those in a Fever. You would like better the Heat of Summer, if, ripening the Fruits of your Gardens, it did not make the Flowers fade ; so that, if Nature was to fashion over again the World, and was to abide by your Advice, she must join Autumn with Spring, and Flowers with Fruits, to make us hope and enjoy at the same Time. But it seems the World was made on this Condition, that all Things should sometimes present us with a good, and sometimes with a bad Aspect. The Sea, after a Tempest, treats of Peace with the Ships on it. The Winds heighten the Beauties of the Earth, and the same Winds destroy many fine Things ; they tear down Trees, and fear

fear not to ravish them of their Honour. Day brings us Night, and we never see but a Part of the Heavens. Imagine then, that, as War is a Preparation to Peace, your Illness opens a Way to Health. For my Part, I hope it will soon reinstate you in your former Pleasures, and that it will let you live as others do. In the mean Time, comfort yourself with the Thought, that Heaven has granted you the Virtues of an Age, whereof you have experienced the Troubles; and that the Candour of moral Beauty supplies the Place in you of that which silvers the Head of old Men. In short, you labour under no Indispositions but what Nature has subjected Kings to, by giving them a Body. The most contagious of Diseases has not spared Emperors, and the fragrant Odours that issued from the Sweat of *Alexander*, did not render him immortal. Great Men have been seen depressed under the Effort and Violence of Pain; and, if even Virtue had a Body, she would, perhaps, be as sickly as you. Thus it is, my Imagination would console me, if I were in your Place; and, by lulling my Soul into its usual Repose, I would endeavour, without holding Consultations with Sooth-sayers and Conjurers, to recover my Health. Our Humours, the chief domestic Enemies we have, should be laid under a certain Regulation, and kept in Peace, that we might enjoy Peace ourselves. I should never be so fool-hardy, as to invite and challenge a Disease, which we cannot beat without a Second, and without the Help of a Physician, who never offers his Assistance as a Friend, but as in Prize-games, for the Profit he expects. I must leave you at Rest, and, advising you to take as much of it as your Pains may permit you, it will not be amiss also to banish from your Thoughts the greatest Cause of Disgust that can happen to you, which is adding to the Length of your Illness that of a Letter, whereby I must be insupportable, though I am, indeed, your, &c.

LETTER to a virtuous LADY, on her ill State of Health.

MADAM,

You have made sufficient Trial, whether Sickness is preferable to Health. It is, indeed, a doleful Thing to see one's self so often subject to Disorders, that excite every Thing within us to a Kind of Revolt. Yet we must kiss the Hand that sends them, and be resigned to every Thing that comes from Heaven, were it the ravaging Force of Thunder to reduce us to Ashes. This is a Tribute we owe Nature, as being her Subjects. We may always turn Matters to some Account with a little Patience. Patience is a Virtue that deceives our Inquietudes, charms our Displeasures, mitigates our Pains, and gives Time to our Courage to arm itself against all the Attacks of Sickness. Here, indeed, you may be ready to reply, that it is very easy to speak to those who are not deaf and dumb; and to judge of Colours with those who are not blind; and that one may speak with a good Grace of a Shipwreck, when in Port and out of Danger. But let not this Fancy deprive us of that of being intirely cured: Though our Physician is in perfect Health himself, he may prescribe very good Remedies; and one must be a very bad Philosopher, or Politician, to say, that a besieged Town ought rather to surrender to the Enemy, than accept of Succours from abroad, because those who offered it were at Liberty. For my Part, if I was in Darkness, I would not refuse a Torch to light me, though it were that of Love, which does not see a Wink.

You are not, I must suppose, ignorant of that Order of Providence, whereby the Friends of God are not always under the most favourable Aspects of Fortune, and that, in Appearance, nothing but Misfortunes await them in human Society. It seems that the Sun, which equally shines upon the whole World, pushes forth his Beams in fine Days only for the Wicked, and

pours

pours down the Rage of stormy Weather on the Good. The Air breathed by the former, as sweet as was that of the terrestrial Paradise, is, in Regard to the latter, overspread with Clouds, and pregnant with Tempests. The Waters that bubble up for the Unjust into crystal Fountains, and the Streams that purl in their Gardens, sporting as it were in festive Dance, gather into Hail, and form Torrents to destroy the Inheritance of the Just. The Earth seems unfriendly in this Respect, that she affords those Worldlings a Profusion of Delights, and refuses Necessaries to those who follow a contrary Road to them. She bestows on these Diamonds, Pearls, Perfumes, and all the Favours and Rarities she produces; whilst Poisons, Serpents, and other Horrors of Nature, are the Portion of those who, acknowledging the first Author of all these Productions, keep them from being overwhelmed by a second Deluge. She has even suffered herself to be embowelled for adorning the Fingers and Neck of a Prostitute, and has not hidden the Iron Tyrants have used for exercising their Cruelties, and making Martyrs.

Ask of God, why Man, whom he has made the Master of all his Works, and the true Portrait of his Divinity, begins his Life in Misery, without the Guilt of any other Crime, than being born, and having seen the Light of Day? Why this Prince of Creatures, who ought to rule over all that is not God, appears to be beneath all that is not Man? It seems that Nature rather acts by him as a Step-mother, than as a fond indulgent Parent. Trees shoot above the Earth with their Trunk and Leaves, and find their Nourishment without stirring out of the same Place: Animals so soon as born have their Weapons of Defence: Birds know the Art of Flying, and Fishes of Swimming: But Man knows nothing without Study; no, not even to speak, and to perform the other necessary Functions of Life, unless instructed by and under the Guidance of a skilful Hand.

So it is that God treats those he loves, as if he was willing to shew them, that, every Thing being contrary to them on Earth, every Thing will be propitious to them in Heaven ; that the Accidents and Crosses of this Life pave the Way for them to the Glory of the other, and that the War wicked Men wage against them, excites them to desire with more Ardour the Peace and tranquil State of the Blessed. God, I may say, has placed us on a Kind of Balance, in which he has made our Body to weigh down, that he may raise our Soul on high. Virtue is never oppressed with Sickness ; she sings, if we will, in the burning Heat of a Fever, as the three Children in the fiery Furnace ; and he who found a safe Harbour in the Belly of a Fish, is a sufficient Proof that she cannot suffer Shipwreck. But, to shew her universal Power, Tygers and Lions lay down their natural Ferocity to pay her Homage, in spite of those who animate them to her Destruction. Some have been of Opinion, that the Stars feed upon the Vapours of the Earth, and what deceived them, is, that, seeing them covered with Clouds, they imagined they attracted them upwards for their Nourishment. So it is with the Just, who are the Light of the World. It seems they cannot live without being constantly overshadowed with Ailments : Their Actions excite Laughter in the Wise of the World ; but, though they are obscured on the Side of Heaven, they are like those Angels Painters give only Face and Wings to : All the Parts of their Bodies are distempered ; they have nothing healthy but the Face, where Virtue appears with the most engaging Charms ; and, when they have no Motion but by the Help of another, their Desires have Wings that waft them above the Stars. They burn with two Fires ; their Body with a Fever, and their Soul with that Love, which consumes the Seraphins : Their Blood cannot be heated to the Degree their Heart is ;

which

which makes them utter Praises to God, which might well be chanted in Paradise by the Mouth of the Blessed. Without thinking of it, Madam, I have drawn your Picture for you, and I have found the Roses, you give Birth to from the Prickles of your Pain. It must, indeed, be confessed, that the Bed you was confined to, was much softer than a Cross; that the Medicines you took from the Hands of your Friends, were more agreeable than Gall and Vinegar; and that your Head-ach was not so insupportable as a Crown of Thorns. It must not be doubted, but that those dewy Damps, the Pores of our Bodies exsude in Illness, are often more pleasing to God than the Fumes of Frankincense; and that the leanest Victims seem to him of sweeter Odour, than the Fat of Bulls the Priests formerly offered to him in Sacrifice. Pains, however, are never so violent, but they leave us at Liberty to call Heaven to our Assistance, and to have a Second to maintain the Combat. The primitive *Christians* spoke to God on Gridirons, Racks, and Wheels. It was for Eternity they fought, and the Reward was worthy of their Conflict. Another Time, Madam, I shall be less troublesome to you; but, if I have been a long Time silent for Fear of disturbing you, you ought to pardon me this Sally, which may not be disagreeable to you, considering the Subject I have enlarged upon, and the Friend that presents it, with the most ardent Desire of being, Madam, &c.

Letter of Consolation to a Friend, on his Disgrace.

SIR,

If I had not a perfect Knowledge of the Vigour of your Mind, I should have a much deeper Sense of the Misfortune that has happened to you, and should with more Care seek for Reasons to console you. But Philosophy has already cured a Wound that would have been mortal to another; and you have given sufficient Proof that none but dastardly Spirits expect their Cure

from Length of Time. What another would have called an insupportable Exile, was only for you a happy Passage from Prison to Liberty ; what would have put Complaints and Blasphemy in another's Mouth, has not occasioned the least Change in your Face : And it may be now said, that your Enemies could not have punished you more cruelly than by treating you with less Rigour. Their Hatred is more glorious to you than their past Respect, and all the Artifices they have had Recourse to for hurting you, are honourable Proofs of your Virtue, and irreproachable Witnesses of their Perverseness. A Woman cannot repute herself chaste, unless she is so both in Mind and Body. A Soldier does not deserve the Name of Valiant, who never saw Sieges and Battles, but on painted Walls ; and a Man wrongfully usurps the Quality of Sage, who has not given Proofs of a generous and noble Heart in adverse Fortune. A Mariner takes Pleasure in steering a Ship, whilst favourable Gales swell her Sails ; but when the Heavens and Sea conspire to destroy him ; when, on whatever Side he casts his Eyes, Objects of Horror and Despair hover round about ; there are but few Pilots that would not let go the Helm, and abandon their Fortune and Life to the Mercy of the Tempest. In like Manner, when all Things smile upon us, Resolutions against Calamities that cannot happen, are easily taken, and Remedies for unfehl Pain are easily thought of. But when our Pompa is once vanished, and when those who adored us in the Morning, think it criminal to salute us in the Evening, we yield up our Arms to the Enemy we had despised. As our Combat, so is our Victory in Fancy ; and we resemble those who, vaunting their Bravery in a Parlour, lose their Heart the Moment they find themselves in a Field of Battle. This Weakness, in my Opinion, proceeds from our slender Knowledge of true Felicity ; for if a Man, who sees all his Designs under the Guidance of Prospe-

rity, did not suffer himself to be dazzled by the Splendor of his present Fortune; if, in the Enjoyment of Pleasures, and the Applause of those that wait upon him, he considered that he sails on a faithless Sea; and that the inconstant Goddess, who heaps Glory and Grandeur upon him, is as much destitute of Reason as her Hatred is: There is no Doubt, but that he would be less attached to the pretended good Things he possesses, and consequently their Loss would give him less Uneasiness. But our Opinion makes this Estimate of Things; all that gratifies our Senses is infinitely amiable; and, as if our Sight and Mind were circumscribed by the same Bounds, what is beyond the Reach of one, cannot gain the Esteem of the other. Children would rather have a Diamond taken from them than their Play-things, because such Objects are proportioned to the Weakness of their Judgment, and they are not capable of knowing the Value of any Thing more precious. And so it is that the Loss of Rest and Liberty, Treasures more valuable than all that the Court can feed our Ambition with, does not affect us. Thus; we violate without Fear the sacred Laws of Piety, to content our irregular Passions; and what ought to draw from our Eyes Tears of Blood, finds us insensible as Blocks of Marble. This Discourse does not in the least regard you, Sir; and, as a beautiful Woman would be in the Wrong to take Offence, if Ugliness was blamed in her Presence, I presume that these Invectives against the Weakness of the Generality of Mankind will not be disagreeable to you: You, whom the Storm had not in the least astonished; you, who did receive the News of your Disgrace with the same cheerful Countenance you did that of your Promotion to the eminent Post of Honour you so long filled with Dignity. Truth dreads Grandeur, and, as a bashful Virgin, cannot endure to mingle with the Company of an insolent Fortune. Flatterers are Shadows inseparable from

from those who may succour them in their Necessities, and sometimes Men of the greatest Integrity, fearing that the Liberty of Speech may be either dangerous or unserviceable to those it regards, content themselves with not approving Faults without blaming them. So that those who are in elevated Posts, in a Condition of hurting, and obliging much, know the last what concerns them. But when a Person is neither influenced by Fear nor Hope, if they receive Praises from him, there will be no Room to suspect Flattery. For what other Consideration, than that of powerful Truth, could oblige us to defend the Actions of a Man, who is no longer capable of acknowledging the Favour, whose Company is contagious, and Friendship suspected? Rejoice then, Sir, to see so great a Diversity of Minds agree in the Esteem of your Virtue. Bless a Misfortune which heaps as much Glory upon you, as it covers your Enemies with Shame. Take a View of their Shipwreck from a safe Harbour, and believe that the Part the People take in your Disgrace, punishes their Perfidy with sufficient Rigour. And indeed, tho' your Modesty might be offended at it, it must be confessed, that, 'till you had sat at the Helm of Affairs, there was no Servant, who preferred, with so much Courage, the Interests of his Master to those of his own Family; in whom Knowledge, Experience, and Fidelity were more happily united; and who, amidst so many Precipices, knew how to walk so upright, and resist, with so much Glory, both Menaces and Promises. But a Tongue, to speak worthily of your Praises, ought to be more eloquent than mine; and a Soul, to suffer them, less enamoured of Modesty than yours. I must therefore conclude this Letter, yet protest to you, that nothing shall hinder me for the future to declare myself your Servant; that, whenever an Opportunity offers, I shall render to your Virtue the Testimony it deserves; and, that, though not powerful enough to reinstate you in your Fortune, I
shall,

shall, at least, have sufficient Courage to blame openly the Perfidy of those who have ruined it.

Letter of Thanks from a Gentleman to a Lady, for the good Offices she rendered him during his Disgrace.

MADAM,

My Misfortunes being so great as to deprive me of the Pleasure of seeing you, permit me to take the Liberty of writing to you, that I may have the Satisfaction to assure you, that the Troubles I am involved in, have not made me lose Sight of your kind Offices. It is in Afflictions true Friends are known; but I had no Reason to prove you by this Touchstone. I found you so ready to oblige me on so many other Occasions, that my greatest Displeasure is to be separated from you without serving you, and without making myself worthy of the Honour of your Friendship. You cannot say on what Account you have assisted me, unless it be by a pure Motive of Generosity. Fortune punishes me very severely for a very slight Fault; but I may say, that I have still less deserved your Good-will than my Disgrace. I persuaded myself that it would not continue long, since you was pleased to take upon you the Care of my Affairs; but my Apprehensions increase daily with the Power of my Enemies. In the Situation I am in, I have no Reason to be in Dread of any Thing, but the Loss of your Remembrance, which would affect me with deeper Concern than that of my Fortune. Would to God I could thank you by Word of Mouth, and shew you, setting aside every other Testimony of Gratitude, a Face, on which the Sense of your Benefits is painted in as lively Colours, as that of my Sorrow! But, since I am cut short of this Hope, be satisfied with this melancholy Farewell, and be assured, that, in what Part soever of the World I seek my Fortune, in the Midst of Troubles and Anxieties, I shall always preserve the Memory of your Goodness,

ness, the only Thing that still obliges me to set a Value on Life, in the Hopes that God will not permit me to remain ungrateful to you, and that he will put it in my Power to convince you, some Time or other, by infallible Proofs, that I am, Madam, &c.

LETTER to a FATHER, on the Loss of all his CHILDREN.

SIR,

The Reasons must be strong and cogent that can comfort a Man in great Affliction ; and, for my Part, not being able to produce any of sufficient Weight, I must leave the Task to others who are better able to acquit themselves of it. My principal Design is to interrupt that profound Silence which has made you so solitary, that it may be said Death had robbed you of your Speech the same Time it did your Children of Life. The last you lost, and who only saw Light to receive the Sanctification of a *Christian* and to be placed in the Number of the Elect, has, no Doubt, depressed you with great Sorrow, by putting you in Mind of all the rest, and by renewing the first Tears you shed on their common Sepulchre. Now, what would you say if I upbraided instead of comforting you ? You loved your Children, and you lament their hard Fate : But should one be tormented through Love ? Grief has this bad Quality in it, that it is not only unprofitable, but always ungrateful ; since, after all, we experience nothing by it but Uneasiness, and it deprives us of the Thoughts of the Satisfaction we received.

How many great Personages have seen their Children die without the least Alteration of Countenance ! How many have dried up their Tears at the Fire that reduced their Bodies to Ashes ! And how many, after paying their last Duty at the funeral Pile, have gone directly to the Senate-house, there to accuse Vice and defend Virtue ! But are not you daily going the Road your Children have gone before you ? Have a little Patience, and you will see them again, never more to lose them.

them. Don't be uneasy, you are running after them ; and Time, which must put an End to your Sorrows, is leading you as fast as it can to the Place of their Abode. Are not you troubled they have got before you ? To complain of their being dead is to complain that they are too soon arrived at Port. Once come into the World, nothing more remains than to die ; and our Entrance into this Life is only for going out of it. Of all that can happen to us, nothing is more certain than Death ; and we complain of a Thing no one was ever yet deceived in. You tell me your Children died too young : But do you know, that those who live longest sometimes live less than others ? Experience shews, that those who reckon the greatest Number of Years, reckon also the greatest Number of Crosses and Misfortunes. Life in itself can neither be deemed a Good nor an Evil ; but it is rather that which forces us to make Trial of both.

It is true, your Children might be virtuous in the highest Degree, by following your Example and Instructions ; but they might also follow the greatest Number, which is not that of the Good. In considering the vicious Inclinations and ill Courses now frequently pursued by Youth, Children are rather become Subjects of Fear than Hopes. However, do not imagine that I would have you become senseless and immoveable like a Statue, or that you should look upon the Death of any of your Family with the same Eyes you would that of an indifferent Person. To see that Bloom extinguished in the little Mouths that prattled to you with so much Pleasure ; to see those Eyes closed that gazed so tenderly on you ; and those delicate Hands cold as Clay that applauded you with so much Love ; to have such a Sight before you, and to possess your Mind at the same Time in Tranquillity, far from shewing Virtue, would prove you destitute of all Sensibility.

When Tears ease and comfort us, we may let them flow without Shame ; we must permit and not command

mand them to gush out: We must drop them for the Sake of Affection, and never through mere Decorum: We see Women equally weep by Nature, and the most insensible by Imitation. It must indeed be a signal Piece of Folly to do so by Example, and to obey any other Emotions than those of our Heart. It is sufficient to be afflicted for ourselves, without being so for others. When Grief is not an Hypocrite, it always keeps itself concealed within, and does not appear abroad, for Fear of being diminished: That which seeks after Spectators shews itself on Theatres, but is never real. Some court Reputation by their Tears, but the Imposture is soon discovered.

There is no Virtue that deprives us of our Senses; the Wise suffer Grief and Pain as others, but their Minds give Admission to, and behave in supporting them in a quite different Manner to the Vulgar: Storms that hurt a Pilot do not therefore make him less courageous. Yet it must be confessed that there is a greater Pleasure in making a Shew of Virtues, and using Moderation, in good than adverse Fortune: Virtues shine with greater Lustre in Opulence than Poverty; Gold enhances the Value of a Diamond; and it is easier to do Things well in the Midst of Roses than Thorns, in one's Country than in Banishment.

This is, Sir, what I had to say to you on your Loss, and on your Virtue, which are incomparable: The one is infinitely lamented, the other is infinitely admired. Your Constancy is not less astonishing than your Misfortune; and I know some who, seeing you suffer, are more touched with Envy than Compassion, and who perhaps would not decline such an Accident as your's, were they sure of appearing so courageous and reasonable as you are. This is the Sentiment of Joy that mingles with my Concern on your Account, and which, by moderating it, has left me the Liberty of performing here for you the good Offices of your, &c.

LETTER

LETTER to a FRIEND, on the Inconveniences of keeping GRAND COMPANY, and not minding his own Affairs.

SIR,

It is no easy Matter to find Comfort and Satisfaction in the wild Sort of Life I am afraid you lead, and which the Connections you have sought after with Persons of Quality, I must think, have forced you into. To be happy, your Mind must be quiet and easy, a Thing impossible in a Life of Trouble and Confusion.

Men who have great Employments are so taken up with the Affairs of others, that they have scarce Time to mind their own; and they live for the Public rather than for themselves. The Magistrate spends the whole Day in inquiring into the Merits of the several Causes he is to report: The Minister is over-burdened with Affairs of State: The Officer spends his whole Life in the military Articles that are committed to his Care: In short, every Station to which Men are advanced above their Fellow-creatures, and which obliges them to labour for the public Good, takes off all their Attention to their own Affairs. What they are forced to allot to those of others is so much taken from their own; besides, that the Increase of Duty is the Increase of Fatigue, and too often of Vexation.

Persons, who have only their own Affairs to mind, have an Advantage of acquiring Happiness with much more Ease than those who have the Public to take Care of. A Man, who carries but two Pounds Weight on his Shoulders, can sooner arrive at the End of the Race than he that carries the Weight of three Hundred. It is not impossible that he who is incumbered with so heavy a Load may arrive at the Goal; but with how much more Ease could he do it without such a monstrous Burden! Just so a Man who is employed in the Affairs of the Public, or those of War, may at length, be they ever so perplexed, find some Time to think of his.

his own private Concerns; but he has two Hundred and ninety-eight Difficulties to surmount, out of three Hundred, more than the Person who has nothing to do with the Public.

There are Persons, who form three Parts in four of those we call Men of Fashion, who, though they have no Employment, are as unconcerned about their own Affairs as if they were obliged to govern the State: Their Passions put them into as much Disorder as Perplexity does the others, and they pass their Lives in perpetual Confusion: Instead of looking at Home, they don't know themselves, but act always without Reflexion: Avarice, Jealousy, Love, Hatred, Revenge, are the sole Incentives of their Actions; and they abandon their Minds to the Impressions of the most dangerous Passions. There are many who indulge themselves in Debauchery, and think that in good Cheap they shall find that Happiness which escapes their Pursuit. After they have been Gluttons at those great Tables, where they were at a Loss which to chuse in the Variety of Dishes, they appear generally with broken Constitutions, pale and wan Complexions; and their Bodies, worn down by excessive Intemperance, communicate their Dulness to their Souls, and render that spiritual Breath terrestrial and material, which is sufficient of itself to make us happy, if it was undisturbed.

There are many People among the Quality who spend their Lives in forming Desires which they can never gratify, and in envying the Condition of others; nay, they go so far as to hate those they envy, from no other Cause but a jealous Opinion that they are happier than themselves, though they often are not so. These Men are like Travellers, who take to a Road, which, the longer they follow, carries them the farther from the Place they are bound to. Nothing is a greater Obstruction to Mens Happiness than Envy: The more jealous a Man is of another's Happiness, the more miserable he is himself. Every Man that is wise, and seeks

seeks to be happy, ought not only not to be envious of another's Prosperity, but, if he finds what he wished for is above what he can reasonably hope to obtain, he should immediately check his Desires.

Reason requires, that every one should embrace and firmly adhere to what is suitable to him ; but the Voice of Reason cannot be heard in that revelling, noisy State wherein great People live : It must be consulted also before it will speak ; but People seldom think of having Recourse to it when Passions are their Masters, and rule them with as arbitrary a Sway as they do the Hearts of most of our fashionable Gentry.

This Wisdom, my dear Friend, so necessary for the Happiness of Life, is not acquired without frequent and careful Reflexion upon ourselves. Few are of that Fortitude of Mind, or that natural Understanding, as to be able, by a plain and short Meditation, to perform what requires a long and painful Scrutiny. Yet there are a few peculiar Favourites of Heaven, who can do that with Ease which shall cost others a great Deal of Labour ; but the Generality of Mankind, in order to render themselves virtuous, have Need to be very circumspect, and to begin betimes to acquire those Qualities which must be of Service to them as long as they live. The Heart must be stored with good Principles, and the Understanding with Knowledge, before the Passions have vented their Poison on both. The first setting out in Life of the gay Part of Mankind is generally the Cause of their being so far out of the right Way, even in Old-age. The most critical Step, for those who think to be happy among the Quality, is the first they take ; if it be bad, the others are almost always the same. Of this first Step I may say what Boileau has said of Crimes :

Dans le Crime il suffit qu'une fois l'on debute.

Une chute toujours attire une autre chute.

*L'honneur est comme une île escarpée et sans bords,
On n'y remonte plus, quand on est dehors.*

“ The

"The first Act of Wickedness is enough ; for one Transgression brings on another : And Honour is like an Island with a steep Shore, on which there is no Re-landing after it is once quitted."

Last Night I was in a meditative Mood, and it was then, dear Friend, that I threw together these cursory Reflexions for your serious Perusal. Whenever I find you profit by them, it will add, more than you can imagine, to the Satisfaction of, &c.

LETTER to a GENTLEMAN, who desired to know in what Cases it was allowable for Persons to alter their CONDITION.

SIR,

As you always found me ready to comply with your Request, I resolved you should also in the Information you desire concerning the Cases that make it lawful for Persons to alter their Condition. You talked to me much about this Affair already, and you was for establishing the general Maxim, that every one ought to study to be easy in his Station. I have since considered the Matter, and found your Opinion liable to several Exceptions : For, if we are in a Post where Crimes of any Sort are necessary ; if a Man cannot avoid submitting himself to unjust Customs, and being a Tool to the Wickedness of a Prince, the Cabals of a Party, the Misdemeanours of a Leader ; it is then not only lawful, but virtuous, to change one's Condition : And, be the new Station what it will, so long as a Man is not forced to act in it against his Conscience, he will always be happier than in that he quitted. All the Treasures in the World, and the greatest Honours, ought not to make us fond of an Employment that renders us criminal, that gives us Matter of Vexation every Day, and will, some Time or other, deliver us over to Remorse, the more painful, because Repentance for the Faults we have committed will come too late to repair

the

the Evil we have done. The most considerable Advantages are no longer such when they make us abandon Virtue, but they are Evils more pernicious than Plague and Famine.

Men are obliged to remain no longer in their Station than they can be serviceable in it to the Community: When this Station becomes a Matter of Indifference to them, they may leave it; but, when continuing in it tends to the Prejudice of Society, they are under a Necessity of abandoning it. A Man may sometimes keep his Post, regardless of his Tranquillity; but he ought not to continue in it, purely for the Sake of getting Riches. Money is either our Tyrant or our Slave; it tyrannises over the Person, who, either for keeping or acquiring it, is guilty of Dishonesty; but it is the Slave of him who knows how to make a proper Use of it, and can part with it on necessary Occasions without Regret. Every wise Man knows, that it is better Money should obey us than we should obey Money; and he thinks the same with Regard to Stores, Employments, and other Things; the Excellence of which is known only by the Use we make of them.

It is also allowable for a Man to alter his Station, and to think what he wishes to obtain as more happy, if such a Change can be consistent with his Duty. That Magistrate who, weary of the Exercise of his Office, disposes of it, perhaps, for a valuable Consideration, to a Person of known Merit and Abilities, and is desirous of sequestering himself from Noise and Tumult in private Life, cannot be justly censured. He discharges his Obligation to the Community by the Choice of his Successor, and procures himself the desired Satisfaction. The Peasant, who advances himself to the Rank of a Burgher; the Burgher, who turns Merchant; the Father, who accepts of Offices with a View of placing his Children in them; all these are in the Right to alter their Station, it being certain something made them uneasy in that which they quitted. An Endeavour to gratify

tify Desires that are lawful, is an Indication of a Man of Sense.

Health is a very essential Article to the Happiness of Life, and may therefore be deemed one of the Reasons why a Person may change his Condition ; because without Health Life is but a Burden, and Death itself is preferable to Years of Pain. There is nothing so silly as the Sentiments of the *Stoicks* in Regard to Health : According to them, it is not a real Good, as being subject to be destroyed, and having no Security against Attacks from without. By the same Principle, those Philosophers asserted that Health was not a real Good, they pretended that Pain was not an Evil ; because Evil was nothing more or less than a Disagreement with Order : And from these two Principles they concluded, that, as there was no happy State for those who were not endowed with Wisdom and Virtue, so there could be no evil or unhappy one for those who were possessed of Virtue, Wisdom, and Fortitude. Thus, according to the *Stoicks*, a virtuous Man, though fleaed alive, is in a very happy State. *Cicero* has displayed all his Eloquence to prove this Opinion, which indeed is equally foolish and absurd, to be very conformable to Reason and Nature : If we may believe him, he would have been glad to have suffered the severest Tortures ; and one would be tempted to think, that he could have been as easy in a Barrel stuck with iron Spikes as in a Bed of Down.

" No, says he, I never thought the Condition of *Regulus* unhappy, uneasy, or to be pitied ; for the Torments which the *Carthaginians* made him suffer could make no Impression on his Magnanimity, Wisdom, Probity, Constancy, or any other of his Virtues, nor consequently on his Understanding. It was in the Power of his Enemies to lay violent Hands on his Body, and make it suffer what they pleased ; but his Soul, being fortified, and as it were encompassed by so many Virtues, was intirely inaccessible to their Attacks." If *Cicero* had not so far indulged his Imagination,

gination, or if he had a violent Fit of the Gout when he wrote all these fine Things, he would have been sensible that the Soul of the greatest Man, as well as that of a Porter, is forced to participate of the Sufferings of the Body. In vain will such Soul affect to soar above Suffering, and to separate herself, as it were, from the Body : All the great Sentiments she calls that Moment to her Assistance will not hinder her from being subject to the general Laws of Nature, or from sharing in the Pains of the Body.

That a Man, who is a Sufferer, be he ever such a Philosopher, most certainly wishes for an End to the Evil which he endures, is a Truth which none but Madmen or impudent Lyars will deny : Whereas, if such a Man did not consider Trouble or Pain as an Evil, he would not care how long it lasted, but would consider it as an indifferent Thing, which, whether it existed or not, was all one to him. I agree, that Persons of Virtue and Firmness of Mind bear their Misfortunes with more Patience than others ; but, though they endeavour not to be overwhelmed with Grief, and strive to suffer with Constancy what cannot be avoided, they are not the less sensible of the Evil. It is with Pains of the Body as with those of the Mind. A Man loses his Son, his Wife, his Estate, his Friend ; he says to himself every Thing he thinks capable of giving him Comfort ; he fortifies his Mind, that it may not sink under the Pressure of Melancholy ; yet the Loss he regrets touches him to the Quick : He puts a Dressing on his Wound, but it is not cured ; it will bleed a long Time, and perhaps never will be healed. Another has the Stone or Gout ; he suffers exquisite Pain ; he tries every Thing that may give him Ease, or bring about a Cure ; and, if neither is practicable, with the Resignation of a patient Spirit he hopes Death will soon put an End to his Mifery.

If those who were so eminent for their Virtue did not repute the Anguish of the Mind and Pains of the

Body as real Evils ; if their Souls, in the Midst of Torment, could receive no Manner of Harm ; if the Triumphs of their Enemies, and the Injuries and Obloquy they loaded them with, did not disturb their Tranquillity ; if they could bear up under all the Accidents of this mortal Life ; if they despised the Insults of Fortune ; and if, as *Cicero* says, their Virtue formed an impregnable Rampart, which hindered them not only from being vanquished, but so much as shaken ; why were the most renowned of them guilty of Self-murder, to extinguish the Pain they felt, or avoid that they dreaded ? The Shame and Vexation *Cato* suffered, by the Prospect of being subject to *Caesar's* Power, obliged him to put an End to his own Life. This Man, so wise that the Ancients set him up singly against all the Gods, could not bear the Thoughts of seeing his Conqueror. What do all *Cicero's* Arguments avail, when there is a Necessity of putting them to the Test ? They vanish, like all other chimerical Notions : They may be pleasing enough by a Sort of dazzling Lustre, while they are purely speculative ; but, when they come to be reduced to Practice, they appear nothing better than Dreams, or fond Delusions. It must therefore be allowed, that both Reason and Nature prove sufficiently that Pain is an Evil, and Health of Course a very great Good. Without Health it is impossible to be truly happy ; and the greatest Wisdom can be but a small Mitigation of the Sorrow and Pains we feel by its Loss.

Health being then absolutely necessary to the Tranquillity of Life, we may surely be at Liberty to quit a Station that deprives us of it ; because, whatever Care we take in other Respects to be happy in such a Situation, we can never be truly so without Health. What signifies good Chear to a Man who has no Appetite or a bad Digestion ? What signify Riches to one who is bed-ridden, and forced to live on Broths and Water-gruel ? What Advantage does a Person reap from Honours, who has not the Enjoyment of the Pleasures of Society,

Society, and only the poor Comfort to find himself called *Your Lordship* by his Physician, Surgeon, and such of his Family as are appointed to attend him in a tedious Illness? Is the Reputation acquired by a General, an able Magistrate, or an illustrious Scholar, of much Ease to them in a Fit of the Gout? In short, all the good Things of this World become as it were insignificant, and lose three Fourths of their Value without Health, which we cannot be too cautious in preserving, or too diligent in recovering when lost. Nothing can oblige us to continue in a State that robs us of it, but such Motives as may compel us to continue therein, though it be at the Hazard of our Lives. We should prize Honour and Virtue more than Life; and every honest Man dreads Guilt more than Death. The Health we should acquire at the Expence of Pro-bity would not make us happy; for, by gaining one of the Points essential to the Happiness of Life, we must be deprived of another, which is the Testimony of a good Conscience; and the Soul would be a Loser, though the Body were a Gainer; there being no true Happiness without the tranquil State of both.

These Reflexions may, Sir, in some Measure, be sufficient to resolve your Doubts: So that you will not, I hope, take it amiss if I conclude with *Horace*:

*Si quid novisti rectius istis,
Candidus imperti; si non, bis utere mecum.*

“ If you have any Thing better than what I here offer, be free, and let me know it: If not, find your Account in joining in Opinion with, Sir, your, &c.”

LETTER to a GENTLEMAN, giving him a Description of
an Accomplished WOMAN.

SIR,

You know what a Connoisseur in Beauty I am. After a World of painful Researches into the Nature and Properties of Things befitting the Fair Sex, I have at last

hit upon a Female, who has all the Fitness of Female Perfection in her. Be not surprised at this bold Assertion: If you think there is no Reality in what I say, at least permit me to indulge myself with the Fancy of believing it.

Among all the beautiful Ladies I ever saw, if some Things were to be admired, others were not to be touched upon; at least they were such as ought to be disguised with much Art; for, to speak the Truth, it is hard to commend all, and be sincere. I am obliged to *Æmilia*, for leaving me purely in my natural Temper, equally inclined to commend and to keep to the Truth. As she stands not in Need either of Favour or Kindness, I have no Occasion to conceal or flatter. To her it is owing, that I can praise To-day without Complaisance; from her it proceeds, that the most prying Observers lose that malicious Nicety, which is only employed in spying out Faults; and, as she inspires them with other Thoughts, they pass with Satisfaction from their usual Censure to real Approbation.

It is certain, that the greatest Part of Women are more indebted to our Compliments, than to their own Merits, for the Praises they receive from us. *Æmilia* is obliged only to herself, for the Justice done her; and secure, that good Things ought to be said of her; it is her sole Interest to bring Men to a Confession.

And indeed, if her Enemies speak of her, it is not in their Power to betray their Conscience; and they confess, with as much Truth as Anger, the Advantages they are obliged to acknowledge in her: If her Friends enlarge in Commendation of her, it is not possible for them to add any Thing to the Merit which affects them. Thus, the former are forced to submit to Truth, when they would follow the Malice of their Motions; and the others, with all their Friendship, are but barely just to her. She expects then nothing from Inclination, as she apprehends nothing from Ill-will. But, since every one is free to conceal his Opinions,

Opinions, *Æmilia* will have Reason to fear the Malice of Silence, the only Prejudice that Rivals and Enemies can do her. But let me descend, from Generals, to a more particular Description of her Person.

All her Features are regular and agreeable, which but seldom happens ; for it seems, that the Caprice of Nature produces the Agreements of Regularity ; and that complete Beauties, who have always something to make them admired, have rarely the Secret of pleasing. *Æmilia* has sparkling Eyes, her Complexion is delicate and smooth, with the best Mixture of Red and White that can be imagined. Whiteness of Teeth, and Vermilion of Lips, are Expressions too general for a secret and particular Charm, which I cannot describe. Were it not for her, that Symmetry in the lower Part of the Face, wherein the Ancients placed Beauty, would be found no where but in the Idea of some Painter, or in the Description Antiquity has left us : And, as an additional Charm, you may see that her Looks are healthful, sprightly and clear : She is in a good Habit of Body, but such a one as does not make us apprehend her growing fatter.

Her Stature is of a just Height, well proportioned and easy : Her Deportment as far from Constraint, as from that affected Negligence, which spoils a good Carriage. To these I may add a noble Air, a grave but natural Aspect, neither formal nor wild. Her Laughter, Speech, and Actions, are all agreeable and decent.

Her Wit is extensive, without being vast, never losing itself so far in general Thoughts, as not to be able to return easily to particular Considerations ; nothing escapes her Penetration, her Judgment leaves nothing unknown. I cannot say, whether she be more ready at unfolding a Mystery, or forming a sound Judgment upon Things, that appear rather to be secret than mysterious ; knowing equally when to be opportunely silent, and when to speak. In her ordinary Conversation, she says nothing with Study, and no-

thing at a Venture: The least Matters discover Attention, and there appears nothing studied in the most serious; her liveliest Discourses cease not to be exact, and her most natural Thoughts are expressed with a delicate Turn: But she despises those lucky Hits that fall from the Mind without Choice, and without Judgment: They may sometimes excite Admiration, but seldom Esteem.

Throughout her Person, you see something great and noble, which proceeds from a secret Relation between the Air of the Face, the Qualities of the Mind, and those of the Soul.

Naturally she would be too magnificent, but a just Consideration of her Affairs restrains her, and she chuseth rather to confine the Generosity of her Humour, than to fall into a Condition, where she must stand in Need of that of others; resolved not to be beholden to those about her; yet, at the same Time, officious to Strangers, and warm in the Interest of her Friends. Not that these Considerations make her relinquish so noble an Inclination; she only regulates it in the Management of her Fortune: Her natural Temper and her Reason make her disinterested, but not negligent.

Her good Sense and Abilities sufficiently appear in her Management of Affairs, where she engages voluntarily, provided she finds a Prospect of any solid Advantage to be made, either for herself or her Friends. But she hates to act merely out of a Spirit of Restlessness; being equally averse from busy impertinent Stirring, and unactive Laziness, which vainly affects the Name of Tranquillity, to cover a real Carelessness.

Having now, Sir, described for you so many fine Qualities, it is Time to see what Impressions they make on our Souls, and what passes in her own.

She has somewhat majestic, that commands our Respect; somewhat sweet and obliging, that wins our Inclination. She attracts us, she gains us, she binds us fast

fast to her Interest, and we never enjoy the Pleasure of her Company without Desires we cannot express.

To consider what may pass within her, I cannot believe her incapable of the Sentiments she gives : But, as she has no less a Command over herself; than over you, she masters in her own Heart, by Reason, what Respect constrains in yours.

Nature is so feeble in some, that it never desires with Vehemence ; impetuous in others, it breaks out into Transports : Exact in *Æmilia*, it has made the Heart sensible, which ought to be so ; and has given to Reason, which ought to command, an absolute Empire over her Motions.

Happy she ! who complies with the Tenderness of her Sentiments, without influencing the Delicacy of her Choice, or that of her Conduct. Happy she ! who, in a Correspondence established for the Sweetness of Life, contents herself with the Approbation of the better Sort, and her own Satisfaction ; who fears not the Murmurs of the Envious, that are jealous of all Pleasures, and malicious against all Virtues.

We are sensible, by an infinite Number of Examples, that the Mind is blinded by Passion ; and that Love can never be truly said to have established his Power, till he has ruined that of our Reason : Our Admiration of *Æmilia* increases, as our Knowledge becomes more refined ; and that Passion, which always appeared a Specimen of Folly, is here the truest Effect of our Happiness.

The great Enemies of *Æmilia* are those that have a false Knowledge of Things, and her Friends are all that know how to judge with Discretion. Every Man has more or less Friendship for her, according as he is more or less nice ; and he that can discover every Day some new Charms in her, to make him the more in Love with her, is satisfied, that he improves in his Judgment.

Some Persons have no Occasion for so long an Inquiry, and for so slow a Meditation. At first Sight they are touched with her Merit, without knowing it; and feel secret Emotions of Esteem, as well as Inclination for her. Scarce has she spoke a few Words, but they find her the most reasonable Person in the World: No-body ever appeared to them so witty, nor so solid, when, as yet, they know neither her Art in contriving, nor her Manner in conducting. They frame, as it were, by Instinct, the most favourable Thoughts of her Virtue; and, when their Reason is afterwards consulted, instead of lessening the Surprise, it cannot but approve of such happy and just Prepossessions.

Amongst the other Advantages of *Æmilia*, one of the greatest, in my Opinion, is to be always the same, and always pleasing; for we find, that the best Humour becomes at length tiresome; the most fertile Imagination is at last exhausted, and makes you languish with itself; the most animated Conversations either disgust, or weary you. This is the Reason why Women sometimes stand in need of some freakish Pleasantries to stir us up, or else are obliged to mingle something diverting in their Discourse, to revive us. She, whom I describe, pleases by herself alone, and at all Times an eternal Equality never affords us a Quarter of an Hour's Distaste. We are glad, if we can find, with others, one agreeable Hour: We cannot complain of passing one tedious Hour with *Æmilia*. Visit her in any Condition, upon any Occasion, you go to a certain Pleasure, and to an assured Satisfaction.

Her's is not an Imagination that at first surprises, and soon after tires you. Her serious Moments do not make you purchase a solid Conversation, at the Loss of her Gaiety: Her Reason pleases, and her Judgment is agreeable.

I will conclude by a Quality, which ought to be considered before all the rest. She is devout, without Superstition and Melancholy; in no Respect subject to that

that Infirmitv, which fancies Miracles wrought in Favour of itself, and perpetually loses itself in Enthusiasm; an Enemy to those solitary Humours, which insensibly diffuse in the Mind an Hatred of the World, and an Antipathy to Pleasures. She is not of Opinion, that we ought to retire from human Society, to seek God in the Horrors of Solitude. She does not believe, that to disengage one's self from a civil Life, and to break off the dearest and most reasonable Intercourse, is to be united to God, but to be tied down to one's self, and foolishly to pursue one's own Imagination. She is for finding God amongst Men, where his Goodness is most active, and his Providence appears to be more worthily employed; and there she endeavours, by his Assistance, to enlighten her Reason, to perfect her Manners, to regulate her Conduct, both as to the Care of Salvation, and the Duties of Life.

Thus, I have given you, Sir, the Description of a perfect Woman. But you may say, that, as it is impossible to form the Description of a Thing that is not, I have at best given only the Idea of an accomplished Person. Well, let it be so, I would not look for it amongst Men, because there is always wanting in their Commerce something of that Sweetness which we meet in that of Women; and I thought it less impossible to find in a Woman the strongest and soundest Reason of Men, than in Man those Charms and Agreements that are so natural to Women.

If you are not inclined to join me in Opinion, the far greater Part of the Female World will never be for you, and you must content yourself with a few Male Admirers in private, but do not think you can reckon among them your, &c.

LETTER, from a PRECEPTOR, to a young GENTLEMAN, his PUPIL, on the CHOICE of COMPANY.

DEAR SIR,

I must call upon you to use the utmost Caution in the Choice of your Company, a very important Matter in Life, on which your future Happiness greatly depends. I am persuaded, that a Man may better know himself or another, by an exact Observation of the Company he keeps, than by most other Occurrences in Life. I lay it down then as a Law, enforced by no less a Sanction than a Man's Reputation and Happiness, that he never make a vicious Man his Associate. Nor would I contract Friendship with one, whose Bent was to Gaiety and sensual Pleasure ; but rather endeavour to lay the Ground-work of social Commerce in the Conversation of Men of good Sense and Sobriety, which will always be innocent, and generally instructive. Nor is your Youth any Disadvantage to you ; for good Men are ever pleased in forming the tender Mind, where they see a Regard for Virtue, a Love to Goodness, and a Desire to be informed, attended with a cheerful Compliance with their kind Advice ; which, indeed, is only pursuing your own Happiness.

To fit your Behaviour to the social Parts of Life, accept the following Rules : When in Company with your Superiors, be always more ready to hear than speak ; or modestly propose such Questions, as shew you desire to be instructed, and not to wrangle or dispute. Conversing with your Equals, I advise you to keep a strict Guard over all your Expressions, that they may appear to be the Result of sober Thought and Reflection. By such Conduct, you will not only attain the Habits of Wisdom and Prudence, but, I assure you, will gain a Superiority over those you converse with ; who, though they may seem not much inclined to take the Pains of forming their own Minds, yet can easily see when others have ; and will

always attend to what they say with Pleasure, and shew a particular Regard, which the sprightly and gay Part of the World know nothing of. If at any Time you have indulged yourself in the Freedom of Discourse, pass it in Review the next Morning, that, whatever Faults you have committed, you may the next Time mend them. Never once allow yourself the Liberty of what is called pushing about the Bottle too freely. I do not mean by this, you should never drink a Glass of Wine : No, entertain your Friend with a cheerful Countenance ; Chearfulness and Innocence should be inseparable. I have met with a Saying, “ The first Glass for myself, the second for my Friend, the third for my Enemy.” The Application is easy. But, before I have done with strong Liquors, I must tell you, they are a treacherous Evil, which insensibly grows upon thoughtless Persons ; and a constant Use of them, though not so as apparently to intoxicate, destroys all that calm and deliberate Consideration, that mild Behaviour, and steady Prudence, which are absolutely necessary to constitute a worthy and rational Being. For, as Dr. *Sydenham* judiciously remarks, They not only produce the most terrible Complication of Distempers that afflict the Body, but, by mingling with the animal Spirits, disturb the Mind ; and, by volatilising it too much, fill it with vain and frivolous Fancies, instead of Things that are solid ; and so make us Jesters and merry Fellows, instead of wise Men. It will be worth your while to think now and then of these seasonable Hints ; and I hope you will, and withal be convinced, that no one has your Well-being and Improvement in Goodness so much at Heart, as your, &c.

LETTER to a FRIEND, on TIME..

SIR,

You may remember, that, when we last enjoyed the Pleasure of each other's Company, our Conversation was on the mis-spending of so precious a Thing as

Time. I have often since considered the Matter, and found your Reflections equally solid and instructive. Further Thoughts have occurred to me on the same interesting Subject, that may serve as an Appendix to yours; and the Distance of Place will be a sufficient Apology for my committing them to Writing.

It may not improperly be observed, that our Globe seems particularly fitted for the Residence of a Being, placed here only for a short Time, whose Task is to advance himself to a higher and happier State of Existence, by unremitted Vigilance of Caution, and Activity of Virtue.

The Duties required of Man are such as human Nature does not willingly perform, and such as those are inclined to delay, who yet intend some Time to fulfil them. It was therefore necessary, that this universal Reluctance should be counteracted, and the Drowsiness of Hesitation wakened into Resolve: That the Danger of Procrastination should be always in View, and the Fallacies of Security be immediately detected.

To this End all the Appearances of Nature uniformly conspire. Whatever we see on every Side, reminds us of the Lapse of Time, and the Flux of Life. The Day and Night succeed each other, the Rotation of Seasons diversifies the Year, the Sun rises, attains the Meridian, declines, and sets, and the Moon every Night changes its Form.

The Day has been considered as an Image of the Year, and the Year as the Representation of Life. The Morning answers to the Spring, and the Spring to Childhood and Youth; the Noon corresponds to the Summer, and the Summer to the Strength of Manhood. The Evening is an Emblem of Autumn, and Autumn of declining Life. The Night, with its Silence and Darkness, shews the Winter, in which all the Powers of Vegetation are benumbed; and the Winter points out the Time when Life shall cease, with all its Hopes and Pleasures.

He that is carried forward, however swiftly, by a Motion equable and easy, perceives not the Change of Place, but by the Variation of Objects. If the Wheel of Life, which rolls thus silently along, passed on through undistinguishable Uniformity, we should never mark its Approaches to the End of the Course. If one Hour were like another, if the Passage of the Sun did not shew that the Day is wasting, if the Change of Seasons did not impress upon us the Flight of the Year, Quantities of Duration, equal to Days and Years, would glide unobserved. If the Parts of Time were not variously coloured, we should never discern their Departure or Succession, but should live thoughtless of the past, and careless of the future, without Will, and perhaps without Power to compute the Periods of Life, or to compare the Time which is already lost with that which may probably remain.

But the Course of Time is so visibly marked, that it is even observed by the Birds of Passage, and by Nations, who have raised their Minds very little above animal Instinct: There are human Beings, whose Language does not supply them with Words by which they can number four; but I have read of none that have not Names for Day and Night, for Summer and Winter.

Yet it is certain, that these Admonitions of Nature, however forcible, however importunate, are too often vain; and that many, who mark with such Accuracy the Force of Time, appear to have little Sensibility as to the Decline of Life. Every Man has something to do which he neglects; every Man has Faults to conquer, which he delays to combat.

So little do we accustom ourselves to consider the Effects of Time, that Things necessary and certain often surprise us like unexpected Contingencies. We leave the Beauty in her Bloom, and, after an Absence of twenty Years, wonder, at our Return, to find her faded. We meet those whom we left Children, and can

can scarcely persuade ourselves to treat them as Men. The Traveller visits in Age those Countries through which he rambled in his Youth, and hopes for Merriment in the old Place.

The Man of Business, wearied with unsatisfactory Prosperity, retires to the Town of his Nativity, and expects to play away the last Years with the Companions of his Childhood, and recover Youth in the Fields where he once was young.

From this Inattention, so general and so mischievous, let it, dear Sir, be our Study to exempt ourselves. We both equally desire to see others happy, let us therefore make Haste to impart Happiness, as much as it lies in our Power, while it can be enjoyed ; and let us remember, that every Moment of Delay takes away something from the Value o^c good Intentions, when not put in Execution. And let us also, who purpose our own Happiness, reflect, that, while we form this Purpose, the Day rolls on, and *the Night cometh, when no Man can work.* I remain, dear Sir, wishing the Completion of our Desires, your, &c.

LETTER from an UNCLE, shewing his Sollicitude for his young NIECE.

SIR,

You know what various Scenes of Life I passed through some Years ago, when you and I were intimate Friends, and lived in the same Neighbourhood. I am now arrived to an happy Old-age ; you may be assured I mean an healthy one. I have been near three Years past a single Man ; have, alas ! experienced the most heart-felt Griefs ; but Time has softened their Severity, and the tender Remembrance is become rather pleasing, than painful to me : I enjoy the Thought, that each Day brings me still nearer to a Meeting with those I have loved and lost. One tender Object engrosses all my Attention, an Orphan Niece, recommended by a dying Sister to my Care. Former I
feel

feel all the Anxiety of a Father, and, for her Sake, wish to live till I can secure to her the Protection of some worthy Man, who may deserve to call so bright a Jewel his. I give you Leave to make Allowances for an old Man's Fondness, but I think her "the fairest Pattern of excelling Nature." Her Age is just Sixteen; her Birth and Fortune intitle her to make some Figure in what is called the Polite World, and I would by no Means exclude her from it; but how shall I guard her young Heart from being infected by the Follies she must meet with there? Have not I Reason to apprehend the Lessons such Numbers will be endeavouring to teach her, in this School of Vanity, will make deeper Impressions than any Thing I can say? To attempt defending her against them is all I can do. For this Purpose, I endeavour to raise her in her own Opinion, to convince her of the Dignity of her Nature, and that she was born for nobler Purposes, than, like the gay Insect of a Day, to flutter for a while, and die. I tell her, Admiration cannot long be hers; a few Years must put an End to it, should no merciless Distemper, by removing the Cause, deprive her of it sooner. But Esteem, far preferable to Admiration, she may, if she pleases, secure to herself, even to her latest Moments. I do not attempt to depreciate the Charms of her Person; I acknowledge them to be superior to those of the Generality of Women; but I recommend it to her to consider this Advantage as a further Call upon her Gratitude to Providence, from whom she has received it. When her Glass presents to her the faithful Representation of her Obligations to Nature, I advise her to be careful, that the Jewel within may be worthy of so rich a Casket; and intreat her to be watchful, that no internal Deformity may disgrace the Elegance and Beauty of her outward Appearance. That the Regularity of her Words and Actions may correspond with that of her Features, I beg her to be persuaded that no Paint can be purchased to

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animate her Face equal to the Glow of Innocence and conscious Virtue.

I am very sensible all the Instructions I can give her, fall infinitely short of those she would have received from her Parents, had they been longer lent her. Her Mother would have held forth her indulgent Hand to guide her through those Paths herself had trod with so much Honour. She would have prevented her mistaking Thorns for Flowers, like too many of her unthinking Sex, who have gathered them as such, and placed them in their Bosoms, without discovering the fatal Error, 'till wounded by them.

My principal Aim, in her Education, is to make her a convervable Companion to a Man of Sense, and an useful Mother to her Children. I shall take Care to admonish her, that, when married, she gives not into the fashionable Folly, I had almost called it Vice, of completing her own Education, when she should attend to that of her young Family. She, who has the Honour of becoming a Wife and Mother, descends much too low, when she suffers a Train of Masters to attend her, and idly wastes, with fiddling Men and singing Women, that Time she should devote to the Care of her Children: A Care from which no Rank excludes the Mother, and for which she is sure of being most eminently rewarded by the exquisite Pleasure arising from it; a Pleasure the gay, the fashionable World, can never know. The indifferent Husband and the giddy Wife seek to attain, by separate Paths, to what they miscall Pleasure, and, whilst they are wasting Youth and Health in the vain Pursuit, their helpless Innocents are abandoned to the Care, or, more properly speaking; to the Negligence of Servants. Thus do they rob themselves of their best, their sweetest Enjoyments, and, with a Parent's tender Name, are Strangers to the pleasing Sensations, the delicate Emotions, that fill a Parent's Breast. Ask a Husband and Wife, affectionately fond of each other, if the most melodious

Notes ever gave them a Pleasure, equal to that which thrills through their Veins, when their little Prattlers, with infant Voice, attempt to lisp their Names? Behold such an happy Pair, surrounded by their blooming Offspring, with Eyes swimming with Delight, gazing on them, and on each other; filled with Gratitude to Providence for the Treasure intrusted to their Care, and resolved, with the Divine Assistance, not to let it perish in their Hands.

This is domestic Happiness; a Happiness most pure, most perfect, because most virtuous. It is a Fore-taste of what we hope to enjoy hereafter, where all is Harmony and Love; it is——to be felt alone——Language is too weak to express it.

If you imagine, Sir, that what I have intimated to you of my Care of bringing up my Niece, can convey any useful Hint to you for the Instruction of your numerous Offspring, it would give me an infinite Pleasure to hear it. No one can have such ardent Desires for their Welfare. This I owe to my perfect Esteem of you, which Length of Time has never lessened; and believe, that I shall always be your,
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LETTER, on the common Idea of the Character of a GENTLEMAN.

SIR,

One great Cause of Disagreement among Mankind is their not having settled and determinate Ideas for the same Words. This, you will perhaps say, is a stale Observation; I grant it, and only produce it as an Introduction to what I intended to write to you.

The Epithet *Free-thinker* is not more abused than the Term *Gentleman*, by a too indiscriminate Application of the Word. A real Gentleman is certainly a most amiable Character. But, as that Word is promiscuously applied, and generally understood, it as certainly often implies such Qualities, as are rather a

Reproach

Reproach to the Possessors, than any Marks of intrinsic Merit.

Any Man, of whatsoever Station, who, with natural good Sense, possesses also an honest Heart; and who has these Essentials polished by a Sweetness of Behaviour, which is better understood than expressed; this Man is, in my Estimation, the true Gentleman: Whether he be a Knight, or a Ticket-porter; a Lord, or a Journeyman-taylor. Acquired Accomplishments adorn, but do not constitute the Gentleman.

It is true, a Person runs great Chance of Disappointment, who would search for Gentlemen among working Bricklayers, Smiths, and other laborious Professions: Since, in those Employments, the Mind, being confined to the Contemplation of the Objects of their Industry, is necessarily very narrow; contracts a Rigidity or Rust for Want of Extension; or, by associating with the Depraved, is too often vitiated itself. But what then? There is no Rule without Exceptions, however seldom they appear; and true Genius will burst through all those Obstacles, which overpower little Minds, and choak up ordinary Capacities.

The Acquirements of Mankind, it is true, differ generally, in Proportion as their Situation is more or less prosperous: Thus many a good Understanding is uncultivated; and many a Head is filled with the Sciences, to as little Purpose, as if they were stuffed with Saw-dust. But, whether that be the Case or not, due Allowance ought to be made for the Disadvantages of a confined Sphere of Activity. Let his Lordship only change his Situation, and conceive him with a Leather-apron about him; the Consequence would be, that great Part of those bright Qualities, admired in the Man of Fortune, would not appear, but lie dormant in the Shoe-maker, merely for Want of Opportunities for Exertion.

I know not whether I have worked any Conviction in you; but I have firmly persuaded myself, that there

there are Men in all Degrees of Life, who merit the Appellation of Gentlemen. I will now attempt for you the Description of many who claim the Distinction of Gentlemen, and currently pass for such.

The first requisite for a Gentleman is either an independent Fortune, a Pension at Court, the Bar, Pulpit, or Camp; or a Subsistence procured by some of the various dark Means implied, when we say of any one, *No-body knows how he lives*: Every one in these Capacities arrogating that honorary Distinction. For your Gentleman scorns to merit his Bread by any useful manual Occupation, or to acknowledge any as belonging to the Fraternity who does.

By Idleness, your Gentleman preserves his Limbs supple and delicate; and attains that easy careless Air, that negligent Swing of his Arms, and that graceful Step, which are considered as Essentials to Gentility. That this is Matter of Fact is evident, seeing many a worthy Person, without these Accomplishments, is stigmatised by the Name of a Clown; while, with them, many a worthless Rascal is respected as a fine Gentleman.

Another needful Article, is, that lofty Assurance in Behaviour, which Independence confers, and which others assume for that very Reason. This, with gay, fantastical Cloaths, attracts Regard; and, if a few round Oaths are judiciously interspersed in Conversation, they give more Dignity and Life to it, and enable a Gentleman to talk Nonsense with a tolerable Grace.

A Gentleman passes his Time at Horse-races, Theatres, and Bagnios, that he may be esteemed a knowing One, a Critic, and a Man of Gallantry. In short, Sir, for I am tired with so insignificant a Subject, a current Gentleman is the more completely so, the more he is devoted to Pleasure: And the more he shews, by continually humming the fag Ends of Tunes, that he is as much above thinking, as above doing any Thing to a good Purpose. And the best Word that

that any one of the common Fry of Gentlemen deserve, is, that as he is a worthless, it is well if he is a harmless Animal; too many of them being very mischievous ones. Such, Sir, are the distinguishing Marks I affix to the real and reputed Gentleman; and I make no Doubt, that a Person of your Discernment will not hesitate one Moment to be of the same Opinion with your, &c.

LETTER, on the Wonders of the CREATION, to reclaim a FRIEND, who had abandoned himself to a licentious Way of Thinking and Living.

DEAR SIR,

Among all the Studies that engage the Mind of Man, the best adapted to his Nature is that of the Works of Omnipotence. This is a Field sufficiently large for the most fertile Genius to expand its Faculties, and, after a serious Contemplation, to learn its own Weakness, and adore that Almighty Being, who spoke the Universe into Existence, and still supports it by the Breath of his Mouth.

The other Evening, when the last Beams of departing Day had tinged the fleecy Clouds with glowing Purple, I left the disgusting Scenes of false Mirth and Jollity you fain would have engaged me in, to enjoy the Coolness of the Air, and meditate on the Wonders of the Creation. The Moon adorned the Chambers of the East, and threw a silver Mantle over the verdant Carpet of Nature. Not the least Noise disturbed the Solemnity of this Scene: The feathered Songsters of the Groves were retired to Rest, and the Herds and Flocks were sleeping on the grassy Surface of the Meadows. In this silent and retired Situation I directed my Eyes towards the azure Arch of Heaven, viewed, with a pleasing Surprise, the grand Theatre of the Universe, and wandered in Idea thro' the boundless Fields of Æther. I remarked some of the Planetary Globes, which form our Solar System,

now

now shining with distinguished Lustre, and reflected on the amazing unerring Accuracy, wherewith they perform their respective Motions about the Sun. Lost in contemplating the unbounded Scene, and unable to comprehend the Wonders of Creation, I stood for some Time silent, and, as it were, buried in Thought, but soon recovered from this pleasing Reverie, again reflected, and again found myself incapable to solve the many Difficulties which at once presented themselves to my Mind.

What Power, said I to myself, hath formed yon brilliant Globes which decorate the grand Theatre of Heaven, and move with such Regularity in infinite Space ? Have they any Bases on which they rest ? Are they supported by adamantine Pillars ? No ; they are balanced on their own Centers, and penile in the Fields of Æther ! What ! penile in the Fields of Æther ! The Mind recoils at the Thought ! Is a Fluid of such amazing Tenuity sufficient to support Globes of such astonishing Magnitude ! Globes, which, if Astronomers are to be believed, and they have sufficient Reasons for what they assert, are many of them prodigiously larger than this Earth we inhabit ! Surely Bodies like these must have some Basis, some Foundation on which they rest. No ! They are self-balanced in the æthereal Fluid, and continued in their Orbits by the Laws of Attraction and Projection ; Laws which support them more firmly than the rocky Basis of Mountains : But what is this grand, this amazing Principle of Attraction ? Alas ! Human Reason is lost in attempting to explain it. A thousand Experiments convince us of its Existence ; but in what it consists surpasses the Boundaries of Human Reason to determine. It is the Cement of universal Nature, it causes the Vapours to ascend into the aerial Reservoirs, and again to descend in balmy Drops of Rain ; it forms the Bars and Doors with which the Almighty shut up the foaming Ocean, and curbed the Rage of its

its impetuous Waves: To it the Mountains owe their unshaken Firmness, and the Nerves of Animals their Strength. The Rivers circulate by its Power, and the stagnant Lakes derive from it their glassy Surface. It causes the Sap to rise in Vegetables, and decorates the Earth with Pearls of Dew.

Tell me, my Friend, whom I would be glad to reclaim, and bring over to a better Way of Thinking; tell me, you that pretend the World owed its Origin to Chance, who imposed this astonishing, this beautiful Law, on the various Globes which move with such harmonious Regularity in unbounded Space? Surely, some Being wiser than yourself must be its Author; as you are unable, in a thousand Instances, to explain its Effects, and even to tell me in what it consists. Remember it was not Yesterday, that it first exerted its Force: It had its Origin with Nature, and was imposed on the Globes of the Universe when they first emerged from their chaotic State: Nor has Time been able to impair its Effects; it still subsists in full Force, and will subsist to the latest Ages. Blush therefore at thy Folly, thou thoughtless Mortal, thou Being of a Day! Acknowledge thy Ignorance, and candidly own, what a little Reflection must teach thee, that a Being infinitely wise, and infinitely powerful, presides over the Universe; that it was he who called these beautiful Globes into Existence, and impressed on them this extensive, this astonishing Law. Come leave thy groveling Thoughts, and soar with me to the planetary Regions, meditate on the Wonders of Creation, and adore thy Maker, and thy God. Reflect for a Moment, that it is to him thou art indebted for thy Existence, and all the Comforts thou enjoyest: From him the Streams of Happiness flow, and his indulgent Care guards thee from every Evil. It is he that causeth the Sun to rise, and teacheth the Dayspring to know its Place; that calls the Thunder from the bursting Cloud, and directs the Lightning's rapid Shaft;

Shaft; that guides the furious Blast of the Tempest, and shakes the solid Foundations of the Earth.

Retire into thyself, thou giddy Mortal; reflect on thy own Weakness, thy Ignorance, thy Folly; and thou wilt soon be convinced how unable thou art to oppose the Hand that formed the Universe, and to contend with that Wisdom which planned the Laws of Nature. Remember thy Actions are all exposed to his View; nor are the most secret Thoughts of thy Heart concealed from his all-searching Eye. The pitchy Mantle of the Night cannot hide any Thing from him; nor is the enormous Mass of Waters, that cover the rocky Bottom of the Ocean, a Veil sufficient to exclude his Sight. Tremble therefore, thou Scoffer at Providence, thou Son of Rapine, of Riot, of Violence, and of Wrong; he remarks every unjust Action, and will surely punish it. Vengeance, terrible as the dusty Whirlwinds of the *Arabian Deserts*, and sudden as the Lightning's Flash, will overtake thee, and pour upon thy Head the Wrath of an offended Creator. But remember it is not yet too late to prevent the Stroke. It is indeed impossible to contend with, but not to deprecate his Fury. Mercy, that darling Attribute of the Deity, will sooth his Indignation, and disarm his Justice.

Leave therefore, for a Moment, the Scenes of Injustice, of Riot and Debauchery, and retire with me to the sequestered Fields; contemplate the astonishing Scenes of the Universe, and you will soon learn to adore their Great, their Almighty Author, and be convinced that Happiness is only to be found in the Paths of Virtue. Should you think I used you with too much Freedom in this Letter; when you consider my good Intention, you will easily pardon it in, dear Sir, your sincere, &c.

C H A P. IV.

Containing Letters on moral and other interesting Subjects for the Instruction of Life.

THE four first Letters in this Chapter point out the Errors in the common Methods of Education, and prescribe suitable Remedies and Improvements in that important Affair, which requires the utmost Care and Discernment in Parents and Teachers.

LETTER I.

On the EDUCATION of YOUTH.

SIR,

I have a long Time expected, with great Impatience, that you would enlarge upon the ordinary Mistakes which are committed in the Education of Children: I flattered myself that you would one Time or other resume this Consideration; but, finding myself disappointed, I have ventured to send you my own Thoughts on this Subject.

I remember *Pericles*, in his famous Oration at the Funeral of those young Men who perished in the *Samian Expedition*, has a Thought very much celebrated by several ancient Critics; namely, “That the Loss which the Commonwealth suffered, by the Destruction of its Youth, was like the Loss which the Year would suffer by the Destruction of the Spring.” The Prejudice which the Public sustains from a wrong Education of Children is an Evil of the same Nature, as it in a Manner starves Posterity, and defrauds our Country of those Persons who, with due Care, might make an eminent Figure in their respective Posts of Life.

I have seen a Book, written by *Juan Huartes*, a Spanish Physician, intitled, *Examen de Ingenios*; wherein he lays it down as one of his first Positions, “That nothing but Nature can qualify a Man for Learning; and,

and, without a proper Temperament for the particular Art or Science which he studies, his utmost Pains and Application, assisted by the ablest Masters, will be to no Purpose."

He illustrates this by the Example of *Tully's Son, Marcus.*

Cicero, in order to accomplish his Son in that Sort of Learning which he designed him for, sent him to *Athens*, the most celebrated Academy at that Time in the World, and where a vast Concourse out of the most polite Nations could not but furnish the young Gentleman with a Multitude of great Examples and Accidents, that might insensibly have instructed him in his designed Studies: He placed him under the Care of *Cratippus*, who was one of the greatest Philosophers of the Age; and, as if all the Books which were at that Time written had not been sufficient for his Use, he composed others on Purpose for him. Notwithstanding all this, History informs us that *Marcus* proved a mere Blockhead; and that Nature, who it seems was even with the Son for her Prodigality to the Father, rendered him incapable of improving by all the Rules of Eloquence, the Precepts of Philosophy, his own Endeavours, and the most refined Conversation in *Athens*. This Author therefore proposes, that there should be certain Triers or Examiners appointed by the State, to inspect the Genius of every particular Boy, and to allot him the Part that is most suitable to his natural Talents.

Plato, in one of his Dialogues, tells us, that *Socrates*, who was the Son of a Midwife, used to say, "That, as his Mother, though she was very skilful in her Profession, could not deliver a Woman unless she was first with Child herself, so neither could he himself raise Knowledge out of a Mind where Nature had not planted it."

Accordingly, the Method this Philosopher took, of instructing his Scholars by several Interrogatories or

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Questions, was only helping the Birth, or bringing their own Thoughts to Light.

The *Spanish Doctor* above-mentioned, as his Speculations grow more refined, asserts, that every Kind of Wit has a particular Science corresponding to it, and in which alone it can be truly excellent. As to those Geniuses which may seem to have an equal Aptitude to several Things, he regards them as so many unfinished Pieces of Nature, wrought off in Haste.

There are indeed but very few to whom Nature has been so unkind, that they are not capable of shining in some Science or other: There is a certain Bias towards Knowledge in every Mind, which may be strengthened and improved by proper Applications.

The Story of *Clavius* is very well known:—He was entered in a College of *Jesuits*; and, after having been tried at several Parts of Learning, was upon the Point of being dismissed, as an hopeless Blockhead, until one of the Fathers took it into his Head to make an Essay of his Parts in Geometry, which it seems hit his Genius so luckily, that he after became one of the greatest Mathematicians of the Age. It is commonly thought, that the Sagacity of the Fathers, in discovering the Talent of a young Student, has not a little contributed to the Figure which their Order has made in the World.

How different from this Manner of Education is that which prevails in our own Country, where nothing is more usual than to see forty or fifty Boys, of several Ages, Tempers, and Inclinations, ranged together in the same Class, employed upon the same Authors, and enjoined the same Tasks! Whatever their natural Genius may be, they are all to be made Poets, Orators, and Historians alike: They are all obliged to have the same Capacity, to bring in the same Tale of Verse, and to furnish out the same Portion of Prose: Every Boy is bound to have as good a Memory as the Captain of the Form. To be brief, instead of adapting

ing Studies to the particular Genius of a Youth, we expect from the young Man that he should adapt his Genius to his Studies. This, I must confess, is not so much to be imputed to the Instructor as to the Parent; who will never be brought to believe that his Son is not capable of performing as much as his Neighbour's, and that he may not make him whatever he has a Mind to.

If the present Age is more laudable than those which have gone before it in any Particular, it is in that generous Care which several well-disposed Persons have taken in the Education of poor Children; and, as in these Charity-schools there is no Place left for the over-weening Fondness of a Parent, the Directors of them would make them beneficial to the Public, if they considered the Precept which I have been thus long inculcating: They might easily, by well examining the Parts of those under their Inspection, make a just Distribution of them into proper Classes and Divisions; and allot them to this or that particular Study, as their Genius qualifies them for their Professions, Trades, Handicrafts, or Service by Sea or Land.

How is this Kind of Regulation wanting in the three great Professions!

Dr. South, complaining of Persons who took upon them holy Orders, though altogether unqualified for the sacred Function, says somewhere, "That many a Man runs his Head against a Pulpit, who might have done his Country excellent Service at a Plough-tail."

In like Manner, many a Lawyer, who makes but an indifferent Figure at the Bar, might have made a very elegant Waterman, and have shined at the *Temple* Stairs, though he can get no Business in the House.

I have known a Corn-cutter who, with a right Education, would have been an excellent Physician.

To descend lower: Are not our Streets filled with sagacious Dray-men and Politicians in Liveries? We

have several Taylors of six Feet high, and meet with many a broad Pair of Shoulders that are thrown away upon a Barber; when perhaps, at the same Time, we see a pigmy Porter reeling under a Burden, who might have managed a Needle with great Dexterity, or have snapped his Fingers with great Ease to himself and Advantage to the Public.

The *Spartans*, though they acted with the Spirit which I am here speaking of, carried it much farther than what I propose: Among them it was not lawful for the Father to bring up his Children after his own Fancy; as soon as they were seven Years old, they were listed in several Companies, and disciplined by the Public. The old Men were Spectators of their Performances; who often raised Quarrels among them, and set them at Strife with one another; that, by those early Discoveries, they might see how their several Talents lay, and, without any Regard to their Quality, dispose of them accordingly for the Service of the Commonwealth. By this Means *Sparta* soon became the Mistress of *Greece*, and famous through the whole World for her civil and military Discipline.

LETTER II.

On the EDUCATION of YOUTH.

SIR,

I now send you some farther Thoughts on the Education of Youth; in which I intend to discuss that famous Question, “Whether the Education at a public School, or under a private Tutor, is to be preferred?”

As some of the greatest Men in most Ages have been of very different Opinions in this Matter, I shall give a short Account of what I think may be best urged on both Sides, and afterwards leave every Person to determine for himself.

It is certain, from *Suetonius*, that the *Romans* thought

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the Education of Children a Business properly belonging to the Parents themselves ; and *Plutarch*, in the Life of *Marcus Cato*, tells us, that, as soon as his Son was capable of Learning, *Cato* would suffer no-body to teach him but himself, though he had a Servant, named *Chilo*, who was an excellent Grammarian, and who taught a great many other Youths.

On the contrary, the *Greeks* seemed more inclined to public Schools and Seminaries.

A private Education promises, in the first Place, Virtue and Good-breeding ; a public School, manly Assurance and an early Knowledge in the Ways of the World.

Mr. *Locke*, in his celebrated Treatise of *Education*, confesses that there are Inconveniences to be feared on both Sides : “ If, says he, I keep my Son at Home, he is in Danger of becoming my young Master ; if I send him Abroad, it is scarce possible to keep him from the reigning Contagion of Rudeness and Vice. He will, perhaps, be more innocent at Home ; but more ignorant of the World, and more sheepish, when he comes Abroad.” However, as this learned Author asserts, that Virtue is much more difficult to be obtained than Knowledge of the World, and that Vice is a more stubborn, as well as a more dangerous Fault, than Sheepishness ; he is altogether for a private Education ; and the more so, because he does not see why a Youth, with a right Management, might not attain the same Assurance in his Father’s House as at a public School. To this End he advises Parents to accustom their Sons to whatever strange Faces come to the House ; to take them with them when they visit their Neighbours ; and to engage them in Conversation with Men of Parts and Breeding.

It may be objected to this Method, that Conversation is not the only Thing necessary ; but that, unless it be a Conversation with such as are, in some Measure, their Equals in Parts and Years, there can be no Room

for Emulation, Contention, and some of the most lively Passions of the Mind ; which, without being sometimes moved by these Means, may possibly contract a Dulness and Insensibility.

One of the greatest Writers our Nation ever produced observes, that a Boy who forms Parties, and makes himself popular in a School or a College, would act the same Part with equal Ease in a Senate or a Privy-council. And another Author, speaking like a Man versed in the Ways of the World, affirms, that the well laying and carrying on of a Design to rob an Orchard trains up a Youth insensibly to Caution, Secrecy, and Circumspection, and fits him for Matters of greater Importance.

In short, a private Education seems the most natural Method for the Forming of a virtuous Man ; a public Education for making a Man of Business. The first would furnish out a good Subject for *Plato's Republic*, the latter a Member for a Community overrun with Artifice and Corruption.

It must, however, be confessed, that a Person at the Head of a public School has sometimes so many Boys under his Direction, that it is impossible he should extend a due Proportion of his Care to each of them. This is however, in Reality, the Fault of the Age ; in which we often see many Parents, who, though each expects his Son should be made a Scholar, are not contented altogether to make it worth While for any Man of liberal Education to take upon him the Care of their Instruction.

In our great Schools, indeed, this Fault has been of late Years rectified ; so that we have at present not only ingenuous Men for the chief Masters, but such as have proper Ushers and Assistants under them. I must nevertheless own, that, for Want of the same Encouragement in the Country, we have many a promising Genius spoiled and abused in those little Seminaries.

I am the more inclined to this Opinion, having myself

self experienced the Usage of two rural Masters, each of them very unfit for the Trust they took upon them to discharge. The first imposed much more upon me than my Parts, though none of the weakest, could endure ; and used me barbarously for not performing Impossibilities. The latter was quite of another Temper ; and a Boy who would run upon his Errands, wash his Coffee-pot, or ring the Bell, might have as little Conversation with any of the *Classics* as he thought fit. I have known a Lad of this Place excused his Exercise for assisting the Cook-maid ; and remember a neighbouring Gentleman's Son was among us five Years, most of which Time he employed in airing and watering our Master's grey Pad. I scorned to compound for my Faults by doing any of these elegant Offices ; and was accordingly the best Scholar, and the worst used, of any Boy in the School.

I shall conclude this Letter with an Advantage mentioned by *Quintilian*, as accompanying a public Way of Education, which I have not yet taken Notice of ; namely, that we very often contract such Friendships at School as are of Service to us all the following Parts of our Lives.

I shall give you, under this Head, a Story very well known to several Persons, and which you may depend upon as a real Truth.

Every one who is acquainted with *Westminster* School knows, that there is a Curtain, which used to be drawn across the Room, to separate the upper School from the lower. A Youth happened, by some Mischance, to tear this Curtain : The Severity of the Master was too well known for the Criminal to expect any Pardon for such a Fault ; so that the Boy, who was of a meek Temper, was terrified to Death at the Thoughts of his Appearance, when his Friend, who sat next to him, bid him be of good Chear, for that he would take the Fault on himself : He kept his Word accordingly. As soon as they were grown up to be

Men, the Civil War broke out, in which our two Friends took the opposite Sides ; one of them followed the Parliament, the other the Royal Party.

As their Tempers were different, the Youth who had torn the Curtain endeavoured to raise himself on the Civil List ; and the other, who had borne the Blame of it, on the Military : The first succeeded so well, that he was in a short Time made a Judge under the Protector. The other was engaged in the unhappy Enterprise of *Penruddock* and *Grove* in the West : I suppose, Sir, I need not acquaint you with the Event of that Undertaking ; every one knows that the Royal Party was routed, and all the Heads of them, among whom was the Curtain-champion, imprisoned at *Exeter*. It happened to be his Friend's Lot, at that Time, to go the *Western* Circuit : The Trial of the Rebels, as they were then called, was very short, and nothing now remained but to pass Sentence on them ; when the Judge, hearing the Name of his old Friend, and observing his Face more attentively, which he had not seen for many Years, asked him, if he was not formerly a *Westminster* Scholar ? By the Answer, he was soon convinced that it was his former generous Friend ; and, without saying any Thing more at that Time, made the best of his Way to *London*, where, employing all his Power and Interest with the Protector, he saved his Friend from the Fate of his unhappy Associates.

The Gentleman, whose Life was thus preserved by the Gratitude of his School-fellow, was afterwards the Father of a Son, whom he lived to see promoted in the Church, and who deservedly filled one of the highest Stations in it.

LETTER III.

On the EDUCATION of YOUTH.

SIR,

You may please to remember, that, in my last Letter, I gave the best Reasons that could be urged in Favour

your of a private or public Education. Upon the Whole it may perhaps be thought, that I seemed rather inclined to the latter; though at the same Time I confess that Virtue, which ought to be our principal Care, is more usually acquired in the former.

I intend therefore, in this Letter, to offer at Methods, by which I conceive Boys might be made to improve in Virtue as they advance in Letters.

I know that, in most of our public Schools, Vice is punished and discouraged whenever it is found out; but this is far from being sufficient, unless our Youth are at the same Time taught to form a right Judgment of Things, and to know what is properly Virtue.

To this End, whenever they read the Lives and Actions of such Men as have been famous in their Generation, it should not be thought enough to make them barely understand so many *Greek* or *Latin* Sentences; but they should be asked their Opinion of such an Action or Saying, and obliged to give their Reasons why they take it to be good or bad. By this Means they would insensibly arrive at proper Notions of Courage, Temperance, Honour, and Justice.

There must be great Care taken, how the Example of any particular Person is recommended to them in Gross; instead of which they ought to be taught wherein such a Man, though great in some Respects, was weak and faulty in others. For Want of this Caution, a Boy is often so dazzled with the Lustre of a great Character, that he confounds its Beauties with its Blemishes, and looks even upon the faulty Parts of it with an Eye of Admiration.

I have often wondered how *Alexander*, who was naturally of a generous and merciful Disposition, came to be guilty of so barbarous an Action as that of dragging the Governor of a Town after his Chariot. I know, this is generally ascribed to his Passion for *Homer*; but I lately met with a Passage in *Plutarch*, which, if I am not much mistaken, still gives us a

clearer Light into the Motives of this Action. *Plutarch* tells us, that *Alexander* in his Youth had a Master named *Lysimachus*, who, tho' he was a Man destitute of all Politeness, ingratiated himself both with *Philip* and his Pupil, and became the second Man at Court, by calling the King *Peleus*, the Prince *Achilles*, and himself *Phœnix*. It is no Wonder if *Alexander*, having been thus used not only to admire, but personate *Achilles*, should think it glorious to imitate him in this Piece of Cruelty and Extravagance.

To carry this Thought yet farther, I shall submit it to your Consideration, whether, instead of a Theme, or Copy of Verfes, which are the usual Exercises (as they are called in the School Phrase) it would not be more proper, that a Boy should be tasked, once or twice a Week, to write down his Opinion of such Persons and Things as occur to him in his Reading; that he should descant upon the Actions of *Turnus* or *Eneas*; shew wherein they excelled, or where defective; censure or approve any particular Action; observe how it exceeded or fell short of another. He might, at the same Time, mark what was moral in any Speech, and how far it agreed with the Character of the Person speaking. This Exercise would soon strengthen his Judgment in what is blameable or Praise-worthy, and give him an early Seafoning of Morality.

Next to these Examples, which may be met with in Books, I very much approve of *Horace's* Way of setting before Youth the infamous or honourable Characters of their Cotemporaries: That Poet tells us, this was the Method his Father made Use of to incline him to any particular Virtue, or give him an Aversion to any particular Vice. " If, says *Horace*, my Father advised me to live within Bounds, and be contented with the Fortune he should leave me; do not you see, says he, the miserable Condition of *Burrus*, and the Son of *Albus*? Let the Misfortunes of these

those two Wretches teach you to avoid Luxury and Extravagance. If he would inspire me with an Abhorrence to Debauchery ; do not, says he, make yourself like *Sextanus*, when you may be happy in the Enjoyment of lawful Pleasures. How scandalous, says he, is the Character of *Trebonius*, who was lately caught in Bed with another Man's Wife ? To illustrate the Force of this Method the Poet adds, That, as a head-strong Patient, who will not at first follow his Physician's Prescriptions, grows orderly when he hears that his Neighbours die all about him ; so Youth is often frightened from Vice, by hearing the ill Report it brings upon others."

Xenophon's Schools of Equity, in his Life of *Cyrus the Great*, are sufficiently famous. He tells us, that the *Persian Children* went to School, and employed their Time as diligently in learning the Principles of Justice and Sobriety, as the Youth in other Countries did to acquire the most difficult Arts and Sciences : Their Governors spent most Part of the Day in hearing their mutual Accusations one against another, whether for Violence, Cheating, Slander, or Ingratitude ; and taught them how to give Judgment against those, who were found to be any ways guilty of these Crimes. I omit the Story of the long and short Coat, for which *Cyrus* himself was punished, as a Case equally known with any in *Littleton*.

The Method which *Apuleius* tells us the *Indian Gymnosophists* took to educate their Disciples, is still more curious and remarkable. His Words are as follow : " When their Dinner is ready, before it is served up, the Masters enquire of every particular Scholar, how he has employed his Time since Sunrising ; some of them answer, that, having been chosen as Arbiters between two Persons, they have composed their Differences, and made them Friends ; some, that they have been executing the Orders of their Parents ; and others, that they have either found out something

new by their own Application, or learned it from the Instructions of their Fellows : But if there happens to be any one among them, who cannot make it appear that he has employed the Morning to Advantage, he is immediately excluded from the Company, and obliged to work while the rest are at Dinner."

It is not impossible, that, from these several Ways of producing Virtue in the Minds of Boys, some general Method might be invented. What I would endeavour to inculcate is, that our Youth cannot be too soon taught the Principles of Virtue ; seeing the first Impressions which are made on the Mind are always the strongest.

The Archbishop of *Cambray* makes *Telemachus* say, that, though he was young in Years, he was old in the Art of knowing how to keep his own and his Friends Secrets. When my Father, says the Prince, went to the Siege of *Troy*, he took me on his Knees ; and, after having embraced and blessed me, as he was surrounded by all the Nobles of *Ithaca*, "O my Friends, says he, into your Hands I commit the Education of my Son : If you ever loved his Father, shew it in your Care toward's him ; but, above all, do not omit to form him just, sincere, and faithful in keeping a Secret." These Words of my Father, says *Telemachus*, were continually repeated to me by his Friends in his Absence ; who made no Scruple of communicating to me their Uneasiness to see my Mother surrounded with Lovers, and the Measures they designed to take on that Occasion. He adds, that he was so ravished at being thus treated like a Man, and at the Confidence reposed in him, that he never once abused it ; nor could all the Insinuations of his Father's Rivals ever get him to betray what was committed to him under the Seal of Secrecy.

There is hardly any Virtue, which a Lad might not thus learn by Practice and Example.

I have heard of a good Man, who used, at certain Times, to give his Scholars Six-pence a-piece, that

they might tell him the next Day how they had employed it. The third Part was always to be laid out in Charity ; and every Boy was blamed or commended, as he could make it appear he had chosen a fit Object.

In short, nothing is more wanting to our public Schools, than that the Masters of them should use the same Care in fashioning the Manners of their Scholars, as in forming their Tongues to the learned Languages. Wherever the former is omitted, I cannot help agreeing with Mr. *Locke*, that a Man must have a strange Value for Words, when (preferring the Languages of the *Greeks* and *Romans* to that which made them such brave Men) he can think it worth while to hazard the Innocence and Virtue of his Son for a little *Greek* and *Latin*.

LETTER IV.

On the EDUCATION of YOUTH.

SIR,

I take the Liberty to send you a fourth Letter upon the *Education of Youth*. In my last I gave you my Thoughts about some particular Tasks, which I conceived it might not be amiss to mix with their usual Exercises, in order to give them an early Seasoning of Virtue ; I shall in this propose some others, which I fancy might contribute to give them a right Turn for the World, and enable them to make their Way in it.

The Design of Learning is, as I take it, either to render a Man an agreeable Companion to himself, and teach him to support Solitude with Pleasure ; or, if he is not born to an Estate, to supply that Defect, and furnish him with the Means of acquiring one.

A Person who applies himself to Learning with the first of these Views, may be said to study for Ornament ; as he who proposes to himself the second, properly studies for Use. The one does it to raise himself

self a Fortune, the other to set off that which he is already possessed of. But, as the far greater Part of Mankind are included in the latter Class, I shall only propose some Methods at present for the Service of such, who expect to advance themselves in the World by their Learning. In order to this, I shall premise, that many more Estates have been acquired by little Accomplishments than by extraordinary ones ; those Qualities, which make the greatest Figure in the Eye of the World, not being always the most useful in themselves, or the most advantageous to their Owners.

The Posts which require Men of shining and uncommon Parts to discharge them, are so very few, that many a great Genius goes out of the World, without ever having had an Opportunity to exert himself ; whereas Persons of ordinary Endowments meet with Occasions fitted to their Parts and Capacities every Day, in the common Occurrences of Life.

I am acquainted with two Persons who were formerly School-fellows, and have been good Friends ever since. One of them was not only thought an impenetrable Blockhead at School, but still maintained his Reputation at the University ; the other was the Pride of his Master, and the most celebrated Person in the College of which he was a Member. The Man of Genius is at present buried in a Country Parsonage of Eightscore Pounds a Year ; while the other, with the bare Abilities of a common Scrivener, has got an Estate of above an hundred thousand Pounds,

I fancy, from what I have said, it will almost appear a doubtful Case to many a wealthy Citizen, whether or no he ought to wish his Son should be a great Genius ; but this I am sure of, that nothing is more absurd than to give a Lad the Education of one,

whom

whom Nature has not favoured with any particular Marks of Distinction.

The Fault therefore of our Grammar Schools, is, that every Boy is pushed on to Works of Genius; whereas it would be far more advantageous for the greatest Part of them to be taught such little practical Arts and Sciences as do not require any great Share of Parts to be Master of them, and yet may come often into Play during the Course of a Man's Life.

Such are all the Parts of practical Geometry. I have known a Man contract a Friendship with a Minister of State, upon cutting a Dial in his Window; and remember a Clergyman, who got one of the best Benefices in the *West of England*, by settling a Country Gentleman's Affairs in some Method, and giving him an exact Survey of his Estate.

While I am upon this Subject, I cannot forbear mentioning a Particular, which is of Use in every Station of Life, and which, methinks, every Master should teach his Scholars; I mean the writing of *English Letters*. To this End, instead of perplexing them with *Latin Epistles*, Themes, and Verses, there might be a punctual Correspondence established between two Boys; who might act in any imaginary Part of Business, or be allowed sometimes to give a Range to their own Fancies, and communicate to each other whatever Trifles they thought fit, provided neither of them ever failed at the appointed Time to answer his Correspondent's Letters.

I believe I may venture to affirm, that the Generality of Boys would find themselves more advantaged by this Custom, when they come to be Men, than by all the *Greek* and *Latin* their Masters can teach them in seven or eight Years.

The Want of it is very visible in many learned Persons, who, while they are admiring the Styles of *Demosthenes* or *Cicero*, want Phrases to express themselves on the most common Occasions. I have seen a Letter

a Letter from one of these *Latin Orators*, which would have been deservedly laughed at by a common Attorney.

Under this Head of Writing, I cannot omit Accompts and Short-hand; which are learned with little Pains, and very properly come into the Number of such Arts as I have been here recommending.

You must doubtless, Sir, observe, that I have hitherto chiefly insisted upon these Things for such Boys, as do not appear to have any Thing extraordinary in their natural Talents, and consequently are not qualified for the finer Parts of Learning; yet I believe I might carry this Matter still farther, and venture to assert, that a Lad of Genius has sometimes Occasion for these little Acquirements, to be as it were the Fore-runners of his Parts, and to introduce him into the World.

History is full of Examples of Persons, who, though they have had the largest Abilities, have been obliged to insinuate themselves into the Favour of great Men by these trivial Accomplishments; as the complete Gentleman, in some of our modern Comedies, makes his first Advance to his Mistress under the Disguise of a Painter, or a Dancing-master.

The Difference is, that in the Lad of Genius these are so many Accomplishments, which in another are Essentials; the one diverts himself with them, the other works at them. In short, I look upon a great Genius, with these little Additions, in the same Light as I regard the *Grand Seignior*, who is obliged, by an express Command in the *Alcoran*, to learn and practise some Handicraft Trade; though I need not to have gone farther for my Instance than *Germany*, where several Emperors have voluntarily done the same Thing. *Leopold the Last* worked in Wood; and I have heard there are several Handicraft Works of his making to be seen at *Vienna*, so neatly turned, that

the

the best Joiner in Europe might safely own them, without any Disgrace to his Profession.

I would not be thought, by any Thing I have said, to be against improving a Boy's Genius, to the utmost Pitch it can be carried. What I would endeavour to shew, is, that there may be Methods taken to make Learning advantageous even to the meanest Capacities.

LETTER V.

On Reason.

SIR,

Reason is a Faculty of the Mind, whereby she puts the Notions and Images of Things, with their Operations, Effects, and Circumstances, that are confused in the Understanding, into the same Order and Condition, in which they are really disposed by Nature, or Event. The right Performance of this is called Truth, to which Reason naturally tends in a direct Line, though she sometimes miscarries and fails by the Subtlety of the Object, or her own Imperfections; and that we call Error, or Falshood. Between this and Truth lies the proper Sphere of Wit, which, though it seems to incline to Falshood, does so only to give Intelligence to Truth; for, as there is a Sort of Cunning in Arithmetic, by giving out a false Number to find a true one; so Wit, by a certain Slight of the Mind, delivers Things otherwise than they are in Nature, by rendering them greater or less than they really are, which is called *Hyperbole*; or by putting them into some other Condition than Nature ever did; as when the Performances of sensible and rational Beings are applied to senseless and inanimate Things, with which the Writings of Poets abound. But when it employs those Things, which it borrows of Falshood, to the Benefit and Advantage of Truth, as in Allegories, Fables, and Apologues, it is of excellent Use, as making a deeper Impression on the Minds

Minds of Men, than if the same Truths were plainly delivered. So likewise it becomes as pernicious, when it takes that from Truth, which it uses in the Service of Error and Falshood; as when it wrests Things from their right Meaning to a Sense that was never intended.

Reason is the only Helm of the Understanding; the Imagination is but the Sail, apt to receive and be carried away with every Wind of Vanity, unless it be steered by the former. And although, like the Load-stone, it has some Variations, it is the only Compass Man has to sail by; nor is it to be contemned, because it sometimes leads him upon a Rock:— That is but accidental, and he is more apt to hit upon Rocks without it. For all the Variations of Reason, that do not proceed from the Disproportion of Men's Wits, which can never be reduced to a Standard, are rather imposed by Passion, Concernment, Melancholy, Custom, and Education, which very few can ever redeem themselves from, than intended by Nature. And, as for the Cheats and Impostures that are wrought by it, they are no other than the greatest Blessings (which *God* and *Nature* have bestowed upon Mankind) are usually made serviceable to: And, if we will disclaim Reason, for being no better dealt with, I do not know how we can excuse the Gospel, Physic, Wealth, Liberty, Wine, and Love, which were destined to the Happiness and Well-being of Man, but most commonly become the fatal Causes of his Ruin and Destruction.

The Original of Reason proceeds from the Divine Wisdom, by which the Order and Disposition of the Universe was immediately contrived, every Part of which has so rational a Relation to every other in particular, and the Whole in general, that, though it consists of innumerable Pieces and Joints, there is not the least Flaw imaginable in the Whole. Hence it follows, that the Order of Nature is but a Copy, which

which the Divine Wisdom has drawn of itself, and committed to the Custody of Nature, of which she is so constant and faithful an Observer, that her very Deviations and Miscarriages are Arguments of her Loyalty to it. For, in those, she is as rationally obedient to her Instructions, as in her regular Operations; and by preserving the Religion of Causes, whereforever they meet, inviolate, though with the Miscarriage of the intended Effect (as if she killed the Child to save the Mother) does but tell us, that she had rather fail of her own Purposes and make Monsters, or destroy Mankind, than digress the least Minute from those Rules, which the Divine Wisdom has prescribed her. This Book of Nature, Man only, of all mortal Creatures, has the Honour and Privilege to read, which leads him immediately to God, and is the greatest Demonstration he hath given of himself to Nature, and the nearest visible Access to his Divine Presence, Humanity is capable of. For, in the first Characters and single Elements of the Creation, we cannot so perfectly read God, as we can, where those Letters are joined together, and become Words and Sense, as they do in the rational Distribution of all the Parts of Nature. This Order is the universal Apostle of the whole World, that perpetually preaches God to Mankind, and to Mankind only, every-where; and has hardly found any Nation so barbarous, where some have not become Profelytes; and, as for others, nothing but this can encounter with them upon their own Grounds. This is the Foundation of all Religion; for no Man, that is not certain there is a God, can possibly believe, or put his Trust in him.

Faith can determine nothing of Reason, but Reason can of Faith; and therefore, if Faith be above Reason, as some will have it, it must be Reason only that can make it appear to be so; for Faith can never do it. So that Faith is beholden to Reason for this

this Prerogative ; and sure it cannot be much above that, from which it receives its Credit. Faith cannot define Reason, but Reason can Faith ; and therefore it should seem to be the larger, as the comprehending must be greater than that it comprehends. But, howsoever we should grant it to be above Reason, certainly the less it is above it, it is justly esteemed the better ; else Divines and Schoolmen of all Ages would never have taken so much Pains, as they have done, to bring it as near to Reason as they can, if it had been better at a Distance. The very Being of Faith depends upon Reason, for no irrational Creature is capable of it ; and, if we will not allow this, we must of Necessity acknowledge, that it depends upon Ignorance, which is worse ; for no Man can believe any Thing, but because he does not know it. But Faith always differs from itself, according as it falls upon Persons : For that, which is one Man's Faith, may be another Man's Knowledge ; so that the less any Man knows, the more he has to believe.

There is nothing that can pretend to judge of Reason but only itself ; and therefore they, that suppose they can say most against it, are forced (like Jewellers, who are wont to beat true Diamonds to Powder, to cut and polish false ones with their Dust) to make Use of it against itself, if they will ever say any Thing against it, that can pretend to be to any Purpose. But in this they cheat themselves, as well as others ; for, if they that can say most against Reason, do it without Reason, they deserve to be neglected ; and if they do it with Reason (as they can never do it with any Thing else) they disprove themselves ; for they use it while they disclaim it, and with as much Inconsistence and Contradiction, as if a Man should tell me he cannot speak.

There is a great deal of Difference between those Actions, that Reason performs freely and of her own Accord,

Accord, and those, wherein she is prescribed to and forced ; the former being commonly clear and open, and the other obscure and intricate ; as the Stream of a River differs from the Pipes of an Aqueduct : For when Opinion, which should wait upon Reason, does govern and dictate to it, the Disorder is so preposterous, and the Restraint of ungrateful to Reason, that (like a Conjurer, who must not stir out of the Circle) her best Performances are commonly but Canting and Imposture. When the Imagination is broken loose from the Obedience of Reason, it becomes the most disordered and ungoverned Thing in the World ; it cheats the Senses, and raises the Passions to that prodigious Height, that the Strength of the Body (as if it gained what the Mind loses) becomes more than treble to what it was before : It transports a Man beyond himself, and does Things, so far beside the ordinary Course of Nature, and the Understanding of the Wisest, that, as if they had lost all their Wits too by Contagion, it often passes for Possessions of the Devil.

They who laid the first Foundations of civil Life, did very well consider, that the Reason of Mankind was generally so slight and feeble, that it would not serve for a Rein to hold them in from the Ruin of one another ; and therefore they judged it best to make use of their Passions, which have always a greater Power over them ; and, by imposing necessary Cheats on their Hopes and Fears, keep them within those Limits, which no Principles of Reason or Nature could do.

Men without Reason are much worse than Beasts, because they want the Ends of their Creation, and fall short of that which gives them their Being, which Beasts do not ; but are relieved from that Defect by another Way of Instinct, which is nothing but a Kind of implicit Reason, that, without understanding why, directs them to do, or forbear those Things, that are agreeable,

agreeable, or hurtful to their particular Natures: While a Fool is but half Man and half Beast, is deprived of the Advantages of both, and has the Benefit of neither.

There is nothing more necessary and useful to Reason than Distinguishing, and therefore the Word *Discretion* signifies nothing else; and yet there is nothing, that is rendered so much the Cause of Ignorance, Error, and Nonsense, as School-Distinctions.

Those who employ their Studies only upon Fancy and Words, do commonly abate as much in their Reason and Judgment, as they improve the other Way; for, unless they make Truth and Observation the Ground and Foundation, or rather the End of their Studies, and use Fancy and Style, only as instrumental to express their Conceptions the more easily and naturally, they are no wiser than an Artificer, that mistakes his Tools for what they only serve to work upon. For those, who propose Wit and Fancy for their End, and take in Sense and Reason only as circumstantial and on the Bye, judge as extravagantly as those who believe themselves rich, because they can cast up ever so great Sums of Money, but have not one Penny. And that is one Reason, why such Men are commonly the most unapt in Things, that require Judgment and Reason. For those, who mistake their Ends, do but shoot Powder that makes a Noise, but aims at Nothing.

Reason and Understanding can only preserve a Man from being imposed upon by the various Cheats of the World, but will not cure him when he is sick; nor protect him against Misfortunes; nor enrich him when he is in Want, and out of Employment.

If Reason be the only Note of Distinction between the Immortality and Mortality of the Souls

of

of Men and Beasts, it is strange that this Reason should be of no Use to Men in the Concernments of their eternal Being, but that all should be managed by the Imagination, with which Beasts are not unfurnished, and, therefore, may seem capable of Immortality, since they only want that, which Man has no Advantage by, Reason.

LETTER VI.

On RELIGION.

SIR,

If we rightly consider the Repose of this Life, it were well if Religion had more or less Influence upon Mankind. It compels, but doth not subject enough; like some Governments, that take away the Sweetness of Liberty, and yet are not attended with the Advantages of Subjection.

The Will makes us aspire but weakly after those good Things which are promised us, because it is not excited enough by the Understanding, which is not enough convinced.

We say, out of Compliance, that we believe whatever Authority enjoins us to believe; but, without a particular Grace, we are rather perplexed than persuaded of a Thing that does not fall under the Evidence of our Senses, and which affords no Matter of Demonstration to our Minds.

This, in short, is the Effect of Religion, with Respect to ordinary Men; let us now see the Advantages of it in the truly and perfectly religious Man.

The truly devout Person breaks off with Nature, if we may be allowed the Expression, to take Pleasure in abstaining from Pleasures; and, while he subjects the Body to the Mind, he makes, in some Measure, even Mortification and Pain delightful to himself.

Philosophy goes no farther, than to teach us to endure Misfortunes. The *Christian* Religion makes us triumph over them, and we may say seriously of it what has been gallantly said of Love.

All other Pleasures are not worth its Pains.

A true *Christian* knows how to make his Advantage of every Thing; the Evils which he suffers, are the good Things which God sends to him. The good Things which he wants, are Evils from which Providence has secured him. Every Thing is a Benefit to him, every Thing in this World is a Mercy; and when, by the Necessity of his mortal Condition, he must die, he looks upon the Period of Life, as a Passage to one more happy, which is never to end.

Such is the Felicity of a true *Christian*, whilst Uncertainty and Trouble make the Condition of all others unhappy.

To say the Truth, most of us are unresolved, and not fully determined, either to Good, or Evil. We find in ourselves a continual Turn and Return from Nature to Religion, and from Religion to Nature.

If we abandon the Care of our Salvation to satisfy our Inclinations, those very Inclinations rise up immediately against our Pleasures; and a Disgust for those Objects, which flattered us most of all, makes us return to the Care of our Salvation.

If, on the other Hand, we renounce our Pleasures out of a Principle of Conscience, the same Thing happens to us in our Search after Salvation, for either Habitude, or Tedium, makes us return to the Objects of our first Inclinations.

I have shewn how it succeeds with us, as to Religion within ourselves. Let us now observe, what Judgment the Public makes of it.

If we forsake the World for God, we are looked upon as impious Persons.

If we forsake the World for God, we are thought to be weak, and decayed in our Understanding, and

we are as little pardoned for sacrificing Fortune to Religion, as Religion to Fortune.

The single Example of Cardinal Retz will suffice to justify my Assertion.

When he was made *Cardinal* by Intrigues, Factions, and Tumults, the World exclaimed against him, as an ambitious Man, that sacrificed, not only the Public, but his Conscience and Religion to his Fortune, (as they said.) When he left the Cares of Earth for those of Heaven; when the Persuasion of an other Life made him consider the Grandeur of this as a Chimera; then they said his Head was turned, and made that to pass for a scandalous Weakness in him, which is proposed to us in *Christianity*, as the greatest Virtue.

Men of mean Qualities shew but little Favour to great Virtues; a lofty Wisdom offends an ordinary Reason.

Mine, as ordinary as it is, admires a Person who is thoroughly persuaded, and would admire him still more, could I find him insensible to all the Temptations of Fortune.

I somewhat question the Sincerity of those Preachers, who offer us the Kingdom of Heaven in Public, and yet sollicit a small Benefice in private, with all the Vigour and Application imaginable.

The sole Idea of eternal Happiness renders the Possession of every Thing else contemptible to a Man of true Belief: But, because few of us have Faith, few of us are able to defend this Idea against outward Objects; the Hope of what is promised to us naturally yielding to the Enjoyment of what is before us.

With the greatest Part of *Christians*, the Desire of Believing serves instead of Belief: The Will gives them a Sort of Faith by its Desires, which the Understanding with all its Light refuses.

I have known some devout Men, that, in a strange Sort of Contrariety between their Affection and their Reason, loved God perfectly, without having a strong Faith in him.

When they abandoned themselves to the Affection of their Heart, there was nothing but Zeal for Religion; it was all Fervency and Love. When they examined their Reason, they were amazed to see that they could not comprehend what they loved; and were at a Loss how to answer themselves upon the Subject of their Love. Then, to deliver myself in spiritual Terms, they wanted Consolations, and fell into that sad State of Devotion, which, in the Language of the Monasteries, is called *Aridity* and *Dryness*.

God alone is able to give us a steady, firm, and real Faith. All that we can do of ourselves, is to humble our Understanding in Opposition to the Light of Nature, and to execute with Submission what is ordained for us.

Humanity easily minglest its Errors in Matters of Faith; but it seldom mistakes in the Practice of Virtues; for it is less in our Power to think justly of the Things of Heaven, than to do well.

A Man can never be mistaken in Actions of Justice and Charity. Sometimes he even ordains, and Nature makes Opposition. Sometimes Nature demands what Reason forbids. But in Matters of Justice and Charity all Debates are silenced, and there is, as it were, a general Agreement between Heaven, Nature, and Reason.

LETTER VII.

On the absurd and ridiculous INDULGENCE of fond MOTHERS to their CHILDREN.

SIR,

I am engaged in a Visit at a Friend's House in the Country, where I promised myself much Satisfaction.

I have

I have however been greatly disappointed in my Expectations ; for, on my Arriyal here, I found a House full of Children, who are *humoured* beyond Measure, and indeed absolutely spoiled by the ridiculous Indulgence of a fond Mother. This unlucky Circumstance has subjected me to many Inconveniences ; and, as I am a Man of a grave reserved Disposition, has been a perpetual Source of Embarrassment and Perplexity. The second Day of my Visit, in the Midst of Dinner, the eldest Boy, who is eight Years old, whipped off my Peruke with great Dexterity, and received the Applause of the Table for his Humour and Spirit. This Lad, when he has reached his fourteenth Year, and is big enough to lie without the Maid, is to be sent to a School in the Neighbourhood, which has no other Merit than that of being but seven Miles off. Six of the Children are permitted to sit at Table, who intirely monopolise the Wings of Fowls, and the most delicate Morsels of every Dish ; because the Mother has discovered, that her Children have not strong Stomachs. In the Morning, before my Friend is up, I generally take a Turn upon the Gravel-walk, where I could wish to enjoy my own Thoughts without Interruption ; but I am here instantly attended by my little Tortmentors, who follow me backwards and forwards, and play at what they call *Running after the Gentleman*. My Whip, which was a Present from an old Friend, has been lashed to Pieces by one of the Boys who is fond of Horses, and the Handle is turned into a Hobby-horse. The main Spring of my repeating Watch has been broken in the Nursery, which, at the Mother's Request, I had lent to the youngest Boy, who was just breeched, and who cried to wear it. The Mother's Attention to the Children intirely destroys all Conversation ; and once, as an Amusement for the Evenings, we attempted to begin reading *Tom Jones*, but were interrupted in the second Page by little Sammy, who is suffered to whip his Top in the Parlour. I am known

to be troubled with violent Head-achs ; notwithstanding which, another of the Boys, without Notice given, or any Regard paid to the Company, is permitted to break out into the Braying of an Ass, for which the Strength of his Lungs is commended ; and a little Miss, at Breakfast, is allowed to drink up all the Cream, and put her Fingers into the Sugar-dish, because she was once *sickly*. I am teased with Familiarities, which I can only repay with a Frown ; and pestered with the Petulance of ludicrous Prattle, in which I am unqualified to join. It is whispered in the Family, that I am a mighty good Sort of Man, but that I cannot *talk to Children*. Nor am I the only Person who suffers from this Folly : A neighbouring Clergyman, of great Merit and Modesty, and much acquainted with the Family, has received Hints to forbear coming to the House, because little *Sukey* always cries when she sees him, and has told her Mamma, she can't bear that *ugly Parson*.

Mrs. *Qualm*, my Friend's Wife, the Mother of this hopeful Offspring, is perpetually breeding ; or rather her whole Existence is spent in a Series of great Bellies, Lyings-in, Visitings, Churchings, and Christenings. Every Transaction of her Life is dated from her several Pregnancies. The Grandmother and the Man-midwife, a serious sensible Man, constantly reside in the House, to be always ready on these solemn Occasions. She boasts that no Family has ever sent out more numerous Advertisements for Nurses *with a fine Breast of Milk*. As her Longings have of late been in the vegetable Way, the Garden is cultivated for this Purpose alone, and totally filled with forward Pease and Melon-glasses, in hopes that she may luckily long for what is at Hand. She preserves to the utmost the Prerogative of frequent Pregnancy ; and, conscious of the Dignity and Importance of being often *big*, exerts an absolute Authority over her Husband. He was once a keen Fox-hunter, but has long ago dropped his

his Hounds ; his Wife having remonstrated, that his early Rising disturbed the Family unseasonably, and having dreamed that he broke his Leg in Leaping a Ditch.

I revere Mrs. *Qualm* as the Mother, and only wish I could recommend her as the Manager of Children. I hope this Letter may fall into her Hands, to convince her how absurd it is to suppose, that others can be as much interested in her own Children as herself. I would teach her, that what I complain of as Matter of Inconvenience may, one Day, prove to her a severe Trial ; and that early Licentiousness will, at last, mock that parental Affection, from whose mistaken Indulgence it arose. I am your's.

LETTER VIII.

On CREDULITY, or CONFIDENCE of OPINION.

SIR,

Credulity, or Confidence of Opinion too great for the Evidence from which Opinion is derived, we find to be a general Weakness, imputed by every Sect and Party to all others, and indeed by every Man to every other Man.

Of all Kinds of Credulity, the most obstinate and wonderful is that of political Zealots ; of Men, who, being numbered, they know not how or why, in any of the Parties that divide a State, resign the Use of their own Eyes and Ears, and resolve to believe nothing that does not favour those whom they profess to follow.

The Bigot of Philosophy is seduced by Authorities which he has not always Opportunities to examine, is intangled in Systems by which Truth and Falshood are inextricably complicated, or undertakes to talk on Subjects which Nature did not form him able to comprehend.

The *Cartesian*, who denies that his Horse feels the
M 3 Spur,

Spur, or that the Hare is afraid when the Hounds approach her ; the Disciple of *Mallebranche*, who maintains that the Man was not hurt by the Bullet, which, according to vulgar Apprehensions, swept away his Head ; the Follower of *Berkley*, who, while he sits writing at his Table, declares that he has neither Table, Paper, nor Fingers ; have all the Honour at least of being deceived by Fallacies not easily detected, and may plead, that they did not forsake Truth but for Appearances which they were not able to distinguish from it.

But the Man who engages in a Party has seldom to do with any Thing remote or abstruse ; the present State of Things is before his Eyes ; and, if he cannot be satisfied without Retrospection, yet he seldom extends his Views beyond the historical Events of the last Century : All the Knowledge that he can want is within his Attainment, and most of the Arguments which he can hear are within his Capacity.

Yet so it is that we meet, every Hour of our Life, with Men who have different Opinions upon every Thing past, present, and future ; who deny the most notorious Facts, contradict the most cogent Truths, and persist in asserting To-day what they asserted Yesterday, in Defiance of Evidence and Contempt of Confutation.

Two of my Companions, who are grown old in political Trifling, are *Tom Tempest* and *Jack Sneaker* ; both of them Men who consider themselves as neglected by their Parties, and therefore intitled to Credit, as having no Motive to favour Ingratitude. They are both Men of Integrity, where no factious Interest is to be promoted ; and both Lovers of Truth, when they are not heated with political Debate.

Tom Tempest is a steady Friend to the House of *Stuart* ; he can recount the Prodigies that have appeared in the Sky, and the Calamities that have afflicted the Nation, every Year from the Revolution ; and is of Opinion, that,

that, if the exiled Family had continued to reign, there would have neither been Worms in our Ships, nor Caterpillars in our Trees. He wonders that the Nation was not awaked by the hard Frost to a Revolution of the true King, and is hourly afraid that the whole Island will be lost in the Sea. He believes that King *William* burned *Whitehall* that he might steal the Furniture, and that *Tillotson* died an Atheist. Of Queen *Anne* he speaks with more Tenderness, owns that she meant well, and can tell by whom and why she was poisoned. In the succeeding Reigns all has been Corruption, Malice, and Design. He believes that nothing ill has ever happened for these forty Years by Chance or Error: He holds that the Battle of *Dettingen* was won by Mistake, and that of *Fontenoy* lost by Contract; that the *Victory* was sunk by private Order; that *Cornhill* was burnt by Emisaries from the Council; and the Arch of *Westminster* Bridge was so contrived as to sink on Purpose, that the Nation might be put to Charge. He considers the new Roads about *Illington* as an Incroachment on Liberty, and often asserts that broad *Wheels* will be the Ruin of *England*.

Tom is generally vehement and noisy, but nevertheless has some Secrets which he always communicates in a Whisper; many and many a Time has *Tom* told me, in a Corner, that our Miseries were almost at an End, and that we should see, in a Month, another Monarch on the Throne: The Time elapses without a Revolution; *Tom* meets me again with new Intelligence; the whole Scheme is now settled, and we shall see great Events in another Month.

Jack Sneaker is a hearty Adherent to the present Establishment; he has known those who saw the Bed into which the Pretender was conveyed in a Warming-pan. He often rejoices that the Nation was not enslaved by the *Irish*. He believes that King *William* never lost a Battle, and that, if he had lived one Year longer, he would have conquered *France*. He holds

that *Charles the First* was a *Papist*. He allows there were some good Men in the Reign of *Queen Anne*; but the Peace of *Utrecht* brought a Blast upon the Nation, and has been the Cause of all the Evil that we have suffered to the present Hour. He believes that the Scheme of the *South Sea* was well intended, but that it miscarried by the Influence of *France*. He considers a standing Army as the Bulwark of Liberty, thinks us secured from Corruption by septennial Parliaments, relates how we are enriched and strengthened by the electoral Dominions, and declares that the public Debt is a Blessing to the Nation.

Yet, amidst all this Prosperity, poor *Jack* is hourly disturbed by the Dread of *Popery*. He wonders that some stricter Laws are not made against *Papists*; and is sometimes afraid that they are busy with *French Gold* among the Bishops and Judges.

He cannot believe that the *Nonjurors* are so quiet for nothing; they must certainly be forming some Plot for the Establishment of *Popery*; he does not think the present Oaths sufficiently binding, and wishes that some better Security could be found for the Succession of the House of *Hanover*. He is zealous for the Naturalisation of foreign *Protestants*; and rejoiced, some Years ago, at the Admission of *Jews* to *English Privileges*, because he thought a *Jew* would never be a *Papist*.

LETTER IX.

On the FEROCITY of MAN, exemplified in the Story of a BOHEMIAN SHEPHERD, who pretended to understand the Language of Birds.

SIR,

Many Naturalists are of Opinion, that the Animals which we commonly consider as mute have the Power of imparting their Thoughts to one another. That they can express general Sensations is very certain; every

every Being that can utter Sounds has a different Voice for Pleasure and for Pain : The Hound informs his Fellows when he scents his Game ; the Hen calls her Chickens to their Food by her Cluck, and drives them from Danger by her Scream.

Birds have the greatest Variety of Notes ; they have indeed a Variety which seems almost sufficient to make a Speech adequate to the Purpose of a Life which is regulated by Instinct, and can admit little Change or Improvement. To the Cries of Birds Curiosity or Superstition has been always attentive ; many have studied the Language of the feathered Tribes, and some have boasted that they understood it.

The most skilful or most confident Interpreters of the sylvan Dialogues have been commonly found among the Philosophers of the *East*, in a Country where the Calmness of the Air and the Mildness of the Seasons allow the Student to pass away a great Part of the Year in Groves and Bowers. But what may be done in one Place by peculiar Opportunities may be performed in another by peculiar Diligence. A Shepherd of *Bohemia* has, by long Abode in the Forests, enabled himself to understand the Voice of Birds, at least he relates with great Confidence a Story, of which the Credibility may be considered by the Learned.

As I was sitting (said he) within a hollow Rock, and watching my Sheep that fed in the Valley, I heard two Vultures interchangeably crying on the Summit of the Cliff : Both Voices were earnest and deliberate. My Curiosity prevailed over my Care of the Flock : I climbed slowly and silently from Crag to Crag, concealed among the Shrubs, till I found a Cavity where I might fit and listen, without suffering or giving Disturbance.

I soon perceived that my Labour would be well repaid ; for an old Vulture was sitting on a naked Prominence, with her Young about her, whom she was instructing in the Arts of a Vulture's Life, and prepa-

ring, by the last Lecture, for their final Dismission to the Mountains and the Skies.

My Children, (said the old Vulture) you will less want my Instructions, because you have had my Practice before your Eyes ; you have seen me snatch from the Farm the household Fowl ; you have seen me seize the Leveret in the Bush and the Kid in the Pasture ; you know how to fix your Talons, and how to balance your Flight when you are laden with your Prey. But you remember the Taste of more delicious Food ; I have often regaled you with the Flesh of Man. Tell us, said the young Vultures, where Man may be found, and how he may be known ; his Flesh is surely the natural Food of a Vulture : Why have you never brought a Man in your Talons to the Nest ? He is too bulky, said the Mother ; when we find a Man, we can only tear away his Flesh, and leave the Bones upon the Ground. Since Man is so big, said the young Ones, how do you kill him ? You are afraid of the Wolf and of the Bear ; by what Power are Vultures superior to Man ? Is Man more defenceless than a Sheep ? We have not the Strength of Man, returned the Mother, and I am sometimes in Doubt whether we have the Subtlety ; and the Vultures would seldom feast upon his Flesh, had not Nature, that devoted him to our Uses, infused into him a strange Ferocity, which I have never observed in any other Being that feeds upon the Earth. Two Herds of Men will often meet, and shake the Earth with Noise and fill the Air with Fire. When you hear Noise, and see Fire which flashes along the Ground, hasten to the Place with your swiftest Wing ; for Men are surely destroying one another ; you will then find the Ground smoaking with Blood and covered with Carcasses, of which many are dismembered and mangled for the Convenience of the Vulture. But, when Men have killed their Prey, says the Pupil, why do they not eat it ? When the Wolf has killed a Sheep, he suffers not the Vulture to touch it,

it, till he has satisfied himself: Is not Man another Kind of Wolf? Man, said the Mother, is the only Beast that kills that which he does not devour, and this Quality makes him so much a Benefactor to our Species. If Men kill our Prey, and lay it in our Way, said the young One, what Need shall we have of labouring for ourselves? Man will sometimes, replied the Mother, remain for a long Time quiet in his Den: The old Vultures will tell you when you are to watch his Motions. When you see Men in great Numbers moving close together, like a Flight of Storks, you may conclude that they are hunting, and that you will soon revel in human Blood. But still, said the young One, I would gladly know the Reason of this mutual Slaughter; I could never kill what I could not eat. My Child, said the Mother, this is a Question which I cannot answer, though I am reckoned the most subtle Bird of the Mountain. When I was young, I used frequently to visit the Ayry of an old Vulture, who dwelt upon the *Carpathian* Rocks; he had made many Observations; he knew the Places that afforded Prey round his Habitation, as far in every Direction as the Strongest Wing can fly between the Rising and the Setting of the summer Sun; he had fed Year after Year on the Entrails of Men: His Opinion was, that Men had only the Appearance of animal Life, being really Vegetables with the Power of Motion; and that, as the Boughs of an Oak are dashed together by a Storm, that Swine may fatten upon the falling Acorns, so Men are by some unaccountable Power driven one against another, till they lose their Motion, that Vultures may be fed. Others think that they have observed something of Contrivance and Policy among these mischievous Beings; and those that hover more closely round them pretend, that there is in every Herd one that gives Directions to the rest, and seems to be more eminently delighted with a wide Carnage. What it is that intitles him to such Pre-eminence I know not; he is seldom

the biggest or the swiftest ; but he shews, by Eagerness and Diligence, that he is, more than any of the others, a Friend to Vultures.

LETTER X.

On some Instances of MODERN VANITY.

SIR,

Had the many wise Philosophers of Antiquity, who have so often and so justly compared the Life of Man to a Race, lived in the present Times, they would have seen the Propriety of that Simile greatly augmented : For if we observe the Behaviour of the polite Part of this Nation (that is, of *all* the Nation) we shall see that their whole Lives are one continued Race ; in which every one is endeavouring to distance all behind him, and to overtake, or pass by, all who are before him ; everyone is flying from his Inferiors, in Pursuit of his Superiors, who fly from him with equal Alacrity.

Were not the Consequences of this ridiculous Pride of the most destructive Nature to the Public, the Scene would be entertaining. Every Tradesman is a Merchant, every Merchant is a Gentleman, and every Gentleman one of the Noblesse. We are a Nation of Gentry, *Populus Generosorum* : We have no such Thing as common People amongst us : Between Vanity and Gin the Species is utterly destroyed. The Sons of our lowest Mechanics, acquiring with their Learning at Charity-schools, the laudable Ambition of becoming Gentle-folks, despise their paternal Occupations, and are all soliciting for the honourable Employments of Tidewaiters and Excisemen. Their Girls are all Milliners, Mantua-makers, or Lady's Women ; or presumptuously exercise that genteel Profession, which used to be peculiarly reserved for the politely-educated, but un-portioned Daughters of their Superiors. Attornies Clerks and City 'Prentices

dress like Cornets of Dragoons, keep their Mistresses and their Hunters, criticise at the Play, and toast at the Tavern. The Merchant leaves his Compting-house for St. James's, and the Country Gentleman his own Affairs for those of the Public, by which neither of them receive much Benefit. Every Commoner of Distinction is impatient for a Peerage, and treads hard upon the Heels of Quality in Dress, Equipage, and Expences of every Kind. The Nobility, who can aim no higher, plunge themselves into Debt and Dependence, to preserve their Rank, and are even there quickly overtaken by their unmerciful Pursuers.

The same foolish Vanity, that thus prompts us to imitate our Superiors, induces us also to be, or to pretend to be, their inseparable Companions, or, as the Phrase is, to keep the *best Company*, by which is always to be understood such Company as are much above us in Rank or Fortune, and consequently despise and avoid us, in the same Manner as we ourselves do our Inferiors. By this ridiculous Affectation are all the Pleasures of social Life and all the Advantages of friendly Converse utterly destroyed. We chuse not our Companions for their Wit and Learning, their good Humour or good Sense, but for their Power of conferring this imaginary Dignity, as if Greatness was communicable, like the Powers of the Load-stone by Friction, or by Contact, like Electricity. Every young Gentleman is taught to believe it is more eligible and more honourable to destroy his Time, his Fortune, his Morals, and his Understanding, at a Gaming-house with the *best Company*, than to improve them in the Conversation of the most ingenious and entertaining of his Equals; and every self-conceited Girl, in fashionable Life, chuses rather to endure the affected Silence and insolent Head-ach of my Lady Duchess for a whole Evening, than to pass it in Mirth and Jollity with the most amiable of her Acquaintance. For since it is possible that some,

who

who have not had the Honour of being admitted into the *best Company*, should imagine, that amongst such there is ever the best Conversation, the most lively Wit, the most profound Judgment, and the most engaging Affability and Politeness ; it may be proper to inform them, that this is by no Means always the Case ; but that frequently in such Company little is said, and less attended to ; no Disposition appears either to please others, or to be pleased themselves ; but that, in the room of all the before-mentioned agreeable Qualifications, Cards are introduced, endued with the convenient Power of reducing Men's Understandings, as well as their Fortunes, to an Equality.

It is pleasant to observe, how this Race, converted into a Kind of perpetual Warfare between the *good* and *bad Company* in this Country, has subsisted for half a Century last past ; in which the former have been perpetually pursued by the latter, and fairly beaten out of all their Resources for superior Distinction ; out of innumerable Fashions in Dress, and Variety of Diversions, every one of which they have been obliged to abandon, as soon as occupied by their impertinent Rivals. In vain have they armed themselves with Lace and Embroidery, and intrenched themselves in Hoops and Furbelows : In vain have they had Recourse to full-bottomed Perukes and Toupees ; to high Heads, and low Heads, and no Heads at all : Trade has bestowed Riches on their Competitors, and Riches have procured them equal Finery. Hair has curled as genteely on one Side of *Temple-bar*, as on the other ; and Hoops have grown to as prodigious a Magnitude in the foggy Air of *Cheapside*, as in the purer Regions of *Grosvenor-square* and *Hill-street*.

With as little Success have Opera's, Oratorio's, *Riccioto's*, and other expensive Diversions been invented to exclude *bad Company* : Tradesmen, by enhancing their Prices, have found Tickets for their Wives and Daughters, and by this Means have been enabled to insult

insult the *good Company*, their Customers, at their own Expence ; and, like true Conquerors, have obliged the Enemy to pay for their Defeat. But this Stratagem has, in some Measure, been obviated by the Prudence of the *very best Company*, who, for this, and many other wise Considerations, have usually declined paying them at all.

For many Years was this Combat between the *good* and *bad Company* of this Metropolis performed, like the ancient Tilts and Tournaments, before his Majesty and the Royal Family every *Friday Night*, in the Drawing-Room at St. James's, which now appears, as it usually fares with the Seat of War, desolate and uninhabited, and totally deserted on both Sides ; except that, on a *Twelfth Night*, the *bad Company* never fail to assemble, to commemorate annually the Victories they have there obtained.

The *good Company* being thus every-where put to Flight, they thought proper at last to retire to their own Citadels ; that is, to form numerous and brilliant Assemblies at their own Hotels, in which, they imagined, they could neither be imitated, or intruded on. But here again they were grievously mistaken ; for, no sooner was the Signal given, but every little Lodging-house in Town, of two Rooms and a Closet on a Floor, or rather of two Closets and a Cupboard, teemed with Card-tables, and overflowed with Company : And, as making a Crowd was the great Point here principally aimed at, the smaller the Houses, and the more indifferent the Company, this Point was the more easily effected. Nor could Intrusion be better guarded against, than Imitation ; for, by some Means or other, either by the Force of Beauty or of Dress, of Wealth or Impudence, of Folly enough to lose great Sums at Play, or of Knavery enough to win them, or of some such eminent and extraordinary Qualifications, these plebeian Enemies soon broke down the strongest of their Barriers, and mingled in the thickest

thickest of their Ranks, to the utter Destruction of all their Superiority and Distinction.

But, though it must be owned, that the Affairs of the *good Company* are now in a very bad Situation, yet I would not have them despair, nor perpetually carry about the Marks of their Defeat in their Countenances, so visible in a Mixture of *Fierté* and Dejection. They have still one Asylum left to fly to, which, with all their Advantages of Birth and Education, it is surprising they should not long since have discovered ; but, since they have not, I shall beg Leave to point it out ; and it is this : That they once more retire to the long deserted Forts of true *British Grandeur*, their princely Seats, and magnificent Castles, in their several Countries ; and, there, arming themselves with Religion and Virtue, Hospitality and Charity, Civility and Friendship, bid Defiance to their impertinent Pursuers ; and though I will not undertake that they shall not, even here, be followed in Time, and imitated by their Inferiors, yet so averse are all Ranks of People at present to this Sort of Retirement, so totally disused from the Exercise of these Kinds of Arms, and so unwilling to return to it, that I will venture to promise it will be very long before they can be overtaken or attacked ; but that here, and here only, they may enjoy their favourite Singularity, unmolested for half a Century to come.

LETTER XI.

From a YOUNG GENTLEMAN, reflecting on the absurd and unmanly EDUCATION given him by his MOTHER.

SIR,

I was condemned by some disastrous Influence to be an only Son, born to the apparent Prospect of a large Fortune, and allotted to my Parents at that Time of Life when Satiety of common Diversions allows the Mind to indulge parental Affection with greater Intenseness. My Birth was celebrated by the Tenants with

with Feasts, and Dances, and Bag-pipes ; Congratulations were sent from every Family within ten Miles round ; and my Parents discovered in my first Cries such Tokens of future Virtue and Understanding, that they declared themselves determined to devote the remaining Part of Life to my Happiness, and the Increase of their Estate.

The Abilities of my Father and Mother were not perceptibly unequal, and Education had given neither much Advantage over the other. They had both kept good Company, rattled in Chariots, glittered in Play-houses, and danced at Court, and were both expert in the Games that were in their Time called in as Auxiliaries against the Intrusion of Thought.

When there is such a Parity between two Persons associated for Life, the Husband, if he be not completely stupid, must always suffer for Want of Superiority, and sink into Submissiveness. My Mamma, therefore, governed the Family without Controul ; and, except that my Father still retained some Authority in the Stables, and now and then, after a supernumerary Bottle, broke a Looking-glass, or *China* Dish, to prove his Sovereignty, the whole Course of the Year was regulated by her Direction, the Servants received from her all their Orders, and the Tenants were continued or dismissed at her Discretion.

She therefore thought herself intitled to the Superintendency of her Son's Education ; and, when my Father, at the Instigation of the Parson, fairly proposed that I should be sent to School, very positively told him, that she would not suffer so fine a Child to be ruined ; that she never knew any Boys at a Grammar School that could come into a Room without blushing, or sit at the Table without some awkward Uneasiness ; that they were always putting themselves into Danger by some boisterous Plays, or vitiating their Behaviour with mean Company ; and that, for her Part, she would rather follow me to the Grave, than

see

see me tear my Cloaths, and hang down my Head, and sneak about with dirty Shoes and blotted Fingers, my Hair unpowdered, and my Hat uncocked.

My Father, who had no other End in his Proposal, than to be wise and manly, soon acquiesced, since I was not to live by my Learning; for indeed he had known very few Students that had not some Stiffness in their Manner. They therefore agreed, that a domestic Tutor should be procured, and hired an honest Gentleman of mean Conversation, and narrow Sentiments, but whom, having passed the common Forms of literary Education, they implicitly concluded qualified to teach all that was to be learned from a Scholar. He thought himself sufficiently exalted by being placed at the same Table with his Pupil, and had no other View, than to perpetuate his Felicity by the utmost Flexibility of Submission to all my Mother's Opinions and Caprices. He frequently took away my Book, lest I should mope with too much Application; charged me never to write without turning up my Ruffles, and generally brushed my Coat, before he dismissed me into the Pavlour.

He had no Occasion to complain of too burdensome an Employment; for my Mother very judiciously considered, that I was not likely to grow politer in his Company, and suffered me not to pass any more Time in his Apartment, than my Lesson required. When I was summoned to my Task, she enjoined me not to get any of my Tutor's Ways, who was seldom mentioned before me but for Practices to be avoided. I was every Moment admonished not to lean on my Chair, cross my Legs, or swing my Hands; like my Tutor; and once my Mother very seriously deliberated upon his total Dismission, because I began, as she said, to learn his Manner of sticking on my Hat, and had his Bend in my Shoulders, and his Totter in my Gait.

Such, however, was her Care, that I escaped all these Depravities; and, when I was only twelve Years old,

old, had rid myself of every Appearance of childish Diffidence. I was celebrated round the Country for the Petulance of my Remarks, and the Quickness of my Replies ; and many a Scholar, five Years older than myself, have I dashed into Confusion by the Steadiness of my Countenance, silenced by the Readiness of my Repartees, and tortured with Envy by the Address with which I picked up a Fan, presented a Snuff-box, or received an empty Tea-cup.

At Fourteen I was completely skilled in all the Niceties of Dress, and I could not only enumerate all the Variety of Silks, and distinguish the Product of a *French Loom* ; but dart my Eye through a numerous Company, and observe every Deviation from the reigning Mode. I was universally skilful in all the Changes of expensive Finery ; but, as every one, they say, has something to which he is particularly born, was eminently knowing in *Brussels Lace*.

The next Year saw me advance to the Trust and Power of adjusting the Ceremonial of an Assembly. All received their Partners from my Hand, and to me every Stranger applied for Introduction. My Heart now disdained the Instructions of a Tutor, who was rewarded with a small Annuity for Life, and left me qualified, in my own Opinion, to govern myself.

In a short Time I came to *London*, and, as my Father was well known among the higher Classes of Life, soon obtained Admission to the most splendid Assemblies, and most crowded Card-tables. Here I found myself universally caressed and applauded ; the Ladies praised the Fancy of my Cloaths, the Beauty of my Form, and the Softness of my Voice ; endeavoured in every Place to force themselves upon my Notice ; and invited, by a thousand oblique Sollicitations, my Attendance to the Play-house, and my Salutations in the Park. I was now happy to the utmost Extent of my Conception ; I passed every Morning in Dresses, every Afternoon in Visits, and every Night in some select Assemblies,

Assemblies, where neither Care nor Knowledge were suffered to molest us.

After a few Years, however, these Delights became familiar, and I had Leisure to look round me with more Attention. I then found that my Flatterers had very little Power to relieve the Languor of Satiety, or recreate Weariness, by varied Amusement; and therefore endeavoured to enlarge the Sphere of my Pleasures, and to try what Satisfaction might be found in the Society of Men. I will not deny the Mortification with which I perceived, that every Man, whose Name I had heard mentioned with Respect, received me with a Kind of Tenderness, nearly bordering on Compassion ; and that those whose Reputation was not well established, thought it necessary to justify their Understandings by treating me with Contempt. One of these Witlings elevated his Crest, by asking me, in a full Coffee-house, the Price of Patches ; and another whispered, that he wondered why Miss *Frisk* did not keep me that Afternoon to watch her Squirrel.

When I found myself thus hunted from all masculine Conversation by those who were themselves basely admitted, I returned to the Ladies, and resolved to dedicate my Life to their Service, and their Pleasure. But I find that I have now lost my Charms. Of those with whom I entered the gay World, some are married, some are retired, and some have so much changed their Opinion, that they scarcely pay any Regard to my Civilities, if there is any other Man in the Place. The new Flight of Beauties to whom I have made my Addresses, suffer me to pay the Treat, and then titter with Boys. So that I now find myself welcome only to a few grave Ladies, who, unacquainted with all that either gives Use or Dignity to Life, are content to pass their Hours between their Bed and their Cards, without Esteem from the Old, or Reverence from the Young.

LETTER XII.

On Riches.

SIR,

There is scarcely any Sentiment, in which, amidst the innumerable Varieties of Inclination that Nature or Accident have scattered in the World, we find greater Numbers concurring, than in the Wish for Riches ; a Wish indeed so prevalent, that it may be considered as universal and transcendental, as the Desire in which all other Desires are included, and of which the various Purposes which actuate Mankind are only subordinate Species and different Modifications.

Wealth is the general Center of Inclination, the Point to which all Minds preserve an invariable Tendency, and from which they afterwards diverge in numberless Directions. Whatever is the remote or ultimate Design, the immediate Care is to be rich ; and, in whatever Enjoyment we intend finally to acquiesce, we seldom consider it as attainable but by the Means of Money. Of Wealth therefore all unanimously confess the Value, nor is there any Disagreement but about the Use.

No Desire can be formed which Riches do not assist to gratify. He that places his Happiness in a splendid Equipage or numerous Dependents, in refined Praises or popular Acclamations, in the Accumulation of Curiosities or the Revels of Luxury, in splendid Edifices or wide Plantations, must still either by Birth or Acquisition possess Riches. They may be considered as the elemental Principles of Pleasure, which may be combined with endless Diversity ; as the essential and necessary Substance, of which only the Form is left to be adjusted by Choice.

The Necessity of Riches being thus apparent, it is not wonderful, that almost every Mind has been employed in Endeavours to acquire them ; that Multitudes

tudes have vied in Arts by which Life is furnished with Accommodations, and which therefore Mankind may reasonably be expected to reward.

It had indeed been happy, if this predominant Appetite had operated only in Concurrence with Virtue, by influencing none but those who are zealous to deserve what they were eager to possess, and had Abilities to improve their own Fortunes by contributing to the Ease or Happiness of others. To have Riches and to have Merit would then have been the same, and Success might reasonably have been considered as a Proof of Excellence.

But we do not find, that any of the Wishes of Men keep a stated Proportion to their Powers of Attainment. Many envy and desire Wealth, who can never procure it by honest Industry, or useful Knowledge. They therefore turn their Eyes about to examine what other Methods can be found of gaining that which none, however impotent or worthless, will be content to want.

A little Enquiry will discover that there are nearer Ways to Profit than through the Intricacies of Art, or up the Steeps of Labour; what Wisdom and Virtue scarcely receive at the Close of Life, as the Recompence of long Toil and repeated Efforts, is brought within the Reach of Subtlety and Dishonesty by more expeditious and compendious Measures; the Wealth of Credulity is an open Prey to Falshood; and the Possessions of Ignorance and Imbecillity are easily stolen away by the Conveyances of secret Artifice, or seized by the Gripe of unresisted Violence.

It is likewise not hard to discover, that Riches always procure Protection for themselves; that they dazzle the Eyes of Enquiry, divert the Celerity of Pursuit, or appease the Ferocity of Vengeance. When any Man is incontestably known to have large Possessions, very few think it requisite to enquire by what Practices they were obtained; the Resentment of Mankind

Mankind rages only against the Struggles of feeble and timorous Corruption; but, when it has surmounted the first Opposition, it is afterwards supported by Favour, and animated by Applause.

The Prospect of gaining speedily what is ardently desired, and the Certainty of obtaining by every Accession of Advantage an Addition of Security, have so far prevailed upon the Passions of Mankind, that the Peace of Life is destroyed by a general and incessant Struggle for Riches. It is observed of Gold by an old Epigrammatist, that *to have it is to be in Fear, and to want it is to be in Sorrow.* There is no Condition which is not disquieted either with the Care of gaining or keeping Money; and the Race of Man may be divided into a political Estimate between those who are practising Fraud, and those who are repelling it.

If we consider the present State of the World, it will be found, that all Confidence is lost among Mankind; that no Man ventures to act, where Money can be endangered, upon the Faith of another. It is impossible to see the long Scrolls in which every Contract is included, with all their Appendages of Seals and Attestations, without wondering at the Depravity of those Beings, who must be restrained from Violation of Promise by such formal and public Evidences, and precluded from Equivocation and Subterfuge by such punctilious Minuteness. Among all the Satires to which Folly and Wickedness have given Occasion, none is equally severe with a Bond or a Settlement.

Of the various Arts by which Riches may be obtained, the greater Part are at the first View irreconcileable with the Laws of Virtue; some are openly flagitious, and practised not only in Neglect, but in Defiance of Faith and Justice; and the rest are on every Side so intangled with dubious Tendencies, and so beset with perpetual Temptations, that very few, even of those who are not yet abandoned, are able to preserve their Innocence, or can produce any other Claim

to Pardon, than that they have deviated from the Right less than others, and have sooner and more diligently endeavoured to return.

One of the chief Characteristics of the Golden Age, of the Age in which neither Care nor Danger had intruded on Mankind, is the Community of Possessions : Strife and Fraud were totally excluded, and every turbulent Passion was stilled, by Plenty and Equality. Such were indeed happy Times, but such Times can return no more. Community of Possession must include Spontaneity of Production ; for what is obtained by Labour, will be of Right the Property of him by whose Labour it is gained. And, while a rightful Claim to Pleasure or to Affluence must be procured either by slow Industry or uncertain Hazard, there will always be Multitudes whom Cowardice or Impatience incite to more safe and more speedy Methods, who strive to pluck the Fruit, without cultivating the Tree; and to share the Advantages of Victory, without partaking the Dangers of the Battle.

In later Ages, the Conviction of the Dangers to which Virtue is exposed, while the Mind continues open to the Influence of Riches, has determined many to Vows of perpetual Poverty ; they have suppressed Desire, by cutting off the Possibility of Gratification ; and secured their Peace, by destroying the Enemy, whom they had no Hope of reducing to quiet Subjection. But, by debarring themselves from Evil, they have rescinded many Opportunities of Good ; they have too often sunk into Inactivity and Uselessness ; and, though they have forborn to injure Society, have not fully paid their Contributions to its Happiness.

While Riches are so necessary to present Convenience, and so much more easily obtained by Crimes than Virtues, the Mind can only be secured from yielding to the continual Impulse of Covetousness by the Preponderating of unchangeable and eternal Motives..

tives. Gold will turn the intellectual Balance, when weighed only against Reputation ; but will be light and ineffectual, when the opposite Scale is charged with Justice, Veracity, and Piety.

LETTER XIII.

- *On MARRIAGE.*

SIR,

As, notwithstanding all that Wit, or Malice, or Pride, or Prudence, will be able to suggest, Men and Women must at last pass their Lives together, I have never therefore thought those Writers Friends to human Happiness, who endeavour to excite in either Sex a general Contempt or Suspicion of the other. To persuade them who are entering the World, and looking abroad for a suitable Associate, that all are equally vicious, or equally ridiculous ; that they who trust, are equally betrayed, and they who esteem, are always disappointed ; is not to awaken Judgment, but to inflame Temerity. Without Hope there can be no Caution. Those who are convinced, that no Reason for Preference can be found, will never harrass their Thoughts with Doubt and Deliberation ; they will resolve, since they are doomed to Misery, that no needless Anxiety shall disturb their Quiet ; they will plunge at Hazard into the Crowd, and snatch the first Hand that shall be held towards them.

That the World is over-run with Vice cannot be denied ; but Vice, however predominant, has not yet gained an unlimited Dominion. Simple and unmingled Good is not in our Power, but we may generally escape a greater Evil by suffering a less ; and therefore those, who undertake to initiate the Young and Ignorant in the Knowledge of Life, should be careful to inculcate the Possibility of Virtue and Happiness, and to encourage Endeavours by Prospects of Success.

N

You,

You, perhaps, do not suspect, that these are the Sentiments of one who has been subject for many Years to all the Hardships of antiquated Virginity; has been long accustomed to the Coldness of Neglect, and the Petulance of Insult; has been mortified in full Assemblies by Enquiries after forgotten Fashions, Games long disused, and Wits and Beauties of ancient Renown; has been invited, with malicious Importunity, to the second Wedding of many Acquaintances; has been ridiculed by two Generations of Coquets in Whispers intended to be heard; and been long considered by the Airy and Gay as too venerable for Familiarity, and too wise for Pleasure. It is indeed natural for Injury to provoke Anger, and by continual Repetition to produce an habitual Asperity; yet I have hitherto struggled with so much Vigilance against my Pride, and my Resentment, that I have preserved my Temper uncorrupted. I have not yet made it any Part of my Employment to collect Sentences against Marriage; nor am inclined to lessen the Number of the few Friends whom Time has left me, by obstructing that Happiness which I cannot partake, and venting my Vexation in Censures of the Forwardness and Indiscretion of Girls, or the Inconstancy, Tastelessness, and Perfidy of Men.

It is, indeed, not very difficult to bear that Condition, to which we are not condemned by Necessity, but induced by Observation and Choice; and therefore I, perhaps, have never yet felt all the Malignity with which a Reproach, edged with the Appellation of *Old Maid*, swells some of those Hearts in which it is infixed. I was not condemned in my Youth to Solitude, either by Indigence or Deformity, nor passed the earlier Part of my Life without the Flattery of Courtship, and the Joys of Triumph. I have danced the Round of Gaiety amidst the Murmurs of Envy, and Gratulations of Applause; been attended from Pleasure to Pleasure by the Great, the Sprightly, and

and the Vain, and seen my Regard sollicited by the Obsequiousness of Gallantry, the Gaiety of Wit, and the Timidity of Love. If, therefore, I am yet a Stranger to Nuptial Happiness, I suffer only the Consequences of my own Resolves, and can look back upon the Succession of Lovers, whose Addresses I have rejected, without Grief, and without Malice.

When my Name began first to be inscribed upon Glasses, I was honoured with the amorous Professions of the gay *Venustulus*; a Gentleman, who, being the only Son of a wealthy Family, had been educated in all the Wantonness of Expence, and Softness of Ef-feminacy. He was beautiful in his Person, and easy in his Address, and, therefore, soon gained upon my Eye, at an Age when the Sight is very little overruled by the Understanding. He had not any Power in himself of gladdening or amusing, but supplied his Want of Conversation by Treats and Diversions; and his chief Art of Courtship was to fill the Mind of his Mistress with Parties, Rambles, Music, and Shews. We were often engaged in short Excursions to Gardens and Seats, and I was for a while pleased with the Care which *Venustulus* discovered in securing me from any Appearance of Danger, or Possibility of Mischance. He never failed to recommend Caution to his Coachman, or to promise the Waterman a Reward, if he landed us safe; and always contrived to return by Day-light, for Fear of Robbers. This extraordinary Sollicitude was represented for a Time as the Effect of his Tenderness for me; but Fear is too strong for continued Hypocrisy. I soon discovered, that *Venustulus* had the Cowardice, as well as Elegance of a Female. His Imagination was perpetually clouded with Terrors, and he could scarcely refrain from Screams and Outcries at any accidental Surprise. He durst not enter a Room, if a Rat was heard behind the Wainscot; nor cross a Field, where the Cattle were frisking in the Sun-shine; the least

Breeze that waved upon the Rivers, was a Storm, and every Clamour in the Street was a Cry of Fire. I have seen him lose his Colour, when my Squirrel had broke his Chain ; and was forced to throw Water in his Face, on the sudden Entrance of a black Cat. Compassion once obliged me to drive away, with my Fan, a Beetle that had kept him in Distress ; and chide off a Dog, that had yelped at his Heels, to which he would gladly have given me up to facilitate his own Escape. Women naturally expect Defence and Protection from a Lover or a Husband, and therefore you will not think me culpable in refusing a Wretch, who would have burthened Life with unnecessary Fears, and flown to me for that Succour, which it was his Duty to have given.

My next Lover was *Fungofus*, the Son of a Stock-jobber, whose Visits my Friends, by the Importunity of Persuasion, prevailed upon me to allow. *Fungofus* was no very suitable Companion ; for, having been bred in a Counting-house, he spoke a Language unintelligible in any other Place. He had no Desire of any Reputation, but that of an acute Prognosticator of the Changes in the Funds ; nor had any Means of raising Merriment, but by telling how somebody was over-reached in a Bargain by his Father. He was, however, a Youth of great Sobriety and Prudence, and frequently informed us, how carefully he would improve my Fortune. I was not in Haste to conclude the Match, but was so much awed by my Parents, that I durst not dismiss him, and might perhaps have been doomed for ever to the Grossness of Pedlary, and the Jargon of Usury, had not a Fraud been discovered in the Settlement, which set me free from the Prosecution of grovelling Pride and pecuniary Impudence.

I was afterwards six Months without any particular Notice, but at last became the Idol of the glittering *Flosculus*, who prescribed the Road of Embroidery

to all the Fops of his Time, and varied, at Pleasure, the Cock of every Hat, and the Sleeve of every Coat, that appeared in fashionable Assemblies. *Flosculus* made some Impression on my Heart by a Compliment which few Ladies can hear without Emotion ; he commended my Skill in Dress, my Judgment in suitting Colours, and my Art in disposing Ornaments. But *Flosculus* was too much engag'd by his own Elegance, to be sufficiently attentive to the Duties of a Lover, or to please with varied Praise an Ear made delicate by Riot of Adulation. He expected to be repaid Part of his Tribute, and staid away three Days, because I neglected to take Notice of a new Coat. I quickly found, that *Flosculus* was rather a Rival, than an Admirer ; and that we should probably live in a perpetual Struggle of emulous Finery, and spend our Lives in Stratagems to be first in the Fashion.

I had soon after the Honour at a Feast of attracting the Eyes of *Dentatus*, one of those human Beings, whose only Happiness is to dine. *Dentatus* regaled me with foreign Varieties, told me of Measures that he had laid for procuring the best Cook in *France*, and entertained me with Bills of Fare, prescribed the Arrangement of Dishes, and taught me two Sauces invented by himself. At length, such is the Uncertainty of human Happiness, I declared my Opinion too hastily upon a Pie made under his own Direction ; after which he grew so cold and negligent, that he was easily dismissed.

Many other Lovers, or pretended Lovers, I have had the Honour to lead a-while in Triumph. But two of them I drove from me, by discovering, that they had no Taste or Knowledge in Music ; three I dismissed, because they were Drunkards ; two, because they paid their Addresses at the same Time to other Ladies ; and six, because they attempted to influence my Choice, by bribing my Maid. Two more I discarded at the second Visit, for obscene Allusions ; and

five, for Drollery on Religion. In the latter Part of my Reign, I sentenced two to perpetual Exile, for offering me Settlements, by which the Children of a former Marriage would have been injured ; four, for representing falsely the Value of their Estates ; three, for concealing their Debts ; and one, for raising the Rent of a decrepit Tenant.

I have now sent you a Narrative, which the Ladies may oppose to the Tale of *Hymenæus*. I mean not to depreciate the Sex, which has produced Poets and Philosophers, Heroes and Martyrs ; but will not suffer the rising Generation of Beauties to be dejected by partial Satire ; to imagine, that those who censure them, have not likewise their Follies and their Vices. I do not yet believe Happiness unattainable in Marriage, though I have never yet been able to find a Man, with whom I could prudently venture an inseparable Union. It is necessary to expose Faults, that their Deformity may be seen ; but the Reproach ought not to be extended beyond the Crime, nor either Sex be condemned, because some Women, or Men, are indelicate, or dishonest :

I am, &c.

LETTER XIV.

On AGE influenced by FLATTERY.

SIR,

There is no State more contrary to the Dignity of Wisdom, than perpetual and unlimited Dependence ; in which the Understanding lies useless, and every Motion is received from external Impulse. Reason is the great Destruction of human Nature, the Faculty by which we approach to some Degree of Association with celestial Intelligences ; but, as the Excellence of every Power appears only in its Operations, not to have Reason, and to have it useless and unemployed, is nearly the same,

Such

Such is the Weakness of Man, that the Essence of Things is seldom so much regarded, as external and accidental Appendages. A small Variation of trifling Circumstances, a slight Change of Form by an artificial Dress, or a casual Difference of Appearance, by a new Light and Situation, will conciliate Affection, or excite Abhorrence, and determine us to pursue or avoid. Every Man considers a Necessity of Compliance with any Will but his own, as the lowest State of Ignominy and Meanness; few are so far lost in Cowardice or Negligence, as not to rouse at the first Insult of Tyranny, and exert all their Force against him who usurps their Property, or invades any Privilege of Speech or Action. Yet we often see those who never wanted Spirit to repel Incroachment, or oppose Violence, at last, by a gradual Relaxation of Vigilance, delivering up, without Capitulation, the Fortress which they defended against Assault, and laying down unbidden the Weapons which they grasped the harder, for every Attempt to wrest them from their Hands. Men, eminent for Spirit and Wisdom, often resign themselves to voluntary Pupillage, and suffer their Lives to be modelled by officious Ignorance, and their Choice to be regulated by presumptuous Stupidity.

The unresisting Acquiescence in the Determination of others may be the Consequence of Application to some Study remote from the beaten Track of Life; some Employment which does not allow Leisure for sufficient Inspection of those petty Affairs, by which Nature has decreed a great Part of our Duration to be filled. To a Mind, thus withdrawn from common Objects, it is more eligible to repose on the Prudence of another, than to be expos'd every Moment to flight Interruptions. The Submission, which such Confidence requires, is paid without Pain, because it implies no Confession of Inferiority. The Business from which we withdraw our Cognisance,

is not above our Abilities, but below our Notice. We please our Pride with the Effects of our Influence thus weakly exerted, and fancy ourselves placed in a higher Orb, from which we regulate subordinate Agents by a slight and distant Superintendence. But, whatever Vanity or Abstraction may suggest, no Man can safely do that by others, which might be done by himself; he that indulges Negligence, will quickly become ignorant of his own Affairs; and he that trusts without Reserve, will at last be deceived.

It is however impossible but that, as the Attention attends strongly towards one Thing, it must retire from another; and he that omits the Care of domestic Business, because he is engrossed by Enquiries of more Importance to Mankind, has at least the Merit of suffering in a good Cause. But there are many who can plead no such Extenuation of their Folly; who shake off the Burthen of their Station, not that they may soar with less Incumbrance to the Heights of Knowledge or Virtue, but that they may loiter at Ease, and sleep in Quiet; and who select, for Friendship and Confidence, not the Faithful and the Virtuous, but the Soft, the Civil, and the Complaisant.

This Openness to Flattery is the common Disgrace of declining Life. When Men feel Weakness increasing on them, they naturally desire to rest from the Struggles of Contradiction, the Fatigue of Reasoning, and the Anxiety of Circumspection; when they are hourly tormented with Pains and Diseases, they are unable to bear any new Disturbance, and consider all Oppositions as an Addition to Misery, of which they feel already more than they can patiently endure. Thus desirous of Peace, and thus fearful of Pain, the Old-man seldom enquires after any other Qualities in those whom he caresses, than Quickness in conjecturing his Desires, Activity in supplying his Wants, Dexterity in intercepting Complaints, before they approach near enough to disturb him; Flexibility to his present Humour,

Humour, Submission to hasty Petulance, and Attention to wearisome Narrations. By these Arts alone, many have been able to defeat the Claims of Kindred and of Merit, and to enrich themselves with Presents and Legacies.

LETTER XV.

On COURTIERS.

SIR,

Liberty contributes very much to the Happiness of Life, and the most easy Way to acquire it is to despise Fortune, and to accustom one's self early to value Things at no more than what they are worth, and not to think the Lot of great Men either more happy, or more to be esteemed, than that of private Men. When a Man is got to the Bounds of his Wishes, and values others according to the Share they have more or less of Virtue, the Condition of the Great no longer dazzles his Eyes ; he looks on them from the only right Point of View, and sees nothing in them of what so much strikes the Eyes of the Vulgar. A true Philosopher knows but one single Advantage that great Men have, an Advantage which, nevertheless, they know not how to improve, but despise it. He envies them neither their Riches, nor their Honour, nor their Offices, nor their Palaces, nor their Banquets ; but he wishes it was in his Power, as it is in theirs, to reward Men of Merit : If he was in their Place, he would do the only Thing which they omit doing, and would omit every Thing which they perform.

Whoever knows what great Men are, knows that, in general, they have all the Faults that are capable of obstructing the Happiness of those who adhere to them, or are obliged to depend on them. Commonly the higher a Man is raised, the more Right he thinks he has to deceive other Men. When he has Occa-

sion for them, he amuses them with fair Promises, but, when they should be performed, they vanish.

Great Men are as ungrateful as they are insincere; they have a thousand Ways to rid themselves of a Man who has done them good Service, when he can be no longer useful to them. They disgust him, despise him; give him cruel Mortification, and, in short, act such a Part, that the Man thinks himself very happy to be quit of them. He is succeeded by another, who holds his Place no longer than needs must; for whatever Service he does, how punctually soever he discharges his Duty, a Day will come when he, too, shall be cashiered as well as his Predecessor: Every Moment of the Time that was to establish his Fortune, accelerates his Ruin; and, when he thinks he has done the best that he could do, that Instant he is disgraced.

Great Men seldom chuse Persons of much Merit for their Friends, either for Want of Discernment, or because the Company of Men of Virtue seems as a Curb to them, and because they are afraid of their Advice, which is a Sort of Reproach for their Misconduct. They repose a Confidence in those who have not Qualities worthy of it. They, moreover, fancy themselves wiser than all other Men, and they grant their Friendship to Persons for the Sake of having Flatterers, rather than Friends.

Be the Dissimulation of great Men never so deep, and how much soever they find their Advantage in appearing the very Reverse of what they are in Reality, yet this Vanity is such, that it beguiles and persuades them, that they possess the most uncommon Qualities of the Mind, and that they cannot conceal the Malignity of their Hearts. The Pleasure they feel in shewing their Superiority over Persons that approach them, induces them to rail and backbite, and nothing is safe from the Virulence of their Tongues. "They cannot," says the wise *Brayere*, conceal their Malice,

Malice, their extravagant Propensity to laugh at another Man's Expence, and to throw out Ridicule often when there is no Foundation for it. These fine Talents are discerned in them at first Sight, and no doubt admirable Talents they are, for entangling a Cully, and making a Fool of any one that was no better before; but they are still more likely to deprive them of all the Pleasure which they might reap from a Man of Wit, who could turn and wind himself a thousand agreeable and pleasant Ways, if the dangerous Humour of Courtiers did not engage him to be reserved: For, in Opposition to that, he puts on a serious Air, in which he intrenches himself, and acts his Part so well, that the Railers, ill-disposed as they are, can have no Reason to laugh at him." One of the greatest Mortifications for those Men, of any Spirit, who are attached to the Great, is to be subject to their Jokes, which are more cutting, because the Air of Superiority, and sometimes of Contempt, which accompanies them, gives them a Bitterness, which they would not be tinctured with, if they were vented by private Persons. There are Men of such a mean servile Temper, that they sooth the Great in the Vice of scandalising Persons of the greatest Worth by barbarous Expressions and cruel Banter: They applaud what they ought to condemn, and their sordid Flattery entails Perpetuity on a Fault, which might, in Process of Time, be by virtuous Counsel corrected. If Great Men did but know how much they suffer in the Opinion of other Men, by endeavouring to make themselves ridiculous, and to what a Degree they make themselves hated by them; they would, perhaps, have so much Regard for themselves, as not to involve themselves in the public Hatred, for the Sake of inventing a Joke, which is often a bad one, and always unworthy of their Quality, and of that Decorum which they ought to keep up.

When we are with great Men whom we are desirous of pleasing, it is not enough to forbear saying Things to them which may disoblige them, but we must be incessantly commending them ; and, even tho' we see nothing in them that is Praise-worthy, we must nevertheless applaud them, and ascribe Virtues to them, of which they have the least Share. We need be under no Apprehension of any Danger from their being sensible that they do not deserve it. *Juvenal* has judiciously remarked, that there is no Praise which comes amiss to such as are invested with a Power equal to that of the Gods. What a sad Employment must it be for a Man of Wisdom and Virtue to approve what ought to be condemned !

Reason and Wisdom are, as it were, Incumbrances upon such as think to make their Fortune under the Protection of great Men ; for they shew them every Moment how ridiculous, nay, how criminal, such Behaviour is ; and yet they are obliged to act as they do, or they must renounce their Hopes.

The Submission, paid to great Men by those who approach them, is beyond Imagination. The Soul of a Courtier only acts, or rather thinks according to the Impressions which it receives from the Sovereign, his Ministers, or Favourites.

The Complaisance that must be paid to a Court, almost deprives the Understanding of its Operations, and puts Courtiers upon doing Things which are sometimes cruel, and sometimes pitiful, often ridiculous, and seldom rational. *Dionysius the Younger* having drank Wine to such a Degree, that he was almost blind, his Courtiers pretended to be all blind ; they jostled one another, and often suffered themselves to be thrown down. The most artful of them also made Bumps in their Foreheads, and, every now and then, pretended at Table, that he could not see the Dishes. Some even affected to be so short-sighted, that they could not see the King, or placed themselves in a Situation

tuation to receive his Spittle. Because *Alexander the Great* carried his Head leaning upon one Shoulder, all his Courtiers did the same. The *French* cut their Hair very short in the Reign of *Francis the First*, because that Prince, by Reason of a Wound, which he had received in his Head, was obliged to have his Hair cut in the same Manner. In the Reigns of *Francis the First* and *Lewis the Fourteenth*, all the Courtiers affected to be Men of Learning, for they knew that those Princes loved and protected the Sciences.

The Court Air is so contagious, it inspires such a Meanness of Spirit, and it accustoms People to so absolute a Vassalage, that the Philosophers who long frequented it have commonly lost their Virtue : Few of them had the Wisdom of *Solon* or the Steadiness of *Callisthenes*; but, on the contrary, debased themselves, and raised their Reputation by their lavish Flatteries of their Sovereigns. *Anaximander*, being with *Alexander the Great*, and hearing a terrible Clap of Thunder, desired that Prince to be so good to own to him, if it was not he that, in Quality of Jupiter's Son, had thundered so loudly. *Pliny the Younger*, in his Panegyric on *Trajan*, wished, in the City of *Rome*, that the Gods would imitate *Cæsar*, and propose him to themselves for a Model. *Trebonianus*, that great Civilian, that wise Legislator, often said to *Justinian*, that he was continually afraid he should see him carried up to Heaven when he least thought of it. Such Sayings as these shew to what a Degree Persons who pass for the wisest Men are capable, I will not say of flattering, but of cringing and lying, when a Court Life has robbed them of their Virtue. What Treasure is there that can make them Amends for the Loss of that Virtue, without which all the Substance they have acquired cannot make them happy?

Would it not be a hundred Times better for a Philosopher to live in a Tub, like surly *Diogenes*, and preserve his Honesty, than to dwell in a stately Palace, where

where he is liable every Moment to lose the Fruits of his painful Study? *Diogenes* judged very wisely when he blamed *Aristippus* for his eager Pursuit of a Court Life, and *Aristippus* made a very bad Excuse for himself: If *Aristippus* (said *Diogenes*) could be contented with Pulse, he would not make his Court to Kings. *Aristippus* answered, If *Diogenes* knew how to make his Court to a King, he would soon be out of Conceit with Pulse. I take *Aristippus's* Answer to be altogether unbecoming a Philosopher; for it says not more or less, than that, if *Diogenes* had known what it was to eat and drink well, at the Expence of his Liberty and the Hazard of his Virtue, Pulse would have been nauseous to him. Besides the Indecency there was in what *Aristippus* said, the Argument was unjust; for it is certain that a Man may know how to make his Court to Kings, and yet think himself more happy in feeding on Pulse than turning Courtier. Whoever is cured of Ambition, and knows the Evils which are the Consequences of that Passion, will always think so too. For one happy Man at Court there are five hundred unhappy; and *Lucretius* had Reason on his Side, when he placed all the Torments of Hell in the Hearts of the Ambitious. According to him, the *Sisyphus* of Hell is the Man's Hell whom we see in Life servilely petitioning the People for the *Fasces* and the Axe, and who exposes himself to fresh Rebuffs to return home full of Hopes and Fears, after making Interest for a Government which has nothing but an empty Name. To aspire, without Success, to the Power of commanding, and to miscarry, even after suffering the greatest Indignity and Cruelty to attain to it, is like the Labour-in-vain of the unhappy Wretch, who rolls a great Stone up a Hill, which, when it is at the Top, continually tumbles back again, and forces him to renew his painful Task.

LETTER XVI.

On CONVERSATION.

SIR,

None of the Desires dictated by Vanity is more general, or less blameable, than that of being distinguished for the Arts of Conversation. Other Accomplishments may be possessed without Opportunity of exerting them, or wanted without Danger that the Defect can often be remarked ; but, as no Man can live otherwise than in an Hermitage without hourly Pleasure or Vexation from the Fondness or Neglect of those about him, the Faculty of giving Pleasure is of continual Use. Few are more frequently envied than those who have the Power of forcing Attention wherever they come, whose Entrance is considered as a Promise of Felicity, and whose Departure is lamented, like the Recess of the Sun from northern Climates, as a Privation of all that enlivens Fancy and inspires Gaiety.

It is apparent, that, for Excellence in this valuable Art, some peculiar Qualifications are necessary ; for every one's Experience will inform him, that the Pleasure which Men are able to give in Conversation holds no stated Proportion to their Knowledge or Virtue. Many find their Way to the Tables and the Parties of those who never consider them as of the least Importance in any other Place : We have all, at one Time or other, been content to love those whom we could not esteem ; and been persuaded to try the dangerous Experiment of admitting him for a Companion whom we knew to be too ignorant for a Counsellor, and too treacherous for a Friend.

I question whether some Abatement of Character is not necessary to general Acceptance : Few spend their Time with much Satisfaction under the Eye of incontestable Superiority ; and therefore, among those whose Presence is courted at Assemblies of Jollity, there are seldom

seldom found Men eminently distinguished for Powers or Acquisitions. The Wit, whose Vivacity condemns flower Tongues to Silence; the Scholar, whose Knowledge allows no Man to fancy that he instructs him; the Critic, who suffers no Fallacy to pass undetected; and the Reasoner, who condemns the Idle to Thought and the Negligent to Attention; are generally praised and feared, reverenced and avoided.

He that would please must rarely aim at such Excellence as depresses his Hearers in their own Opinion, or debars them from the Hope of contributing reciprocally to the Entertainment of the Company. Merriment, extorted by Sallies of Imagination, Sprightliness of Remark, or Quickness of Reply, is too often what the *Latins* call the *Sardinian Laughter*; a Distortion of the Face without Gladness of Heart.

For this Reason, no Style of Conversation is more extensively acceptable than the Narrative. He who has stored his Memory with slight Anecdotes, private Incidents, and personal Particularities, seldom fails to find his Audience favourable. Almost every Man listens with Eagerness to cotemporary History; for almost every Man has some real or imaginary Connection with a celebrated Character, and some Desire to advance or oppose a rising Name. Vanity often co-operates with Curiosity: He that is a Hearer in one Place qualifies himself to become a Speaker in another; for, though he cannot comprehend a Series of Argument, or transport the volatile Spirit of Wit without Evaporation, he yet thinks himself able to treasure up the various Incidents of a Story, and pleases his Hopes with the Information which he shall give to some inferior Society.

Narratives are for the most Part heard without Envy; because they are not supposed to imply any intellectual Qualities above the common Rate: To be acquainted with Facts not echoed by plebeian Mouths may happen to one Man as well as to another; and to relate them, when they are known, has in Appearance so little Difficulty,

faculty, that every one concludes himself equal to the Task.

But it is not easy, and in some Situations of Life not possible, to accumulate such a Stock of Materials as may support the Expence of continual Narration ; and it frequently happens, that they who attempt this Method of ingratiating themselves, please only at the first Interview ; and, for Want of new Supplies of Intelligence, wear out their Stories by continual Repetition.

There would be, therefore, little Hope of obtaining the Praise of a good Companion, were it not to be gained by more compendious Methods ; but such is the Kindness of Mankind to all, except those who aspire to real Merit and rational Dignity, that every Understanding may find some Way to excite Benevolence, and whoever is not envied may learn the Art of procuring Love : We are willing to admire ; we favour the Mirth or Officiousness that sollicits our Regard, but oppose the Worth or Spirit that inforces it.

The first Place among those that please, because they desire only to please, is due to the *merry Fellow*, whose Laugh is loud and whose Voice is strong ; who is ready to echo every Jest with obstreperous Approbation, and countenance every Frolic with Vociferations of Applause. It is not necessary to a *merry Fellow* to have in himself any Fund of Jocularity or Force of Conception ; it is sufficient that he appears in the highest Exultation of Gladness ; for the greater Part of Mankind are gay or serious by Infection, and follow, without Resistance, the Attraction of Example.

Next to the *merry Fellow* is the *good-natured Man* ; a Being generally without Benevolence, or any other Virtue, than such as Indolence and Insensibility confer. The Characteristic of a *good-natured Man* is to bear a Joke ; to sit unmoved and unaffected amidst Noise and Turbulence, Profaneness and Obscenity ; to hear every Tale without Contradiction ; to endure Insult without Reply ; and to follow the Stream of Folly, what-

ever

ever Course it shall happen to take. *The good-natured Man* is commonly the Darling of the petty Wits, with whom they exercise themselves in the Rudiments of Raillery; for he never takes Advantage of Failings, nor disconcerts a puny Satirist with unexpected Sarcasms; but, while the *Glaſs* continues to circulate, contentedly bears the Expence of uninterrupted Laughter, and retires rejoicing at his own Importance.

The modest Man is a Companion of a yet lower Rank, whose only Power of giving Pleasure is not to interrupt it. *The modest Man* satisfies himself with peaceful Silence, which all his Companions are candid enough to consider as proceeding not from Inability to speak, but Willingness to hear.

Many, without being able to attain any general Character of Excellence, have some single Art of Entertainment, which serves them as a Passport through the World. One I have known for fifteen Years the Darling of a weekly Club, because every Night, precisely at Eleven, he begins his favourite Song, and, during the vocal Performance, by correspondent Motions of his Hand, chalks out a Giant upon the Wall. Another has endeared himself to a long Succession of Acquaintances by sitting among them with his Wig reversed; another by contriving to smut the Nose of any Stranger who was to be initiated in the Club; another by purring like a Cat, and then pretending to be frightened; and another by yelping like a Hound, and calling the Drawers to drive out the Dog.

Such are the Arts by which Chearfulness is promoted, and sometimes Friendship established; Arts which those that despise them should not rigorously blame, except when they are practised at the Expence of Innocence; for it is always necessary to be loved, but not always necessary to be reverenced.

LETTER XVII.

On PASSIONATE PERSONS.

SIR,

It is a vulgar Notion, and worthy of the Vulgar, for it is both false and absurd, *That passionate People are the best-natured People in the World*: “They are a little hasty, it is true; a Trifle will put them in a Fury; they neither know nor care what they say or do; but then, as soon as it is over, they are extremely sorry and penitent for any Injury or Mischief they did.” This Panegyric on these choleric good-natured People, when examined and simplified, amounts in plain common Sense and *English* to this: That they are good-natured when they are not ill-natured; and that, when in their Fits of Rage they have said or done Things that have brought them to Gaol or the Gallows, they are extremely sorry for it. It is indeed highly probable that they are; but where is the Reparation to those whose Reputations, Limbs, or Lives they have either wounded or destroyed? This Concern comes too late, and is only for themselves: Self-love was the Cause of the Injury, and is the only Motive of the Repentance.

Had these furious People real Good-nature, their first Offence would be their last; and they would resolve at all Events never to relapse: The Moment they felt their Choler rising, they would injoin themselves an absolute Silence and Inaction, and by that sudden Check rather expose themselves to momentary Ridicule (which by the Way would be followed by universal Applause) than run the least Risque of being irreparably mischievous.

I know it is said in their Behalf, that this Impulse to Warmth is constitutionally so sudden and so strong, that they cannot stifle it even in its Birth: But Experience shews us that this Allegation is notoriously false; for we daily observe that these stormy Persons both can and

and do lay those Gusts of Passion, when awed by Respect, restrained by Interest, or intimidated by Fear. The most outrageous Furioso does not give a Loose to his Anger in Presence of his Sovereign or his Mistress ; nor the expectant Heir in Presence of the peevish Dotard from whom he hopes for an Inheritance. The sullen Courtier, though perhaps under the strongest Provocations, from unjust Delays and broken Promises, calmly swallows his unavailing Wrath, disguises it even under Smiles, and gently waits for more favourable Moments ; nor does the Criminal fly in a Passion at his Judge or his Jury.

There is then but one solid Excuse to be alledged in Favour of these People ; and, if they will frankly urge it, I will candidly admit it, because it points out its own Remedy : I mean, let them fairly confess themselves mad, as they most unquestionably are ; for what Plea can those who are frantic ten Times a Day bring against Shaving, Bleeding, and a dark Room, when so many much more harmless mad Men are confined in their Cells at *Bedlam*, for being mad only once in a Moon ? Nay, I have been assured by the late ingenious Doctor *Monro*, that such of his Patients who were really of a good-natured Disposition, and who, in their lucid Intervals, were allowed the Liberty of walking about the Hospital, w^ould frequently, when they found the previous Symptoms of their returning Madness, voluntarily apply for Confinement, conscious of the Mischief which they might possibly do, if at Liberty. If those who pretend not to be mad, but who really are so, had the same Fund of Good-nature, they would make the same Application to their Friends, if they have any.

There is in the *Ménagiana* a very pretty Story of one of these angry Gentlemen, which sets their Extravagancy in a very ridiculous Light.

Two Gentlemen were riding together, one of whom, who was a choleric one, happened to be mounted on a high-mettled Horse : The Horse grew a little troublesome,

some, at which the Rider grew very angry, and whipped and spurred him with great Fury ; to which the Horse, almost as wrong-headed as his Master, replied with Kicking and Plunging. The Companion, concerned for the Danger, and ashamed of the Folly of his Friend, said to him coolly, “ Be quiet, be quiet, and shew yourself the wiser of the two.”

This Sort of Madness, for I will call it by no other Name, flows from various Causes, of which I shall now enumerate the most general.

Light unballasted Heads are very apt to be overset by every Gust or even Breeze of Passion ; they appreciate Things wrong, and think every Thing of Importance but what really is so : Hence those frequent and sudden Transitions from silly Joy to sillier Anger, according as the present silly Humour is gratified or thwarted. This is the never-failing Characteristic of the uneducated Vulgar, who often, in the same Half-hour, fight with Fury and shake Hands with Affection. Such Heads give themselves no Time to reason ; and, if you attempt to reason with them, they think you rally them, and resent the Affront. They are, in short, over-grown Children, and continue so in the most advanced Age. Far be it from me to insinuate, what some ill-bred Persons have bluntly asserted, that this in general is the Case of the fairest Part of our Species, whose great Vivacity does not always allow them Time to reason consequentially, but hurries them into Testiness upon the least Opposition to their Will : But at the same Time, with all the Partiality which I have for them, and no-body can have more than I have, I must confess, that, in all their Debates, I have much more admired the Copiousness of their Rhetoric than the Conclusiveness of their Logic.

People of strong animal Spirits, warm Constitutions, and a cold Genius (a most unfortunate and ridiculous, though common Compound) are most irascible Animals, and very dangerous in their Wrath : They are active, puzzling, blundering, and petulantly enterprising

sing and persevering : They are impatient of the least Contradiction, having neither Arguments nor Words to reply with ; and the animal Part of their Composition bursts out into furious Explosions, which have often mischievous Consequences. Nothing is too outrageous or criminal for them to say or do in these Fits ; but, as the Beginning of their Frenzy is easily discoverable by their glaring Eyes, inflamed Countenances, and rapid Motions, the Company, as Conservators of the Peace (which by the Way every one is, till the Authority of a Magistrate can be procured) should forcibly seize these Madmen, and confine them, in the mean Time, in some dark Closet, Vault, or Coal-hole.

Men of nice Honour, without one Grain of common Honesty (for such there are) are wonderfully combustible : The honourable is to support and protect the dishonest Part of their Character. The Consciousness of their Guilt makes them both sore and jealous.

There is another very irascible Sort of human Animals, whose Madness proceeds from Pride. These are generally the People who, having just Fortunes sufficient to live idle and useless to Society, create themselves Gentlemen, and are scrupulously tender of the Rank and Dignity which they have not. They require the more Respect, from being conscious that they have no Right to any. They construe every Thing into a Slight, ask Explanations with Heat, and misunderstand them with Fury : “ Who are you ? What are you ? Do you know whom you speak to ? I’ll teach you to be so insolent to a Gentleman,” are their daily Idioms of Speech, which frequently end in Assault and Battery, to the great Emolument of the Round-house and Crown-office.

I have known many young Fellows who, at their first Setting out in the World, or in the Army, have simulated a Passion which they did not feel, merely as an Indication of *Spirit*, which Word is falsely looked upon as synonymous with *Courage*. They dress and look fierce, swear

swear enormously and rage furiously, seduced by that popular Word *Spirit*. But I beg Leave to inform these young *Gentlemen*, whose Error I compassionate, that the true Spirit of a rational Being consists in cool and steady Resolution, which can only be the Result of Reflection and Virtue.

Our great Creator has wisely given us Passions to rouse us into Action, and to engage our Gratitude to him, by the Pleasures they procure us; but, at the same Time, he has kindly given us Reason sufficient, if we will but give that Reason fair Play, to controul those Passions; and has delegated Authority to say to them, as he said to the Waters, *Thus far shall ye go, and no farther*. The angry Man is his own severest Tormenter; his Breast knows no Peace, while his raging Passions are restrained by no Sense of either religious or moral Duties. What would be his Case, if his unforgiving Example (if I may use such an Expression) were followed by his all-merciful Maker, whose Forgiveness he can only hope for, in Proportion as he himself forgives and loves his Fellow-creatures?

LETTER XVIII.

On CIVILITY and GOOD-BREEDING.

SIR,

Civility and *Good-breeding* are generally thought, and often used, as synonymous Terms; but are by no Means so.

Good-breeding necessarily implies *Civility*; but *Civility* does not reciprocally imply *Good-breeding*. The former has its intrinsic Weight and Value, which the latter always adorns, and often doubles, by its Workmanship.

To sacrifice one's own Self-love to other People's is a short, but, I believe, a true Definition of *Civility*; to do it with Ease, Propriety, and Grace is *Good-breeding*. The one is the Result of Good-nature; the other of

good Sense, joined to Experience, Observation, and Attention.

A Ploughman will be *civil*, if he is good-natured; but cannot be *well-bred*: A Courtier will be well-bred, though perhaps without Good-nature, if he has but good Sense.

Flattery is the Disgrace of *Good-breeding*, as Brutality often is of Truth and Sincerity: *Good-breeding* is the middle Point between those two odious Extremes.

Ceremony is the Superstition of *Good-breeding*, as well as of Religion; but yet, being an Out-work to both, should not be absolutely demolished. It is always, to a certain Degree, to be complied with, though despised by those who think, because admired and respected by those who do not.

The most perfect Degree of *Good-breeding*, as I have already hinted, is only to be acquired by great Knowledge of the World and keeping the best Company. It is not the Object of mere Speculation, and cannot be exactly defined, as it consists in a Fitness, a Propriety, of Words, Actions, and even Looks, adapted to the infinite Variety and Combinations of Persons, Places, and Things. It is a Mode, not a Substance; for what is *Good-breeding* at St. James's would pass for Foppery or Banter in a remote Village; and the home-spun Civility of that Village would be considered as Brutality at Court.

A cloistered Pedant may form true Notions of *Civility*; but if, amidst the Cobwebs of his Cell, he pretends to spin a speculative System of *Good-breeding*, he will not be less abused than his Predecessor, who judiciously undertook to instruct *Hannibal* in the Art of War. The most ridiculous and most awkward of Men are, therefore, the speculatively well-bred Monks of all Religions and all Professions.

Good-breeding, like Charity, not only covers a Multitude of Faults, but, to a certain Degree, supplies the Want of some Virtues. In the common Intercourse

of Life it acts Good-nature, and often does what Good-nature will not always do ; it keeps both Wits and Fools within those Bounds of Decency, which the former are apt to transgress, and which the latter never know. Courts are unquestionably the Seats of *Good-breeding*, and must necessarily be so, otherwise they would be the Seats of Violence and Desolation : There all the Passions are in the highest State of Fermentation : All pursue what but few can obtain, and many seek what but one can enjoy ; *Good-breeding* alone restrains their Excesses. There, if Enemies did not embrace, they would stab ; there, Smiles are often put on to conceal Tears ; there, mutual Services are professed, while mutual Injuries are intended ; and, there, the Guile of the Serpent simulates the Gentleness of the Dove. All this, it is true, at the Expence of Sincerity ; but, upon the Whole, to the Advantage of social Intercourse in general.

I would not be misapprehended, and supposed to recommend *Good-breeding*, thus profaned and prostituted, to the Purposes of Guilt and Perfidy ; but I think I may justly infer from it, to what a Degree the Accomplishment of *Good-breeding* must adorn and inforce Virtue and Truth, when it can thus soften the Outrages and Deformity of Vice and Falshood.

I am sorry to be obliged to confess, that my native Country is not, perhaps, the Seat of *Good-breeding* ; though I really believe that it yields to none in hearty and sincere *Civility*, as far as *Civility* is (and to a certain Degree it is) an inferior moral Duty of doing as one would be done by. If *France* exceeds us in that Particular, the incomparable Author of *L'Esprit des Loix* accounts for it very impartially, and I believe very truly : “ If my Countrymen (says he) are the best-bred People in the World, it is only because they are the ‘‘ vainest.’’ It is certain, that their *Good-breeding* and Attentions, by flattering the Vanity and Self-love of others, repay their own with Interest. It is a general

O Commerce,

Commerce, usually carried on by a Barter of Attentions, and often without one Grain of solid Merit, by Way of Medium, to make up the Balance.

It were to be wished that *Good-breeding* were in general thought a more essential Part of the Education of our Youth, especially of Distinction, than at present it seems to be: It might even be substituted in the Room of some academical Studies, that take up a great Deal of Time to very little Purpose; or, at least, it might usefully share some of those many Hours that are so frequently employed upon a Coach-box or in Stables. Surely those, who by their Rank and Fortune are called to adorn Courts, ought at least not to disgrace them by their Manners.

But I observe with Concern, that it is the Fashion for our Youth of both Sexes to brand *Good-breeding* with the Name of Ceremony and Formality: As such, they ridicule and explode it; and adopt in its Stead an offensive Carelessness and Inattention, to the Diminution, I will venture to say, even of their own Pleasures, if they know what true Pleasures are.

Love and Friendship necessarily produce, and justly authorise, Familiarity; but then *Good-breeding* must mark out its Bounds; for I have known many a Passion and many a Friendship degraded, weakened, and at last (if I may use the Expression) wholly *flattered* away, by an unguarded and illiberal Familiarity. Nor is *Good-breeding* less the Ornament and Cement of common social Life: It connects, it indears, and, at the same Time that it indulges the just Liberty, restrains that indecent Licentiousness of Conversation, which alienates and provokes. Great Talents make a Man famous, great Merit makes him respected, and great Learning makes him esteemed; but *Good-breeding* alone can make him be loved.

I recommend it in a more particular Manner to my Country-women, as the greatest Ornament to such of them as have Beauty, and the safest Refuge for those who

who have not. It facilitates the Victories, decorates the Triumphs, and secures the Conquests of Beauty; or in some Degree atones for the Want of it. It almost deifies a fine Woman, and procures Respect at least to those who have not Charms enough to be admired.

Upon the Whole, though *Good-breeding* cannot, strictly speaking, be called a Virtue, yet it is productive of so many good Effects, that, in my Opinion, it may justly be reckoned more than a mere Accomplishment.

LETTER XIX.

On FOLLY.

SIR,

Most People complain of Fortune, few of Nature; and, the kinder they think the latter has been to them, the more they murmur at what they call the Injustice of the former.

Why have not I the Riches, the Rank, the Power of such and such, is the common Expostulation with Fortune; but why have not I the Merit, the Talents, the Wit, or the Beauty of such and such others, is a Reproach rarely, or never, made to Nature.

The Truth is, that Nature, seldom profuse, and seldom niggardly, has distributed her Gifts more equally than she is generally supposed to have done. Education and Situation make the great Difference. Culture improves, and Occasions elicit natural Talents. I make no Doubt, but that there are potentially (if I may use that pedantic Word) many *Bacons*, *Lockes*, *Newtones*, *Cæsars*, *Cromwells*, and *Marlboroughs*, at the Plough-tail, behind Counters, and, perhaps, even among the Nobility; but the Soil must be cultivated, and the Seasons favourable, for the Fruit to have all its Spirit and Flavour.

If sometimes our common Parent has been a little partial, and not kept the Scales quite even; if one pre-

ponderates too much, we throw into the lighter a due Counterpoise of Vanity, which never fails to set all right. Hence it happens, that hardly any one Man would, without Reserve, and in every Particular, change with any other.

Though all are thus satisfied with the Dispensations of Nature, how few listen to her Voice? How few follow her, as their Guide? In vain she points out to us the plain and direct Way to Truth; Vanity, Fancy, Affectation, and Fashion assume her Shape, and wind us through Fairy Ground to Folly and Error.

These Deviations from Nature are often attended by serious Consequences, and always by ridiculous ones; for there is nothing truer than the trite Observation, “That People are never ridiculous for being what they really are, but for affecting to appear what they really are not.” Affectation is the only Source, and, at the same Time, the only Object of Ridicule. No Man whatsoever, be his Pretensions what they will, has a natural Right to be ridiculous: It is an acquired Right, and not to be acquired without some Industry; which perhaps is the Reason why so many People are so jealous and tenacious of it.

Even some People’s *Vices* are not their own, but affected and adopted (though at the same Time unenjoyed) in Hopes of shining in those fashionable Societies, where the Reputation of certain Vices gives Lustre. In these Cafes, the Execution is commonly as awkward, as the Design is absurd; and the Ridicule equals the Guilt.

This calls to my Mind a Thing that really happened not many Years ago: A young Fellow of some Rank and Fortune, just let loose from the University, resolved, in order to make a Figure in the World, to assume the shining Character of, what he called, a Rake. By Way of learning the Rudiments of his intended Profession, he frequented the Theatres, where he was often drunk, and always noisy. Being one Night

Night at the Representation of that most absurd Play, the *Libertine destroyed*, he was so charmed with the Profligacy of the Hero of the Piece, that, to the Edification of the Audience, he swore many Oaths, that he would be the *Libertine destroyed*. A discreet Friend of his, who sat by him, kindly represented to him, that to be the *Libertine* was a laudable Design, which he greatly approved of ; but that to be the *Libertine destroyed* seemed to him an unnecessary Part of his Plan, and rather rash. He persisted, however, in his first Resolution, and insisted upon being the *Libertine*, and *destroyed*. Probably he was so ; at least the Presumption is in his Favour. There are, I am persuaded, so many Cases of this Nature, that, for my own Part, I would desire no greater Step towards the Reformation of Manners for the next twenty Years, than that People should have no Vices but *their own*.

The Blockhead, who affects Wisdom, because Nature has given him Dulness, becomes ridiculous only by his adopted Character ; whereas he might have stagnated in his native Mud, or, perhaps, have engrossed Deeds, collected Shells, and studied Heraldry or Logic, with some Success.

The shining Coxcomb aims at all, and decides finally upon every Thing, because Nature has given him Pertness. The Degree of Parts, and animal Spirits, necessary to constitute that Character, if properly applied, might have made him useful in many Parts of Life ; but his Affectation and Presumption make him useless in most, and ridiculous in all.

The septuagenary fine Gentleman might, probably, from his long Experience and Knowledge of the World, be esteemed and respected in the several Relations of domestic Life, which, at his Age, Nature points out to him ; but he will most ridiculously spin out the rotten Thread of his former Gallantries. He dresses, languishes, ogles, as he did at Five-and-twenty ; and modestly intimates, that he is not without a *bonne Fortune*

which *bonne Fortune* at laſt appears to be the Proſtitute he had long kept (not to himſelf) whom he marries and owns, because *the poor Girl was ſo fond of him, and ſo defirous to be made an honest Woman.*

The fexagenary Widow remembers, that ſhe was handsome, but forgets, that it was thirty Years ago ; and thinks herſelf ſo, or, at laſt, very *likeable* ſtill. The pardonable Affectations of her Youth and Beauty unpardonably continue, increase even with her Years, and are doubly exerted, in Hopes of concealing the Number. All the gaudy glittering Parts of Dress, which rather degraded than adorned her Beauty in its Bloom, now expose, to the highest and the juſteſt Ridicule, her ſhriveiled or her over-grown Carcaſe. She totters or ſweats under the Load of her Jewels, Embroideries, and Brocades, which, like ſo many *Egyptian Hieroglyphics*, ſerve only to authenticate the venerable Antiquity of her august Mummy. Her Eyes dimly twinkle Tenderness, or leer Desire ; their Language, however inelegant, is intelligible ; and the Half-pay Captain understands it. He addresses his Vows to her Vanity, which assures her they are ſincere. She pities him, and prefers him to Credit, Decency, and every ſocial Duty. He tenderly prefers Her (though not without ſome Hefitation) to a Jail.

Self-love, kept within due Bounds, is a natural and useful Sentiment. It is, in Truth, ſocial Love too, as Mr. Pope has very juſtly observed : It is the Spring of many good Actions, and of no ridiculous ones. But Self-flattery is only the Ape or Caricatura of Self-love, and reſembles it no more than is absolutely neceſſary to heighten the Ridicule. Like other Flattery, it is the moſt profuſely beſtowed, and greedily swallowed, where it is the leaſt deſerved. I will conclude this Subject with the Subſtance of a Fable of the ingenioſus Monsieur *de la Motte*, which ſeems not unapplicable to it :

Jupiter made a Lottery in Heaven, in which Mortals,

tals, as well as Gods, were allowed to have Tickets. The Prize was *Wisdom*; and *Minerva* got it. The Mortals murmured, and accused the Gods of foul Play. *Jupiter*, to wipe off this Aspersion, declared another Lottery, for Mortals singly, and exclusively of the Gods. The Prize was *Folly*. They got it, and shared it among themselves. All were satisfied. The Loss of *Wisdom* was neither regretted, nor remembered; *Folly* supplied its Place, and those who had the largest Share of it, thought themselves the wisest.

LETTER XX.

On AVARICIOUS GLUTTONY.

SIR,

When *Diogenes* was once asked, what Kind of Wine he liked best? He answered, “That which is drank at the Cost of others.”

Though the Character of *Diogenes* has never excited any general Zeal of Imitation, there are many who resemble him in his Taste of Wine; many who are frugal, though not abstemious; whose Appetites, though too powerful for Reason, are kept under Restraint by Avarice, and to whom all Delicacies lose their Flavour, when they cannot be obtained but at their own Expence.

Nothing produces more Singularity of Manners, and Inconstancy of Life, than the Conflict of opposite Vices in the same Mind. He that uniformly pursues any Purpose, whether good or bad, has a settled Principle of Action; and, as he may always find Associates that are travelling the same Way, is countenanced by Example, and sheltered in the Multitude; but a Man, actuated at once by different Desires, must move in a Direction peculiar to himself, and suffer that Reproach, which we are naturally inclined to bestow on those who deviate from the rest of the World, even without enquiring whether they are worse or better.

Yet this Conflict of Desires sometimes produces wonderful Efforts. To riot in far-fetched Dishes, or surfeit with unexhausted Variety, and yet practise the most rigid Œconomy, is surely an Art, which may justly draw the Eyes of Mankind upon them, whose Industry or Judgment has enabled them to attain it. To him, indeed, who is content to break open the Chests, or mortgage the Manors of his Ancestors, that he may hire the Ministers of Excess at the highest Price, Gluttony is an easy Science; yet we often hear the Votaries of Luxury boasting of the Elegance which they owe to the Taste of others, relating with Rapture the Succession of Dishes, with which their Cooks and Caterers supply them; and expecting their Share of Praise with the Discoverers of Arts, and the Civilisers of Nations. But, to shorten the Way to convivial Happiness, by eating without Cost, is a Secret hitherto in few Hands, but which certainly deserves the Curiosity of those, whose principal Enjoyment is their Dinner; and who see the Sun rise with no other Hope, than that they shall fill their Bellies before it sets.

Of them that have, within my Knowledge, attempted this Scheme of Happiness, the greater Part have been obliged to desist; and some, whom their first Attempts flattered with Success, were reduced by Degrees to a few Tables, from which they were at last chaced, to make Way for others; and, having long habituated themselves to superfluous Plenty, growled away their latter Years in discontented Competence.

None enter the Regions of Luxury with higher Expectations than Men of Wit, who imagine, that they shall never want a Welcome to that Company, whose Ideas they can enlarge, or whose Imaginations they can elevate; and believe themselves able to pay for their Wine, with the Mirth which it qualifies them to produce. Full of this Opinion, they crowd, with little Invitation, wherever the Smell of a Feast allures them;

them ; but are seldom encouraged to repeat their Visits, being dreaded by the Pert, as Rivals, and hated by the Dull, as Disturbers of the Company.

No Man has been so happy in gaining and keeping the Privilege of living at luxurious Houses, as *Gulosulus*, who, after thirty Years of continual Revelry, has now established, by uncontroverted Prescriptions, his Claim to partake of every Entertainment ; and whose Presence, they, who aspire to the Praise of a sumptuous Table, are careful to procure on a Day of Importance, by sending the Invitation a Fortnight before.

Gulosulus entered the World without any eminent Degree of Merit ; but was careful to frequent Houses where Persons of Rank resorted. By being often seen, he became in Time known ; and, from sitting in the same Room, was suffered to mix in idle Conversation, or assisted to fill up a vacant Hour, when better Amusement was not readily to be had. From the Coffee-house he was sometimes taken away to Dinner ; and, as no Man refuses the Acquaintance of him, whom he sees admitted to Familiarity by others of equal Dignity, when he had been met at a few Tables, he with less Difficulty found the Way to more, till at last he was regularly expected to appear wherever Preparations are made for a Feast within the Circuit of his Acquaintance.

When he was thus by Accident initiated into Luxury, he felt in himself no Inclination to retire from a Life of so much Pleasure, and therefore very seriously considered how he might continue it. Great Qualities, or uncommon Accomplishments, he did not find necessary ; for he had already seen, that Merit rather inforces Respect, than attracts Fondness ; and, as he thought no Folly greater than that of losing a Dinner, for any other Gratification, he often congratulated himself, that he had none of that disgusting Excellence which impresses Awe upon Greatness, and condemns

its Possessors to the Society of those who are wise or brave, and indigent as themselves.

Gulosulus, having never allotted much of his Time to Books or Meditation, had no Opinion in Philosophy, or Politics, and was not in Danger of injuring his Interest by dogmatical Positions, or violent Contradiction. If a Dispute arose, he took Care to listen with earnest Attention, and, when either Speaker grew vehement and loud, turned towards him with eager Quickness, and uttered a short Phrase of Admiration, as if surprised by such Cogency of Argument as he had never known before. By this silent Concession, he generally preserved in either Controvertist such a Conviction of his own Superiority, as inclined him rather to pity than irritate his Adversary ; and prevented those Outrages, which are sometimes produced by the Rage of Defeat, or Petulance of Triumph.

Gulosulus was never embarrassed, but when he was required to declare his Sentiments, before he had been able to discover to which Side the Master of the House inclined ; for it was his invariable Rule to adopt the Notions of those that invited him.

It will sometimes happen, that the Insolence of Wealth breaks into Contemptuousness, or the Turbulence of Wine requires a Vent ; and *Gulosulus* seldom fails of being singled out on such Emergencies, as one on whom any Experiment of Ribaldry may be safely tried. Sometimes his Lordship finds himself inclined to exhibit a Specimen of Raillery, for the Diversion of his Guests ; and *Gulosulus* always supplies him with a Subject of Merriment. But he has learned to consider Rudeness and Indignities as Familiarities that intitle him to greater Freedom : He comforts himself, that those who treat and insult him pay for their Laughter ; and that he keeps his Money, while they enjoy the Jest.

His chief Policy consists in selecting some Dish from every Course, and recommending it to the Company, with an Air so decisive, that no one ventures to contradict

tradict him. By this Practice he acquires at a Feast a Kind of dictatorial Authority ; his Taste becomes the Standard of Pickles and Seasoning, and he is venerated by the Professors of *Epicurism*, as the only Man who understands the Niceties of Cookery.

Whenever a new Sauce is imported, or any Innovation made in the culinary System, he procures the earliest Intelligence, and the most authentic Receipt; and, by communicating his Knowledge under proper Injunctions of Secrecy, gains a Right of tasting his own Dish, whenever it is prepared, that he may tell whether his Directions have been fully understood.

By this Method of Life *Gulosulus* has so impressed on his Imagination the Dignity of feasting, that he has no other Topic of Talk, or Subject of Meditation. His Calendar is a Bill of Fare ; he measures the Year by successive Dainties. The only common Places of his Memory are his Meals ; and, if you ask him at what Time an Event happened, he considers whether he heard it after a Dinner of Turbot, or Venison. He knows, indeed, that those who value themselves upon Sense, Learning, or Piety, speak of him with Contempt ; but he considers them as Wretches envious or ignorant, who do not know his Happiness, or wish to supplant him ; and declares to his Friends, that he is fully satisfied with his own Conduct, since he has fed every Day on twenty Dishes, and yet doubleth his Estate.

LETTER XXI.

On MODESTY and ASSURANCE.

SIR,

I have here sent you a Fable, with which, perhaps, you will not be displeased.

Modesty, the Daughter of *Knowledge*, and *Assurance*, the Offspring of *Ignorance*, met accidentally upon the Road ; and, as both had a long Way to go, and had experienced, from former Hardships, that they were alike

alike unqualified to pursue their Journey alone, they agreed, notwithstanding the Opposition in their Natures, to lay aside all Animosities, and, for their mutual Advantage, to travel together. It was in a Country where there were no Inns for Entertainment; so that, to their own Address, and to the Hospitality of the Inhabitants, they were continually to be obliged for Provisions and Lodging.

Affurance had never failed getting Admittance to the Houses of the Great; but it had frequently been her Misfortune to be turned out of Doors, at a Time when she was promising herself an elegant Entertainment, or a Bed of Down to rest upon. *Modesty* had been excluded from all such Houses, and compelled to take Shelter in the Cottages of the Poor; where, tho' she had Leave to continue as long as she pleased, a Truss of Straw had been her usual Bed, and Roots, or the coarsest Provisions, her constant Repast. But, as both, by this accidental Meeting, were become Friends and Fellow-travellers, they entertained Hopes of assisting each other, and of shortening the Way by dividing the Cares of it.

Affurance, who was dressed lightly in a Summer Silk and short Petticoats, and who had something commanding in her Voice and Presence, found the same easy Access as before, to the Castles and Palaces upon the Way; while *Modesty*, who followed her in a Rustic Gown, speaking low, and casting her Eyes upon the Ground, was, as usual, pushed back by the Porter at the Gate, till introduced by her Companion, whose fashionable Appearance and familiar Address got Admission for both.

And, now, by the Endeavours of each to support the other, their Difficulties vanished, and they saw themselves the Favourites of all Companies, and the Parties of their Pleasures, Festivals, and Amusements. The Sallies of *Affurance* were continually checked by the Delicacy of *Modesty*; and the Blushes of *Modesty* were

were frequently relieved by the Vivacity of *Affurance*; who, though she was sometimes detected at her old Pranks, which always put her Companion out of Countenance, was yet so awed by her Presence, as to stop short of Offence.

Thus, in the Company of *Modesty*, *Affurance* gained that Reception and Esteem, which she had vainly hoped for in her Absence; while *Modesty*, by Means of her new Acquaintance, kept the best Company, feasted upon Delicacies, and slept in the Chambers of State. *Affurance* indeed had, in one Particular, the Ascendancy over her Companion: For, if any one asked *Modesty*: whose Daughter she was, she blushed, and made no Answer; while *Affurance* took the Advantage of her Silence, and imposed herself upon the World as the Offspring of *Knowledge*.

In this Manner did the Travellers pursue their Journey; *Affurance* taking the Lead through the great Towns and Cities, and apologising for the Rusticity of her Companion; while *Modesty* went foremost through the Villages and Hamlets, and excused the odd Behaviour of *Affurance*, by presenting her as a Courtier.

It happened one Day, after having measured a tedious Length of Road, that they came to a narrow River, which, by a hasty Swell, had washed away the Bridge that was built over it. As they stood upon the Bank, casting their Eyes on the opposite Shore, they saw, at a little Distance, a magnificent Castle, and a Crowd of People inviting them to come over. *Affurance*, who stopped at nothing, throwing aside the Covering from her Limbs, plunged, almost naked, into the Stream, and swam safely to the other Side. *Modesty*, offended at the Indecency of her Companion, and diffident of her own Strength, would have declined the Danger; but being urged by *Affurance*, and derided for her Cowardice by the People on the other Side, she unfortunately ventured beyond her Depth, and, oppressed by

by her Fears, as well as entangled by her Clothes, which were bound tightly about her, immediately disappeared, and was driven by the Current none know whither. It is said, indeed, that she was afterwards taken up alive by a Fisherman upon the *English* Coast, and that shortly she will be brought to this Metropolis, and shewn to the Curious of both Sexes.

Affurance, not in the least daunted, pursued her Journey alone ; and, though not altogether as successful as with her Companion, yet, having learnt in particular Companies, and upon particular Occasions, to assume the Air and Manner of *Modesty*, she was received kindly in every House ; and, at last arriving at the End of her Travels, she became a very great Lady, and rose to be the first Maid of Honour to the Queen of the Country.

LETTER XXII.

On CRUELTY, INJUSTICE, and BENEFICENCE.

SIR,

I am lately come to Town, after a few Months Retirement in the Country, where I was made acquainted with the following Instance of Cruelty and Injustice ; the Relation of which affected me so sensibly, that I have not yet been able to efface the Impression it made on my Mind :

A poor Man rented a small Farm of a wealthy Country 'Squire ; and with the utmost Labour and Diligence was scarce able to clear his Rent, and provide for a numerous Family. He was six Months in Arrears, when his Landlord distrained ; and the Amount of what he seized on the Premises considerably exceeded his Demand. However he refused to come to any Account, or to deliver the Surplus which remained in his Hands. The Farmer, being unable to litigate the Affair, must have submitted to his Oppressor, and been inevitably ruined, had not the Humanity of a neighbouring Gentleman preserved him ; who, hearing of

his

his Distress, interposed in his Behalf, and recovered the Overplus, so unjustly detained ; which he returned to the thankful desponding Owner. But his Goodness did not stop here. For, being convinced of his honest Endeavours to prosper, he raised a Subscription for his Benefit, among the Gentlemen of his Acquaintance, to which he contributed very largely himself. By Means of these charitable Offices, he was enabled to fly from Oppression, and become Tenant to a Person of more Worth and Integrity ; under whom he continues in favourable Circumstances, which he endeavours to improve with all the chearful Efforts of Industry ; and takes every Oportunity of testifying the purest Gratitude to his noble Benefactor.

This Story affords us the lively Representation of two opposite Characters. In the one we have a true Picture of Justice and Beneficence ; Virtues, which are truly ornamental, than which none are more suitable to our Nature, or more conducive to the Benefit of Mankind. In the other we have a perfect Idea of Injustice and Inhumanity ; Vices which disgrace our Being, and are the Bane of Society.

The Motives which prompt Men to Injustice are various. Some are smitten with the Love of Superiority ; and, to reach that State of Pre-eminence to which they aspire, they will be guilty of every Act of Depredation, which they can commit with Impunity. Some are attached to sensual Pleasures, and to indulge in Luxury, and to gratify their voluptuous Appetites, will wantonly distress the Good and Virtuous, and deprive them even of the Necessaries of Life. Some are cursed with the Thirst of Avarice, and will practise all the Arts of Extortion, to amass Heaps of Wealth, which they dare not enjoy themselves, yet refuse to bestow the least Part of their Treasure towards the Relief of the Indigent and Necessitous. Some there are who think the slightest Provocation a sufficient Colour for the most rigid Oppression, and upon that Principle

urge their Power of Resentment to the utmost ; but such are to learn, that, whenever Revenge exceeds the Degree of the Offence offered, the Avenger is guilty of the same Cruelty and Injustice, as if he had received no Injury whatever. To be truly just, it is not enough that we ourselves do no Wrong to our Fellow-creatures ; we ought also, as far as we are able, to repel the Attempts made by others, to their Prejudice ; and to shelter and protect the Defenceless from the Hands of Violence. If we neglect this, we are unjust. And, though we are exempt from the Cognisance of human Laws ; though we feel no Remorse of Conscience, for having abandoned those who have a Claim to our Protection ; yet, we must not flatter ourselves, that he, whose impartial Eye traces us through every Subterfuge, will suffer us to go unpunished, for having forsaken our Duty to Society, and acted in Opposition to the Dictates of Reason and Religion.

Next to Justice Beneficence claims our peculiar Regard. But, when we would exercise this Virtue, we ought to deliberate with ourselves, and see that we do not mistake its Office. We should consider, whether our Circumstances will answer our intended Bounty ; for there are many who are generous to Strangers, to the Prejudice of their Friends and Relations. There are others yet more unpardonable, who rob one Part of Mankind, and bestow the Plunder on the other, to gain the Reputation of being liberal ; but such are equally as unjust as if they had converted the Spoils to their own Use ; for true Beneficence should be exerted with a View of doing Good, without Detriment to any one. We ought also to consult the Worth of the Person whom we have chosen for the Object of our Liberality ; and to consider in what Degree of Benevolence he stands towards us ; for they have the best Title to our Favour, who regard us most. We ought likewise to examine our Minds, whether we are actuated by the

pure Motives of Virtue and Humanity, abstracted from the least Inducement of Vain-glory and Ostentation.

These are the Principles which ought to govern true Beneficence, and direct such as are possessed of Riches or Power to the Exertion of those Blessings for the Benefit of Mankind. The Sons of Poverty and Distress have a Right to the Protection and Assistance of the Rich and Powerful. Their Hearts should be open, as a Refuge for the Afflicted ; and their Coffers should be as Store-houses for the Needy. But Inhumanity too often closes every Avenue to the former ; and the rusty Locks of Avarice with-hold the charitable Distribution of the Wealth, which moulds in the latter : Those Locks, which are seldom opened, till the Pride or wanton Prodigality of some lavish Heir break into the Hoard, which he profusely squanders away, to enrich the Vicious and Undeserving.

There is a further and yet more grievous Misfortune, which frequently attends the Wretched. Such are not only denied that Succour, to which their Miseries intitle them ; but sometimes impelled by the Prevalence of their ruling Passions. —— They who are bound to ease the Load of their Affliction, add to the Weight, and crush them into a State of Dependence on their lawless Wills and Inclinations.

These proud Oppressors should be made to know, that true Magnanimity consists in the faithful and ready Discharge of those Duties which we owe to the Distressed and Injured. All other is false Greatness. Man was not made for himself alone, but for the Support and Advantage of Society ; which is to be preserved by the Exchange of good Offices and Acts of Humanity. These are Virtues, which reflect true Dignity on human Nature. These keep us united in the indissoluble Bonds of mutual Love and Friendship. These are the most distinguishing Characteristics of a good Man.

LETTER XXIII.

On FRIENDSHIP.

SIR,

There is nothing more talked of, and less easily found, than *Friendship*: Although every body pretends to it, yet not one Person in a Million possesses this noble Passion. Kings are, in a Manner, intirely incapacitated, by their high Station, from being acquainted with it; and we find *Hiero of Syracuse*, long since, complaining, “That he perceived himself deprived of all mutual *Friendship*, reciprocal Society, and familiar Conversation, wherein the greatest Pleasures of human Life consisted:” For what real Affection can one Man shew another, that is in some Measure obliged, whether he will or not, in every Word and Action, to express to him the greatest Respect and Courtesy he is Master of? The Honour that Princes receive from their Servants, is rather paid to the Majesty they represent, than to themselves; there is too great an Inequality and Disproportion in their Circumstances for real *Friendship* to have Place between them; whatsoever the greater Part of their Followers say to them, is little better than a false Gloſs, and mere Dissimulation. *Julian the Emperor*, being one Day flattered by his Courtiers, for administering Justice, and deciding rightly in a certain Affair, “I should very readily grow proud (said he) if these Commendations came from such as durſt either accuse or dispraise my Faults, if I should commit any.”

History furnishes very few Examples of real *Friendship* in this exalted Station; whether it exists between Kindred or otherwise, the Affection it produces, is always superior to that caused by Affinity in Blood. *Herodotus* seems to give us an Instance to the contrary, in his Account of *Psammeticus King of Egypt*, who having been defeated and taken Prisoner by *Cambyses King*

King of *Persia*, and seeing his Daughter pass before him in base and vile Apparel, being sent to draw Water from a Well, he uttered not a Word, notwithstanding the Complaints of his Friends, but held his Eyes fixed on the Ground ; and, shortly after beholding his Son led to Execution, he still preserved the same undaunted Courage and Resolution, and did not change his Countenance, until, perceiving a familiar Friend of his dragged in Chains among the Captives, he began to beat his Head, and burst forth into extreme Sorrow. A Person, unacquainted with the true Workings of Nature, would, at first Sight, imagine, that this Prince's Grief for his Friend exceeded that for his Children ; but his Answer to *Cambyses*, who asked him, how it happened that he so much bewailed the Disaster of his Friend, and seemed to neglect the Misfortunes of his Children, shews the contrary. “ It is (answered *Psimmeticus*) because Tears and Complaints are sufficient to express my Concern for this last unfortunate Spectacle ; whereas the two former exceed by much every human Means of testifying my Grief.”

When unhappy Catastrophes make up a Part of the History of Princes and great Personages, who have acted in exalted Stations, or are represented in the moving Language and well-wrought Scenes of Tragedians, they do not fail of filling our Minds with Compassion : But then they affect us only in a transient Manner, and pass through our Imaginations as Incidents, in which our Fortunes are too humble to be concerned, or which Writers invent to display the Force of their own Talents : Or, at most, as Things more proper to exercise the Power of our Minds, than to create new Habits in them.

Instead of such exalted Passages, it would be of great Use to lay before Mankind such Adventures of Persons who are not raised above the common Level. This would better prevail upon the ordinary Race of Men,

Men, who are so prepossessed with outward Appearances, that they mistake Fortune for Nature ; and believe that nothing can relate to them, that does not happen to such as live and look like themselves.

The ancient Poets, for Want of authentic and real Examples of the noble Quality of *Friendship*, had Recourse to Fiction, and told us Stories of their *Pylades* and *Orestes* ; but I shall, at present, entertain you with as great an Action of generous *Friendship*, as human Nature is capable of performing. It is taken from the Voyages of *Huighen van Linschoten*, who was an Author of unexceptionable Credit, and in Part Eye-witness of the Story :

“ In the Beginning of the sixteenth Century, the Portuguese Carracks sailed from *Lisbon* on their Voyage to *Goa*; a very great, rich, and flourishing Colony of that Nation, in the *East-Indies*. There were no less than twelve hundred Souls, Mariners, Merchants, Passengers, Priests, and Friars, on board one of these Vessels. The Beginning of their Voyage was prosperous ; they had doubled the Southern Extremity of the great Continent of *Africa*, called the Cape of *Good-Hope*, and were shaping their Course North-east, to the great Continent of *India* ; when some Gentlemen on board, having studied Geography and Navigation (Arts that reflect Honour on the Possessors) found in the Latitude in which they were then sailing a large Ridge of Rocks laid down in their Sea-charts. They had no sooner made this Discovery, than they acquainted the Captain of the Ship of the Affair, desiring him to communicate the same to the Pilot ; which Request he immediately gratified, recommending him to lie by in the Night, and slacken Sail by Day, until they should be past the Danger. It is a Custom always among the Portuguese absolutely to commit the Sailing Part, or the Navigation of the Vessel, to the Pilot, who is answerable, with his Head, for the safe Conduct or Carriage of the King’s Ships, or those belonging to private

private Traders; and he is under no Manner of Direction from the Captain, who commands in every other Respect.

The Pilot, being one of those self-sufficient Men, who think every Hint given them by others, in the Way of their Profession, as derogatory from their Understanding, took it as an Affront to be taught his Art; and, instead of complying with the Captain's Request, actually crowded more Sail than the Vessel had carried before. They had not sailed many Hours, but, just about the Dawn of Day, a terrible Disaster befel them, which would have been prevented, had they lain by. The Ship struck upon a Rock. I leave to your Imagination what a Scene of Horror this dreadful Accident must occasion among twelve hundred Persons, all in the same inevitable Danger, beholding, with fearful Astonishment, that instantaneous Death, which now stared them in the Face!

In this Distress the Captain ordered the Pinnace to be launched; into which having tossed a small Quantity of Biscuit, and some Boxes of Marmalade, he jumped in himself, with nineteen others, who, with their Swords, prevented the Coming in of any more, lest the Boat should sink. In this Condition they put off into the great *Indian* Ocean, without a Compass to steer by, or any fresh Water, but what might happen to fall from the Heavens, whose Mercy alone could deliver them. After they had rowed four Days to and fro, in this miserable Situation, the Captain, who for some Time had been very sick and weak, died. This added, if possible, to their Misery; for, as they now fell into Confusion, every one would govern, and none would obey. This obliged them to elect one of their own Company to command them, whose Orders they implicitly agreed to follow. This Person proposed to the Company to draw Lots, and to cast every fourth Man over-board, their small Stock of Provision being so far spent, as not to be able, at a very short Allowance,

ance, to sustain Life above three Days longer. They were now nineteen Persons in all : In this Number were a Friar and a Carpenter, both of whom they would exempt ; as the one was useful to absolve and comfort them in their last Extremity, and the other to repair the Pinnace, in Case of a Leak, or other Accident. The same Compliment they paid to their new Captain, he being the odd Man, and his Life of much Consequence. He refused this Indulgence a great while, but, at last, they obliged him to acquiesce ; so that there were four to die out of the remaining sixteen Persons.

The three first, after having confessed, and received Absolution, submitted to their Fate. The fourth, whom Fortune condemned, was a *Portuguese* Gentleman, that had a younger Brother in the Boat, who, seeing him about to be thrown over-board, most tenderly embraced him, and, with Tears in his Eyes, besought him to let him die in his Room, införing his Arguments, by telling him, “ That he was a married Man, and had a Wife and Children at *Goa*, besides the Care of three Sisters, who absolutely depended upon him ; that, as for himself, he was single, and his Life of no great Importance ; he therefore conjured him to let him supply his Place.” The elder Brother, astonished, and melting with this Generosity, replied, “ That, since the Divine Providence had appointed him to suffer, it would be wicked and unjust to permit any other to die for him, especially a Brother, to whom he was so infinitely obliged.” The Younger, persisting in his Purpose, would take no Denial ; but, throwing himself on his Knees, held his Brother so fast, that the Company could not disengage them. Thus they disputed for a while, the elder Brother bidding him be a Father to his Children, and recommended his Wife to his Protection ; and, as he would inherit his Estate, to take Care of their common Sisters ; but all he could say could not make the Younger desist. This was a

Scene of Tenderness that must fill any Breast, susceptible of generous Impressions, with Pity. At last, the Constancy of the elder Brother yielded to the Piety of the other ; he acquiesced, and suffered the gallant Youth to supply his Place ; who, being cast into the Sea, and a good Swimmer, soon got to the Stern of the Pinnace, and laid Hold of the Rudder with his Right-hand ; which being perceived by one of the Sailors, he cut off the Hand with a Cutlass. The Youth, then dropping into the Sea, caught again Hold with his Left, which received the same Fate by a second Blow ! Thus dismembered of both Hands, he made a Shift, notwithstanding, to keep himself above Water with his Feet and two Stumps, which he held bleeding upwards.

This moving Spectacle so raised the Pity of the whole Company, that they cried out, “ He is but one Man ! let us endeavour to save his Life.” He was accordingly taken into the Boat, where he had his Hands bound up, as well as the Place and Circumstances would permit. They rowed all that Night, and next Morning, when the Sun arose, as if Heaven would reward the Gallantry and Piety of this young Man, they descried Land, which proved to be the Mountains *Mozambique*, in *Africa*, not far from a *Portuguese* Colony. Thither they all safely arrived, where they remained, until the next Ships from *Lisbon* passed by, and carried them to *Goa* ; at which City *Linschoten* assures us, that he himself saw them land, supped with the two Brothers that very Night, beheld the Younger with his Stumps, and had the Story from their own Mouths, as well as from the rest of the Company.

LETTER XXIV.

On the Difference betwixt PRIDE and VANITY.

SIR,

Pride and Vanity are Terms often used indiscriminately ;

nately ; for they seem to be so nearly allied, that it requires more than ordinary Discernment to mark the Distance which divides them.

Nevertheless, an acute Observer can perceive essential Differences between them ; and, though they may sometimes arise from the same Principle, yet the Effects they produce are extremely various and distinct.

A vain Man is studious to catch Applause by a forward Display of presumed Excellencies, which he arrogates, either wholly, or perhaps to a Degree, without a just Title to support his Claim. A proud Man, on the other Hand, challenges Respect from a Consciousness of latent Merit, without ever deigning to discover the Grounds of his Pretensions to every one from whom he exacts the Tribute. The proud Man therefore is generally distant and reserved ; the vain Man is familiar and communicative. The proud Man is the best Friend ; the vain Man is the better Companion. The proud Man has the most Good-nature ; the vain Man the most good Humour.

It is sufficient for the vain Man, that he is admired by the present Circle that surrounds him ; he weighs the Importance of his Admirers by the Scale of Self-love ; and, if they condescend to extol him, he blindly confers Excellence on them.

But the proud Man often views the Circle about him with a sullen Contempt, and disdains to receive Applause but from those who deserve it themselves. It is not the Tribute, but the Tributary that gratifies the Delicacy of his Ambition.

It is owing to this Difference of Temperature, that the former is generally pleased in all Companies ; whereas the latter finds Satisfaction but in few. The one is satisfied with his own imaginary Perfection, and delighted with every one who rates, or appears to rate, his own Merit according to his own Estimate ; the other, though conscious of distinguished Worth, is nevertheless

vertheless sensible of his Defects, and disgusted with the indiscriminate Zeal of vulgar Eulogium.

To these different Degrees of Self-satisfaction it may perhaps be owing, that the vain Man has generally the most lively Imagination; the proud Man the most solid Judgment. When the Mind is impressed with an Opinion of its own Perfection, Imagination takes its full Play, and may be indulged to the utmost Extent of Wantonness; but, when we become sensible of our own Defects, those lively Sallies are restrained, by our own continued Efforts, towards more solid Improvement; and, however we may take Pride in being superior to others, yet it is sufficient to suppress our Vanity, that we are not inferior to ourselves, that is, to our own Ideas of Excellence.

The vain Man therefore has most Power to amuse; the proud Man has generally the best Talents to instruct. But, as Thousands court Amusement for one who solicits Instruction, the former is best calculated to thrive in the World, while the latter has the best Title to its Encouragement. The one entertains you, by exerting his whole Strength to possess you with an Opinion of his Excellence; while the other keeps you at a Distance, by concealing his Talents till he is convinced that your Judgment is worthy of Regard.

The vain Man may be said to covet Renown; the proud Man to seek Reputation. To be distinguished is the Ambition of the former; to deserve Distinction is the Pride of the latter. The one, so that he gains the End in View, is frequently not over-nice in the Means of obtaining it: But it is not sufficient for the other to reach the proposed Ultimate, unless he can attain it by Means which are honourable, and justifiable in his own Opinion.

A vain Man is often betrayed into a Littleness of Spirit, and sometimes led into moral Turpitude, from an eager Desire of being thought important; while the proud Man often seems deficient in worldly Sagacity, and a

proper Attention to Interest, from a real Magnanimity of Soul.

Thus an Imbecillity of Intellects, in the one, often corrupts the Virtues of the Heart; while, in the other, a Greatness of Mind is often mistaken for a Defect of Understanding.

But, however the real Superiority rests on the Side of the latter, it will, from the wrong Apprehensions of the Multitude, be generally attributed to the former. Light and ornamental Qualifications are more universally engaging than deep and solid Endowments: Every Man is captivated with what is agreeable, but few can discern what is just.

Add to this, that Occasions of shewing the lesser Accomplishments continually occur; whereas an Opportunity of displaying those superior Qualities seldom offers.

Thus it often happens, that the proud Man lives in Obscurity, with a Degree of latent Merit which might illustrate an exalted Station; while the vain Man is brought into the World, and often made ridiculous by his Promotion.

If the Extremes of the two Characters could be happily blended together, they might form a Disposition at once agreeable and respectable: If the one was less forward, and the other more affable, both might become engaging.

It is observable, that these different Qualities are often the Foundation of national Distinctions. Thus, with Respect to our Enemies the *French*, and us; they are vain, we are proud: Their Vanity gives them a becoming Openness and Grace of Deportment; while, from Excess of Pride, we contract our awkward Bashfulness and sullen Austerity of Manners: Our sheepish Reserve is often erroneously imputed to intellectual Incapacity; while their forward Presumption is mistaken for Ability.

But,

But, if they excel us in Grace, we surpass them in Virtue ; if they are polite and good-humoured, we are good-natured and sincere. Good-humour shews itself in the Countenance, and often smiles there alone ; Good-nature resides in the Heart, and makes all placid within. The Man who can command Good-humour often smiles with the Companion, whom he amuses without any Disposition to serve him ; the Man endued with Good-nature, on the contrary, will assist the Friend, whom he has not Talents to divert or entertain.

Vanity, which endeavours to be agreeable to all, is seldom warmly attached to any ; Pride, which is morose to the Multitude, embraces the Few with cordial Affection. Such is the Condition of human Nature, that exterior Grace and internal Worth are rarely united in the same Person ! The one is to be learned in the World, which is not a Seminary of Virtue ; the other is to be acquired in the Closet, which is not the School of Politeness.

As Men grow familiar with the World, for the most Part, they swell with Vanity, and become tainted with Folly and Fallacy ; they impose on themselves and deceive others. In Proportion as they are abstracted from it, they too often increase their Pride, but generally improve their Understanding and Integrity. So seldom, alas ! do Morals and Manners serve to illustrate each other.

LETTER XXV.

On GRATITUDE.

SIR,

Gratitude is a Passion so firmly implanted in the human Breast, by the Great Author of Nature, that all the human Race, from the Prince, that sways the Sceptre over a free and civilised People, to the meanest Inhabitant of the solitary Desert, feel its Power, and are ambitious of cherishing its godlike Dictates. It is not,

as the *Spectator* justly observes, like the Practice of many other Virtues, difficult and painful, but attended with so much Pleasure, that, were there no positive Command that enjoined it, nor any Recompence laid up for it hereafter, a generous Mind would indulge it, for the natural Gratifications that accompany it.

About three Years before the present War broke out in *America*, one of the *New-England Hunters* discovered an *Indian* in the Woods, almost perished with Hunger. He had, it seems, fallen from a Precipice, and dislocated his Ankle, which had rendered him incapable either of returning, or providing himself with Sustenance in those extensive Forests. The *Hunter*, moved with the deplorable Sight of a fellow Mortal reduced to such Extremities, afforded him all the Relief in his Power: He gave him such Provisions as he had collected for himself; and, with the greatest Labour and Fatigue, conveyed him to his Hut, which was many Miles distant from the Place where he found him. The *Savage* expressed the strongest Sense of *Gratitude* to his Deliverer; and at Parting told him, that, if ever he should be so unfortunate as to see him in Distress, he would spill the last Drop of his Blood to relieve him, or alleviate his Sufferings.

In the Beginning of the Year Seventeen hundred and fifty-eight, this generous *Hunter* had the Misfortune to be taken, with several others, by a Party of *Indians*, and was used with all the shocking Barbarity which those savage Invaders so often exercised on the innocent Inhabitants. At length, spent with Fatigue, and the inhuman Treatment he had met with, the *Hunter* became unable to follow his unrelenting Masters to their Village; he therefore sunk under the Weight of their savage Cruelty, and expected every Moment the friendly Stroke of the *Tomahawk*, that would put at once a Period both to his Life and Sufferings.

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The *Indians* now gathered round him, and the fatal Blow was just going to be given, when a Company of their Countrymen joined them, in their Return from Hunting; among whom was the *Indian*, whose Life he had some Years before so kindly preserved. He viewed the unfortunate Stranger with great Attention, and soon perceived him to be no other than his former Deliverer. Almost distracted at seeing his Benefactor in such Distress, he flew to his Assistance, raised his Head from the Earth, and used every Method in his Power to revive him, and fill his Breast with the Hopes of Liberty.

His Countrymen were amazed at his Conduct; and one, more savage than the rest, endeavoured to separate him from the Prisoner, on whom he intended to inflict their brutal Execution. But the faithful, the grateful *Indian*, opposed his insulting Countryman, and related the Obligations he was under of saving the Prisoner from their Fury, and supporting the Life of a Person, to whom he was indebted for his own. "If you persist, said he to his Countrymen, in your Design of destroying your Prisoner, you must open a Passage through my Breast to strike the Blow. He generously assisted me, when Hunger had almost deprived me of Life; and I will now rescue him, or perish in the Attempt."

The *Indians* applauded his Conduct, and permitted him to dispose of the Prisoner as he pleased. Having thus obtained the Liberty of his Deliverer, he conveyed him to his Cabbin, and by the most assiduous Care and Attention recovered his Health and Strength, and then conducted him through the Forests to his Habitation.

LETTER XXVI.

On Hope.

SIR,

It is astonishing, that Man, the most noble of all Creatures, should have so many Imperfections. It seems, as if there was always something of which he is in Want, - since he is ever desiring what he does not possess. Every Thing he sees, every Thing he hears, every Thing that he imagines, excite so many Desires, which nothing can extinguish, and which it is almost impossible for him to attain. His Weakness will not suffer him to keep Pace with the Vivacity of his Imagination ; nor can his Imagination furnish him with the Means of Gratification ; he is agitated by an eternal Inquietude, which *Hope* alone is capable of calming.

Man, though often unhappy in his Projects, applies himself to them with Ardour ; and even the Misfortune of having failed almost constantly serves him for a new Motive of pursuing them. This Thirst, which cannot be quenched, and which constantly parches him up ; these Desires, which are always infatiable, and which he is never sure of restraining ; would doubtless become a dreadful Punishment, were it not for the *Hope* of Success, with which he is flattered ; and it renders him at least happy, from the Idea that he cannot fail of being so.

In Fact, *Hope* only leads him through agreeable Paths, till he arrives at the Place where it is obliged to abandon him ; it alone has the Art to take from him the Sensation of the present Moment, when it is disagreeable ; and to render in a Manner present agreeable Futurity, to which he proposes to arrive. How far soever that which pleases him is distant, *Hope* brings it nearer ; he enjoys Happiness, while he hopes for it ; if it

it escapes him, he hopes still ; if he acquires it, he promises himself that he shall possess it for ever.

Whether happy or unhappy, we are supported and animated by *Hope* ; and such is the Inconstancy of human Things, that it justifies our boldest Projects, since, by the Viciissitudes of Good and Evil, we have no more Reason to fear what we detest, than to hope for what we desire.

May we not say with Truth, that *Hope* to us is a second Life, and that it softens the Bitterness of that we have received from the Hands of the *Creator* ? It is still the Soul of the Universe, and the most powerful Spring that maintains its Harmony.

It is by *Hope* that the whole World is governed. Would Laws be made, were it not for the Hope of a wise Polity ? Should we see obedient Subjects, if each of them, by his Submission, did not flatter himself with contributing to the Happiness of his Country ? What would be the Arts, and how many of them would be judged useless, were it not for the Hope of the Advantages to be derived from them ? Would not the Sciences be neglected, Talents uncultivated, the most happy Genius lost, without the flattering Hope of a more certain and refined Taste, in every Thing that is of Importance to be known ?

If we ask the Warrior, what it is that leads him so often to expose himself to Danger, when he might spend the same Days with less Peril, and more Tranquillity ? He will say, it is from the Hope of Glory, which he cherishes and prefers to the insipid Sweetness of an obscure and inactive Life. The Merchant traverses the Seas ; but it is the Hopes of being recompensed by Riches, that makes him despise the Dangers of Rocks and Tempests. The Husbandman bends under his Plough, and bedews the Earth with his Sweat ; but that Earth is to feed him ; and he would never be at the Pains of cultivating it, did he not expect the Reward of his Labours.

Whatever are our Enterprises, *Hope* is the Motive; it is the Forecast of our Success, and at least for a Time, a real Good in the Want of that which escapes us. It is a Joy anticipated, which sometimes deceives; but, while it subsists, affords us a Pleasure, which seldom yields to the Enjoyment of that which it promises, and often effaces the Pleasure we have already tasted in the most happy Situation.

And how could we with Tranquillity enjoy Life, if we did not live from Day to Day in the Hope of prolonging it? There are scarcely any of the Sick, even those afflicted with the most desperate Disease, who do not flatter themselves at the Approach of Death, and hope for a Cure, almost at the Moment when they expire. We carry our Hopes even beyond the Grave, and endeavour to immortalise ourselves in the Memory of Men. Filled with this pleasing Idea, we are more disposed to plunge, without Return, into the Abyss of Eternity.

LETTER XXVII.

On the EDUCATION of DAUGHTERS.

SIR,

Camillus is convinced, that no Trust is superior, or of equal Importance, to the tuitionary Cultivation of an immortal Soul. As Providence has blessed him with two fine Daughters, their present and future Happiness is the reigning Object of his Care.

He never could persuade himself to admire the Maxims of Prudence, said to be gathered from the extravagant Rant of our Tragedies; and less is his Esteem for those modest Dispositions, which People pretend to imbibe from the luscious Gallantries of Comedy. For which Reason he has no impatient Desire to secure for Miss *Milissa* and Miss *Serena* a Place in the Front-box.—However, as we are not immoderately to covet what is absolutely forbidden, he has himself attend-

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ed them, once or twice, to the theatrical Entertainments, and public Diversions; thinking it much the safest Method, that their Curiosity should be gratified under his own Inspection; and hoping to make them sensible, how much they endanger their Virtue, who too often frequent them; how shamefully they debase their Affections, who are passionately fond of them; and what mere Phantoms they follow, who seek for Satisfaction in such delusory Delights.

They learn to dance, in order to acquire a genteel Air, and a graceful Demeanor; not to thine at a Ball, or win the worthless Admiration of Fops. He has introduced them to the Knowledge of History, and its instructive Facts. They have a tolerable Idea of the four *Universal Monarchies*, so eminent for their great Events, and so circumstantially foretold in Scripture. They have been led through the most remarkable Transactions of our own Country, and are pretty well acquainted with the present State of *Europe*. They have been taught to observe the honourable Success that has usually attended the Practice of Integrity, guided by Prudence; together with the Scandal and Ruin, which have always pursued Folly in her senseless Rambles, and dogged Vice to her horrid Haunts.

They have been initiated in *Geography*, and understand the several Divisions of the Globe; the Extent of its principal Kingdoms; and the Manners of their various Inhabitants. They will tell you the peculiar Commodities which each Climate produces; whence comes the Tea, that furnishes their Breakfast; and whence the Sugar, that renders it palatable; what Mountains supply them with Wines, and what Islands send them Spices; in what Groves the Silk-worms spin the Materials for their Cloaths, and what Mines supply them with the Diamonds that sparkle in their Earrings. — A Screen, covered with a Set of coloured *Maps*, and a Custom of referring, from the public Papers, to those beautiful Draughts, has rendered the

Acquisition of this Knowledge a Diversion rather than a Task; has inticed them into a valuable Branch of Science, under the inviting Disguise of Amusement.— This serves to enlarge their Apprehensions of Things, gives them magnificent Thoughts of the *Great Creator*, and may help to suppress that silly, Self-admiration, which prompts so many pretty Idols to fancy themselves the only considerable Creatures under Heaven.

They spell to Perfection, and have obtained this Art by a Sort of Play, rather than by laborious Application. Whenever they asked any little Gratification, it has been their Father's Custom to make them spell the Word; which if they performed aright, they seldom failed in their Request. They are Mistresses of the Needle; and the youngest, whose Genius inclines that Way, is expert in using the Pencil. Music is their Recreation, not their Business.

Thoroughly verfed in the most practical Parts of *Arithmetic*, they have each their Week, wherein to be intrusted with the Management of a Sum of Money. This they disburse, as Circumstances require, for the smaller Necessaries of the Family. Of this they keep an exact Account, and make a regular Entry of each Particular in their Day book.

Camillus always contrives to make what tends to their Improvement the Matter of their Reward. If they have committed a Fault, they are forbid the Privilege of using their Maps. If they have behaved in a becoming Manner, their Recompence is not a Piece of Money, or a Paper of Sweetmeats, but some new Instruction on the *Globe*, or some new Lesson on the *Harpsichord*, which may at once delight and improve them.

He discountenances all those Arts of petulant Barbarity which Children are so apt to exercise on the reptile Creation. He informs his lovely Pupils, that every living Creature is sensible of Pain; that to turn their Torments into Pastime, and make Sport with their An-

guish,

guish, is a Rigour more than tyrannical, worse than brutal ; and the very Reverse of that benign Providence, whose *tender Mercies are over all his Works.*

He proposes to give them a Taste of *Natural Philosophy*, and to accommodate them with the best *Microscopes*, that the Use of these Instruments, and a Spice of that Knowledge, may inspire them with an early Admiration of Nature's Works, and with the deepest Veneration of Nature's *Almighty Author*. *Camillus* has no Design to finish a Couple of Female Philosophers ; or to divert their Attention from those domestic Arts, which are the truest Accomplishments of the Sex.

For nothing lovelier can be found
In Woman, than to study Household Good.

MILTON.

Yet neither would he have his Daughters debarred from that rational and exalted Delight, which is to be found in contemplating the Curiosities of the *Great Creator's Cabinet*.

Why may they not, without departing from their own, or incroaching on the Masculine Character ; why may they not be acquainted with the accurately nice Structure of an Animal, or with the Process and Effects of Vegetation ? Why may they not learn the admirable Operations of the Air, or the wonderful Properties of the Water ? Have some general Notion of the immense Magnitudes, the prodigious Distances, and the still more amazing Revolutions of the *Heavenly Orbs* ? He apprehends it very practicable to conduct an Entertainment with Dignity, and order a Family with Propriety, even while they retain some tolerable Idea of those magnificent Laws, which regulate the System of the Universe.

The *Microscope*, whenever they are inclined to amuse themselves, will shew them a Profusion of splendid Ornaments, in some of the most common and contemptible

ble Objects. It will shew them Gold and Imbroidery, Diamonds and Pearl, Azure-green and Vermilion, where unassisted Eyes behold nothing but Provocatives of their Abhorrence. This Instrument will shew them the brightest Varnish, and the most curious Carving, even in the minutest Scraps of Existence. Far more surprising than the magic Feats of the most dextrous Juggler, it will treat their Sight, not with delusive, but real Wonders. A huge Elephant shall stalk, where a puny Mite was wont to crawl. Blood shall bound from the beating Heart, and Eyes sparkle with a lively Lustre; Limbs shall play the most sprightly Motions, or stand composed in the most graceful Attitudes; where nothing ordinarily appeared, but a confused Speck of animated Matter.

A Tincture of *Philosophy* will be the Cosmetic of Nature; will render all her Scenes lovely, and all her Apartments a Theatre of Diversion; Diversions infinitely superior to those dangerous Delights, which are so apt to inveigle the Affections, and debauch the Minds of young People.

When *Philosophy* lends her Optics, an unclouded Morning, beautiful with the rising Sun; a clear Night, brilliant with innumerable Stars; will be a more pleasing Spectacle than the gaudiest Illuminations of the Assembly-room. The Melody of Birds, and the Murmur of Fountains; the humming Insect, and the sighing Gale; will be a higher Gratification, than the finest Airs of an Opera. A Field covered with Corn, or a Meadow besprinkled with Daisies; a Marsh planted with Osiers, or a Mountain shaded with Oaks; will yield a far more agreeable Prospect, than the most pompous Scenes that decorate the Stage. Should Clouds overcast the Heavens, or Winter disrobe the Flowers; an Inquiry into the Causes of these grand Vicissitudes will more than compensate the transitory Loss. A Discovery of the Divine Wisdom and infinite Goodness, in these seeming disastrous Changes, will impart Gaiety to

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the most gloomy Sky, and make the most unornamented Seasons smile.

It is for Want of such truly elegant and satisfactory Amusements, that so many Ladies of the first Distinction, and finest Genius, have no proper Employ for their delicate Capacities, but lose their Happiness in Flights or Fits of the Vapours; lose their Time in the most insipid Chat, or the most whimsical Vagaries; while Thought is a Burden, and Reflection is a Drudgery, Solitude fills them with Horror, and a serious Discourse makes them melancholy.

LETTER XXVIII.

On DEATH and ETERNITY.

SIR,

It is reported of *Simonides* the Philosopher, that, being asked what *God* was, he desired a Day to resolve the Question; but, when the Time was expired, instead of giving an Answer, he requested two, and, when these were ended, begged the Favour of four. On his being asked the Reason for such unaccountable Conduct, he replied, “The longer I study, the more arduous and difficult the Question appears.” That *God* exists is abundantly evident, from every Page of the Book of Nature; but what He is, exceeds the Bounds of human Imagination. It is therefore no Wonder, that Men are lost in endless Labyrinths and Difficulties, when they attempt to desire what cannot be conceived by the utmost Stretch of mortal Sagacity. Were it possible for us to search out an infinite Being, we should ourselves equal Immensity: But here Reason wanders without a Path, and Imagination is bewildered in intricate Mazes, Doubts, and Perplexities. Since therefore it is impossible for us to search out the *Almighty* to Perfection, let us not dare to dispute his Wisdom, because we are not able to fathom its Depth. What may appear to us confused, may possibly be designed,

signed, and wisely calculated for the most noble and valuable Purposes. Was it possible for *Joseph* to consider the Treachery of his Brethren in selling him to the *Ishmaelites*, as necessary to his becoming the second Person in the Land of *Egypt*? Did *David*, when he fed the Flock of his Father, imagine, that he should shortly exchange his Crook for a Sceptre, and his grassy Couch for a splendid Throne?

But the *Almighty* beholds universal Nature at one View: Nothing is concealed from his all-piercing Eye, nothing too hard for his omnipotent Arm. Let us therefore be resigned to our Lot, whatever it be, in this sequestered Vale of Mortality; remembering that Time is so far from being the Whole of Existence, that it is but a minute Spot in the Map of Beings, a small District in the Globe of Eternity. Let us therefore look upon the Sufferings of this present Life, as the Dust of the Balance, when compared to the Happiness of a future Existence.

Why (says an ancient Author) does the World still continue to strive for Vain-glory, a Bubble which vanishes with a Breath of Air, and is far easier dissolved than the Snow on the Mountains? Where is *Solomon the Wise*, or *Sampson the Powerful*? Where is *Jonathan the faithful Friend*, or *Absalom the vile Usurper*? To what Region is the once-victorious *Cæsar* retired, and what Empire does he now command? Where is *Epalus* with his sumptuous Feast, or *Aristotle* with his boasted System of Philosophy? Many Persons famous in their Days, who have filled up the List of Time, are now expired, like Meteors which blaze for a short Space, and are seen no more. How vain and transitory then is human Glory; which, like a Light exposed to the Fury of the Winds, is soon blown out by the Breath of Dissolution? And how much vainer still is mortal Man, who strives to purchase these mean Trifles, at the Expence of his Time and Felicity?"

Such Sentiments are truly noble; they teach us the

Wisdom

Wisdom of the Skies. Time reigns over all below, Eternity belongs to the Regions of Spirits. Years of Enjoyment will soon roll over, and Hours of Pleasure pass with unperceived Rapidity away: An Age itself presently expires; and an hundred Years, already past, appear but as Yesterday. Delights and Diversions last only a short Time, nor are Sports and carnal Pleasures of eternal Duration: One Moment crushes the Pomp and Grandeur of a thousand Years; and, as a sacred Writer very justly observes, *the Fashion of this World is continually passing away.*

Thoughts, like these, will infallibly remove our Affections from the transitory Pleasures of this lower World, and fix them on those permanent Scenes of Happiness beyond the Grave. They will teach us the Insignificance of the one, and the immense Value of the other; and, from a Comparison of these, a certain great Man was induced to write the following remarkable Epitaph on himself:

“ You, who are so assiduously seeking for Preference, Honour, and Applause, cool your ambitious Spirits with the Thoughts of Mortality: You have reached the Goal, and are pompously seated on your long desired Throne; be instructed from this Monument, erected to the Remembrance of the King of Terrors, that nothing can escape the Stroke of his Arm: Kingdoms with their Princes will soon expire, and Crowns and Sceptres are but little Things in the Hands of Death. You, who were once acquainted with me, see what I now am: Yesterday I was esteemed higher than you, and To-morrow may reduce you to the same Situation with myself.”

Let us engrave such Letters of Instruction on the Tables of our Memory, and they will teach us the Art of numbering our Days, *that we may apply our Hearts unto Wisdom.*

Then shall we not fear the Approaches of the King of Terrors, nor be terrified at entering the gloomy Valley,

Valley, over which Death extends his sable Wings. And though we are not conducted in a stately Pomp to the Grave, nor attended with a numerous Concourse of Mourners ; though we are not praised with the flattering Encomiums of an eloquent Orator, nor our Actions engraved on Pillars of Brass, or Monuments of Marble ; yet when Time shall have obliterated these Inscriptions, and even blended the Particles of the Tablets with the Dust, we shall be inexpressibly happy in the Mansions of Beatitude.

LETTER XXIX.

Sir HENRY SIDNEY's first Letter to his Son, afterwards Sir PHILIP SIDNEY, containing Rules for his Conduct in Life.

SIR,

Notwithstanding the following Letter was written near two hundred Years ago, there is so much of the tender Parent, accomplished Scholar, real Gentleman, and true *Christian* conspicuous in it, that I am convinced it will be agreeable to you.

Son PHILIP,

I have received two Letters from you, the one in *Latin*, the other in *French*, which I take in good Part; and will you to exercise that Practice of Learning often, for it will stand you instead in that Profession of Life, which you are born to live in: And now since this is my first Letter, that ever I did write to you, I will not, that it be all empty of some Advices, which my natural Care of you provoketh me to wish you to follow as Documents to you in this tender Age.

Let your first Action be the lifting up your Hands and Mind to *Almighty God* by hearty Prayer, and feelingly digest the Words you speak in Prayer, with continual Meditations, and thinking of him to whom you pray ; and use this at an ordinary or particular Hour, whereby

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the Time itself will put you in Remembrance to do that Thing, which you are accustomed to do in that Time.

Apply your Study in such Hours, as your discreet Master doth assign you, earnestly; and the Time, I know, he will so limit, as shall be both sufficient for your Learning, and safe for your Health. And mark the Sense and Matter of what you read, as well as the Words; so shall you both enrich your Tongue with Words, and your Wit with Matter, and Judgment will grow as you advance in Age.

Be humble and obedient to your Master; for, unless you frame yourself to obey, yea, and to feel in yourself what Obedience is, you shall never be able to teach others how to obey you hereafter.

Be courteous of Behaviour, and affable to all Men, with Universality of Reverence, according to the Dignity of the Person; there is nothing that winneth so much, with so little Cost.

Use moderate Diet, so as, after your Meat, you may find your Wit fresher, and not duller; and your Body more lively, and not more heavy.

Seldom drink Wines, and yet sometimes do, lest, being forced on a sudden to drink, it should inflame you.

Use Exercise of Body, but such as may in no wise endanger your Bones nor Joints: It will much increase your Strength, and enlarge your Breath.

Delight to be cleanly, as well in all Parts of your Body, as in your Garments; it shall make you graceful in each Company, and otherwise you will become loathsome.

Give yourself to be merry, for you degenerate from your Father, if you find not yourself more able in Wit and Body to do any Thing, when you be most merry; but let your Mirth be ever void of all Scurility, and biting Words, to any Person; for a Wound, given

given by a Word, is harder to be cured, than that which is given by a Sword.

Be you rather a Hearer, and a Bearer away of other Men's Talk, than a Beginner or Procurer of Speech; otherwise you will be accounted to delight to hear yourself speak.

Be modest in all Companies, and rather be laughed at by *light Fellows*, for a maiden Shame-facedness; than of your *sober Friends*, for pert Boldness.

Think upon every Word you will speak, before you utter it; and remember how Nature hath, as it were, rampired up the Tongue with Teeth, Lips, yea; and Hair without the Lips; and all betokens Reins and Bridles, to restraining the Use of that Member.

Above all Things, tell no Untruth, no not in Trifles; the Custom of it is naught, and let it not satisfy you, that the Hearers, for a Time, take it for a Truth; for afterwards it will be known, as it is, to Shame: And there cannot be a greater Reproach to a Gentleman, than to be accounted a Lyar.

Study and endeavour yourself to be virtuously occupied, so shall you make such a Habit of Well-doing, as you shall not know how to do Evil, though you would.

Remember, my Son, the noble Blood you are descended from by your Mother's Side; and think, that only by a virtuous Life, and good Actions, you may be an Ornament to your illustrious Family; and otherwise, through Vice and Sloth, you will be esteemed *Labes Generis*, which is one of the greatest Curses that can happen to Man.

Well, my little *Philip*, this is enough for me, and I fear too much for you at this Time; but yet, if I find that this light Meat of Digestion do nourish any Thing in the weak Stomach of your Capacity, I will, as I find the same grow stronger, feed it with tougher Food; farewell. Your Mother and I send our Blessing,

ling, and Almighty God grant you his; and nourish you with his Fear, guide you with his Grace, and make you a good Servant to your *Prince and Country*.

Your loving Father,

Henry Sydney.

LETTER XXX.

On TRUE HAPPINESS.

SIR,

You have often asked me, “ In what True Happiness consists ? ” I have considered the Matter, and do now inform you, that True Happiness consists in three Things. 1. In such an Innocence, that the Mind has nothing criminal to reproach itself with. 2. In learning to be content with that Station wherein Heaven has placed us. 3. In the Enjoyment of perfect Health. If any of these be wanting, we cannot be truly happy. Virtue is then of Service to comfort us, but it cannot exempt us from the Evils which we suffer. There is a great Difference between comforting a Man, and curing him : We assist the Former to bear up under his Misfortunes, but we change the Pain and Sorrow of the Latter into Pleasure and Joy.

’Tis certain that a Man who abandons himself to Wickedness, be his Estate, Dignity, or Post, ever so great or eminent, cannot be happy. The Wicked are their own Judges ; the Horror of their Crimes follows them wherever they go ; and though their Guilt is so far unknown to the Public, that they pass for Men of Virtue, yet they are not easy in their Minds. *The worst Punishment, says Juvenal, which a wicked Man suffers, is, that he cannot declare himself innocent, though he is acquitted and discharged out of Court ; and though the Praetor takes a Bribe, and obtains for him a Pardon, yet he cannot absolve himself.*

’Tis a Mistake to think that bad Men can intirely stifle the Remorse of Conscience. Sometimes they fancy

fancy they are above the Reproaches of it ; but soon after they condemn themselves ; they are struck with a secret Horror, persecute themselves, and are their own Executioners. The Torments which they endure are not to be expressed ; and may it not be justly questioned, whether any Thing can be more tormenting in Hell than a Conscience bearing secret Witness in the Soul against a Man's Guilt Day and Night ? No Pleasures, Banquets, Plays, or any other Representations, nor even the Charms of Love, can restore a Calm to a Breast which is troubled with a Remorse for Wickedness. Conscience is not silent in the most pompous Entertainments ; but, like an implacable Fury, which nothing can pacify, it poisons the most dainty Dishes, and turns the most sprightly Mirth into Uneasiness.

They who appear to us the boldest Offenders, are the most timorous, after the Commission of their Crimes : They are equally in Dread of the Indignation of Men and the Wrath of Heaven, and turn pale at the least Flash of Lightning. If it thunders, they are half dead ; for they do not consider it as proceeding from a natural Cause ; but imagine, that Heaven, provoked at their Wickedness, is ready to dart its Thunderbolts on their guilty Heads. Nor are they much more tranquil after the Storm is over ; for they imagine it only a Respite from their deserved Punishment. The slightest Malady that seizes them they fancy will deprive them of this Life, to hurry them into a new one, full of Torments. I make no Doubt, that, if the Wicked did but foresee what Troubles their Crimes would involve them in, they would abstain from committing them ; but they do not begin to see and feel the Enormity of them, till after they have committed them ; yet their natural Bias to Wickedness leads them on to perpetrate new ones ; so that they cannot help doing the Evil which in their own Judgment they condemn. They hope to be less troubled in Conscience

by

by fresh Transgressions than by the former, and flatter themselves, they shall make Wickedness familiar to them by repeated Acts of it. What Wretches are these, who think to obtain a Cure by what increases their Disease, and are incessantly procuring themselves new Torments !

The common People, who only judge by Appearances, very often think Men happy, who are actually devoured with corroding Care and Vexation. They cannot conceive how a Sovereign, to whom all is Obedience, can be unhappy ; that a great Nobleman, who keeps a plentiful House, who has Mistresses, Domestics, Equipages, Palaces, and Manors, can be tormented with a thousand Uneasinesses ; but wise Men know, that this Sovereign, who does not govern by the Rules of Justice, finds that he is hated by his People, despised by foreign Nations, and doomed to be transmitted to Posterity as a wicked Prince. There is no Man, be he ever so bad, but is sorry to be hated and despised. The Wicked have a Love for themselves, as well as the Good ; and while they have, Hatred and Contempt wound them. If we read the History of the most cruel and savage Tyrants, we shall find them more than once lamenting that they were the Abhorrence of Mankind, and their Vexation at the Thoughts of it made them still more fierce and barbarous, to be revenged of this Abhorrence ; and such their Vengeance added to the Measure of their own Uneasiness, and of the public Hatred.

Therefore no Man can be truly happy, let his Condition be what it will, unless he is virtuous. The Prince and the Peasant are on the same Footing in this Respect : The one is as much punished by Remorse on his Throne, as the other at his Plough. Whoever seeks to live a happy Life, ought to be more afraid of Guilt than of Death ; for the latter only puts an End to our Days, whereas the former renders them unhappy. The virtuous Man, when he dies, goes to the

Enjoyment

Enjoyment of much greater Happiness than what he loses ; whereas the Criminal, while he lives, is overwhelmed with Misfortunes here, and tormented with the Fear of those that threaten him in the Life to come ; and, though he should not believe the Immortality of the Soul, yet he is not less unhappy, because he has no Hopes of finding his Misfortunes succeeded by Happiness, after Death.

The second Thing which is absolutely necessary towards leading a happy Life, is, to know how to make ourselves easy in the Station wherein Heaven has placed us. If a Man has a Competency ; if he has every Thing that is requisite to keep him from Want ; why should he envy others the Possession of great Riches, which perhaps might only be instrumental to render him unhappy ? *It is not Wealth, as Horace wisely says, that makes a Man happy. None can be esteemed happy, but they who are so wise as to be satisfied with whatever the Gods send them.* When Men give themselves up to Ambition, and lay no Restraint on their Desires, they become Slaves to their Passions ; and wherever Passions bear arbitrary Sway over a Man, he is sure to be always unhappy.

The wisest and most important Thing in Life is, to be able to know how to be content with the Portion allotted us by Heaven. He who is for increasing his Income by illegal Methods, is tormented by Remorse ; and he who strives to increase it by honest, and yet painful, is oppressed with Care and Anxiety ; Faults, which ought equally to be avoided, if we would live happy. Why should we be perpetually thinking of what we might want some Years hence ? It would be much better to leave every Thing to Contingencies, and make the best of our present Fortune. Besides, do we know certainly that it would be for our Advantage, if Heaven was to gratify our Wishes ? Perhaps, from the very Moment we saw them fulfilled, we should date the Beginning of Misfortunes, which would depress, and never

never leave us till Death ; at best, they would increase the Thirst after Riches in us, and would only render our Avarice the stronger. When once the Heart is set upon the amassing of Wealth, the Treasures of all the Princes upon Earth cannot satisfy it ; the more a Man has, the more he covets. Avarice is a Passion which can never be satisfy'd ; the more we seek to gratify it, the stronger it grows, and the more it manifests its Power. It is an unmerciful Tyrant, which nothing can pacify ; or rather, I will call it a Devil within us, who makes us act as he pleases, and leaves us not a Moment's Respite.

A Man stands not in Need of much Philosophy, to be sensible, that an honest Mediocrity is infinitely more desirable than immense Riches. It is sufficient if we hearken to plain Reason, and have Resolution enough to abide by its Dictates.

Great Honours and Dignities have as little Tendency as Riches to procure a happy Life. A Peasant may be happy, though he is not a Judge, or a Justice of the Peace, in his Village. In all Conditions we may enjoy the Ease and Tranquillity of Life, if we acquit ourselves of our respective Duties with Honour and Prudence ; tho' indeed State Employments are so far from rendering a Man happy, that more commonly they lessen his Felicity, by subjecting him to a great Number of Duties which are indispensable, and which he cannot neglect, without failing in his Obligations to himself and the Public, and consequently without forfeiting his Happiness.

It may be said of Honours, Birth, and Riches, that no Estimate can be made of them, but as considered by those who enjoy them : They become Sources of great Misfortunes to those who make an improper Use of them ; and as great Wisdom is required for a Man to know how to behave in Prosperity, the Wealth and Grandeur, which raise us above other Men, are commonly more prejudicial than useful : From being real Advantages,

Advantages, they become Misfortunes, and are Obstructions to the Happiness of Life, but though Dignities may become dangerous by the Use that may be made of them, we must not infer from thence, as Seneca does, *That there's no Republic that can bear with a wise Man; nor no wise Man that can live in the Administration of a Republic.*

Perhaps it will be asked, that, if it is easier for Men in a private than public Capacity to be happy, why the latter, who desire to be so, do not embrace a private Life? The Reason is very plain ; because they are so attached to their Condition by what they owe to their Family, their Country, their Prince, or themselves, that they cannot quit it without Breach of Duty. Should they take a Step which they knew was not becoming them, they would not be happy, because it is essential to the Happiness of Life to have nothing wherewith a Man can reproach himself. It is natural therefore for Men of Wisdom and Penetration to continue in the Posts Heaven has placed them, and to endeavour to make themselves happy therein, without seeking an Alteration, which, instead of being for the better, would keep them at a Distance from what they would fain attain to.

LETTER XXXI.

From Mr. POPE to Dr. ATTERBURY, Bishop of ROCHESTER, about a Month before his Banishment.

My Lord,

Once more I write to you as I promised, and this once, I fear, will be the last! The Curtain will soon be drawn between my Friend and me, and nothing left but to wish you a long good Night. May you enjoy a State of Repose in this Life, not unlike that Sleep of the Soul, which some have believed is to succeed it, where we lie utterly forgetful of that World from which we are gone, and ripening for that to which we are

are to go. If you retain any Memory of the past, let it only image to you what has pleased you best; sometimes present a Dream of an absent Friend, or bring you back an agreeable Conversation. But upon the whole, I hope, you will think less of the Time past, than of the future; as the former has been less kind to you than the latter infallibly will be. Do not envy the World your Studies; they will tend to the Benefit of Men against whom you can have no Complaint, I mean of all Posterity: And perhaps, at your Time of Life, nothing else is worth your Care. What is every Year of a wise Man's Life, but a Censure or Critic on the past? Those whose Date is the shortest, live long enough to laugh at one half of it: The Boy despises the Infant, the Man the Boy, the Philosopher both, and the *Christian* all. You may now begin to think your Manhood was too much a Puerility; and you'll never suffer your Age to be but a second Infancy. The Toys and Baubles of your Childhood are hardly now more below you, than those Toys of our riper, and of our declining Years, the Drums and Rattles of Ambition, and the Dirt and Bubbles of Avarice. At this Time, when you are cut off from a little Society, and made a Citizen of the World at large, you should bend your Talents not to serve a Party, or a few, but all Mankind. Your Genius should mount above that Mist in which its Participation and Neighbourhood with Earth hath long involved it: To shine abroad and to Heaven, ought to be the Business and Glory of your present Situation. Remember it was at such a Time, that the greatest Lights of Antiquity dazzled and blazed the most; in their Retreat, in their Exile, or in their Death: But, why do I talk of dazzling or blazing? It was then that they did Good; that they gave Light, and that they became Guiders to Mankind.

Those Aims alone are worthy of Spirits truly great, and such, I therefore hope, will be yours. Resentment indeed may remain, perhaps cannot be quite extin-

extinguished, in the noblest Minds ; but Revenge never will harbour there : Higher Principles than those of the first, and better Principles than those of the latter, will infallibly influence Men whose Thoughts and whose Hearts are enlarged, and cause them to prefer the Whole to any Part of Mankind, especially to so small a Part as one's Self.

Believe me, my Lord, I look upon you as a Spirit entered into another Life, as one just upon the Edge of Immortality, where the Passions and Affections must be much more exalted, and where you ought to despise all little Views, and all mean Retrospects. Nothing is worth your looking back ; and therefore look forward, and make (as you can) the World look after you : But take Care, that it be not with Pity, but with Esteem and Admiration.

I am, with the greatest Sincerity, and Passion for your Fame as well as Happiness, Yours, &c.

LETTER XXXII.

On the Uselessness of WEALTH and FLATTERY, an Eastern Tale.

SIR,

As *Ortogrul* of *Basra* was one Day wandering along the Streets of *Bagdat*, musing on the Varieties of Merchandise which the Shops offered to his View, and observing the different Occupations which busied the Multitudes on every Side ; he was awakened from the Tranquillity of Meditation by a Croud that obstructed his Passage. He raised his Eyes, and saw the Chief *Vizier*, who had returned from the *Divan*, and was entering his Palace.

Ortogrul mingled with the Attendants, and, being supposed to have some Petition for the *Vizier*, was permitted to enter. He surveyed the Spaciousness of the Apartments, admired the Walls hung with golden Tapestry, the Floors covered with silken Carpets, and despised the simple Neatness of his own little Habitation.

“ Surely,

" Surely (said he to himself) this Palace is the Seat of Happiness, where Pleasure succeeds to Pleasure, and Discontent and Sorrow can have no Admission. Whatever Nature has provided for the Delight of Sense is here spread forth to be enjoyed. What can Mortal wish or imagine which the Master of this Palace has not obtained? The Dishes of Luxury cover his Table, the Voice of Harmony lulls him in his Bowers; he breathes the Fragrance of the Groves of Java, and sleeps upon the Down of the Cygnets of Ganges. He speaks, and his Mandate is obeyed; he wishes, and his Wish is gratified; all whom he sees obey him, and whom he hears flatter him. How different, *Ortogrul*, is thy Condition, who art doomed to the perpetual Torments of unsatisfied Desire, and who hast no Amusement in thy Power that can with-hold thee from thy own Conviction. They tell thee that thou art wise, but what does Wisdom avail with Poverty? None will flatter the Poor, and the Wise have very little Power of flattering themselves. That Man is surely the most wretched of the Sons of Wretchedness, who lives with his own Faults and Follies always before him; and who has none to reconcile him to himself by Praise and Veneration. I have long sought Content, and have not found it; I will from this Moment endeavour to be rich.

Full of his new Resolution, he shuts himself in his Chamber for six Months, to deliberate how he should grow rich; he sometimes purposed to offer himself as a Counsellor to one of the Kings of India, and sometimes resolved to dig for Diamonds in the Mines of Golconda. One Day, after some Hours passed in the violent Fluctuation of Opinion, Sleep insensibly seized him in his Chair; he dreamed that he was ranging a desert Country in Search of some one that might teach him to grow rich; and as he stood on the Top of a Hill shaded with Cypress, in Doubt whither to direct his Steps, his Father appeared on a sudden, standing before him. *Ortogrul*, said the old Man, I know thy Perplexity, listen to

thy Father. Cast thine Eye on the opposite Mountain. *Ortogrul* looked, and saw a Torrent tumbling down the Rocks, roaring with the Noise of Thunder, and scattering its Foam on the impending Woods. Now, said his Father, look upon the Valley that lies between the Hills. *Ortogrul* looked, and espied a little Well, out of which issued a small Rivulet. Tell me now, said his Father, dost thou wish for sudden Affluence, that may pour upon thee like the Mountain Torrent, or for a slow and gradual Increase, resembling the Rill gliding from the Well? Let me be quickly rich, said *Ortogrul*; let the golden Stream be quick and violent. Look round thee, said his Father, once again. *Ortogrul* looked, and saw the Channel of the Torrent dry and dusty; but, following the Rivulet from the Well, he traced it to a wide Lake, which the Supply, slow and constant, kept always full. He waked, and determined to grow rich by silent Profits and persevering Industry.

Having sold his Patrimony, he engaged in Merchandise, and in twenty Years purchased Lands, on which he raised a House, equal in Sumptuousness to that of the *Vizier*; to which he invited all the Ministers of Pleasure, expecting to enjoy all the Felicity he had imagined Riches able to afford. Leisure soon made him weary of himself, and he longed to be persuaded that he was great and happy. He was courteous and liberal; he gave all that approached him Hopes of pleasing him, and all who should please him, Hopes of being rewarded. Every Art of Praise was tried, and every Source of adulatory Fiction was exhausted. *Ortogrul* heard his Flatterers without Delight, because he found himself unable to believe them. His own Heart told its Frailties, his own Understanding reproached him with his Faults. “How long, said he, with a deep Sigh, have I been labouring in vain to amass Wealth, which at last is useless! Let no Man hereafter wish to be rich, who is already too wise to be flattered.”

LETTER XXXIII.

*On the BEAUTY, WISDOM, and MAGNIFICENCE
of NATURE.*

SIR,

How grand is that Prospect which is set before us, during the solemn Silence and Shade of Night ! The Luminaries of Heaven shine forth with majestic Pomp, and form a glorious Spectacle to the Eye. To the contemplative Mind they appear still more wonderful, and afford a delightful Subject of Speculation. Reason comes in Aid to the Feebleness of Sense, and directs the Imagination, which, guided by this superior Faculty, conceives the Planets to be large Spheres of similar Substances with that of our Earth, and to be fitted for the same Purposes. It conceives the smaller Globes which attend these Planets to be similar to the Moon ; and each of the other Stars, with which the Heavens are bespangled, to communicate, like the Sun, Light and Heat to depending Satellites, which, by Reason of their Distance, are invisible to Mankind. How numerous are these Globes ! How regular their Courses ! How many noble, though unknown Purposes, may they answer in their respective Regions ! How large is the Circumference of their Orbits, and how immense are their Distances from this Earth ! Yet these immense Distances do not render them useless to Mankind. By their various Positions and Courses, they distinguish different Quarters and Regions, both in Heaven and Earth. They mark out the Revolutions of Days, Months, and Years. Hence the certain Succession of Night and Day, and the beautiful Variety of returning Seasons.

But even upon this our Earth, though of an inferior Size, many stupendous Objects strike the Imagination. Lofty Mountains, continued Ranges of Hills, vast Wilds and Deserts, wide and extended Plains, large and rapid Streams, present themselves to our View, and create an agreeable Astonishment.

With still greater Agitation, do we behold the vast Collection of Waters in the Ocean, which at once satisfies the Eye with a boundless Prospect, and presents the Wonders of the Deep to the contemplative Mind. Hark! The impetuous Winds are raised; the unruly Element dashes its furious Waves against impending Rocks. By its roaring Billows amidst the boisterous Tempests, it sets before us an Idea of a Power irresistible, and fills our Minds with Awe. But now the Winds are hushed; and, the violent Agitation of the Waves ceasing, the Storm is changed into a Calm, and the smooth and wide Surface presents us with the fair Image of reigning Order and universal Peace.

Nor is it Greatness alone that strikes us in the Prospect of Nature. Joined to this Magnificence, we observe an exact Uniformity, and endless Variety. Hence that enchanting Beauty, which yields so much Pleasure, whether we behold the vast Machine at one View, or at greater Leisure survey its different Parts.

How delightful is the Prospect of the Earth, diversified with Hills, Vallies, Woods, Rivers, Lakes, and Seas! The Verdure and Freshness of the Spring, the rich Fruits of Autumn, and that Plenty of variegated Flowers, which gaily blossom in Summer, greatly heighten our Pleasure. How cheerful is the rising Sun, which discloses their various Beauties! How enlivening are his Morning Beams! How bright and how vigorous are his Mid-day Light and Heat! How gentle and how composing are his Evening Rays! How awful and how solemn is the Silence of the Night, which draws a Veil over the Face of Nature, and, by throwing a Shade upon the Glories of this Earth, prepares for Rest and Sleep? Yet never is the Earth wholly deprived of Light; for now the Moon and Stars assume their wonted Empire, and send forth their cheerful, tho' fainter Rays, to prevent a total Darkness.

Not only the fertile Fields and Meadows, which are watered with Brooks and Rills; not only the Woods and

and

and richer Plains, with the grassy Pastures of the Mountains, and all the more finished Scenes, give Pleasure to the Eye, and strike us with a Sense of Beauty ; but even the rougher and less finished Parts of Nature. With a pleasing Astonishment we behold the barren Heath, the Wildness of the Desart, the unshapen Rocks, and impending Precipices. The Rigours of Winter have their peculiar Graces, and furnish us with Prospects, which become agreeable in their Season.

Nature hath made ample Provision, not for our Pleasure only, but for the Conveniences and Necessities of Mankind, and the other Animals, which are Inhabitants of our Globe.

How many different Sorts of Soils and Moulds are to be found upon the Surface of the Earth ! Some are prolific, and produce innumerable Seeds and Roots, which either serve to furnish tasteful Food to Man, and other Animals, or to prepare delicious and refreshing Liquors for quenching their Thirst, and for exhilarating their Spirits ; or are of great Use in the Composition of powerful Medicines. Other Kinds of Earth are unfit for Vegetation ; yet none of them are really barren and unprofitable, but add Fertility to other Mould, and are useful in the numerous Arts, which minister to the Necessities and Conveniences of human Life.

Besides earthly Substances, Nature has provided Plenty of Bodies, which have a more firm Consistence. It furnishes Stones for Houses, and other Structures. These Stones are harder or softer, to answer different Ends. Being compacted together by a glutinous Earth, they are erected into Edifices, which endure for Ages, and withstand the Force of the fiercest Storms.

There are other Stones, some brighter, some paler, of one, or divers Colours, which, by their peculiar Lustre, serve for Elegance and Ornament; but, being less necessary, are of a smaller Size, and are found more rarely than others, which serve for more substantial Uses.

Within the dark and cold Recesses of the Earth, yet
not

not far below its Surface, that Mankind may dig for them more easily, Nature hath provided large Quantities of combustible Substances for supplying us with Light and Heat. Various Metals are also generated, which, being pure and unmixed, or mixed and compounded by human Art, are formed into innumerable Instruments and Utensils, which are both curious and useful.

By the constant Vicissitude of the Tides, when the Waters rise or fall, according to the Motions of the Moon, all Stagnation of the Ocean is prevented; and the Foulness and Corruption of its Waters are purged.

To preserve the Element of Air pure and healthful, gentle Gales and Breezes, nay the fiercest Winds become the obedient Ministers of the Almighty.

Innumerable Grains, Roots, Herbs, Flowers, Shrubs, and Trees, divided into many different Kinds, belong to the vegetable Kingdom. How beautiful are their various Forms and Colours! How refreshing and enlivening are their Perfumes! How powerful are their Influences and Virtues! How regular are the Processes, from the smallest Seed or Plant, to the most sweetly perfumed, or the most finely variegated Flower, or to the most fruitful or firmest Tree!

But, whatever Wonders may be observed in the Formation and Growth of the vegetable Kinds, the Structure of Animals is still more wonderful and divine. Indued with various Degrees of Perception, by which they are sensible of their Existence, their Life is infinitely superior to that of Vegetables. Unanimated Matter exists not for itself. To those alone, who are capable of perceiving it, its Existence is of Importance. But Animals live, feel, and enjoy. By the Production of insensible Matter the *Creator* displays his Grandeur and Wisdom; but it is by Means of living Substances alone, which are indued with Sense and Perception, that the exuberant Goodness of the great *Father* of the Universe can be manifested.

How

How just are the Proportions of animated Bodies ! How beautiful are their Forms ! How curious is the Texture of those Substances of which they are compounded ! How proper is the Structure and Situation of their Parts ! What high Regard is shewn to Ornament and Grace ! What abundant Provision is made for Conveniency and Use !

What plentiful Sources of Pleasure are the Senses of Animals ! With what excellent Instincts are they endowed by the wise and bountiful *Creator* ! Incapable of Speech, untaught by any but Nature herself, they find out the Use of their Faculties, and attain the full Perfection of their Kind. In searching out their Food, in propagating and providing for their Young, in chusing or preparing their Habitations, they act with sagacious Foresight, and discover a wonderful Capacity.

How far inferior, notwithstanding, are all the other Animals to Man, and how divine is that Reason with which he is endowed ! How many and how different Objects does the Mind of Man comprehend at once, or in the quickest Succession ! Starting from the narrow Bounds of the Body, in a Moment it reaches to all the surrounding Objects : It runs over Plains, Mountains, Rivers, Villages, and Cities, and whatever else lies within Sight. Not satisfied with such narrow Limits, but disdaining all Confinement, it imagines the most distant Scenes, and apprehends Objects beyond Objects, without End. Equally unconfin'd with Respect to Time, from the present Instant it looks back on innumerable Ages already past, and extends its Thoughts to an Eternity to come. An infinite Number of Objects, far and near, great and small, of all Diversities of Colours and Figures, are painted in its Imagination. The Transactions of all Nations in all the Regions of the Earth, during all past Ages, may be treasured up in its Memory.

Over all Arts and Sciences Philosophy presides as of the highest Dignity. Various are Men's Dispositions and Abilities, and by their different Characters they dis-

cover different Degrees of Perfection. But it is by the Study and Practice of true Philosophy, that the highest Dignity of human Nature is displayed. Among all the Characters of Mankind, that of the Philosopher himself is the most perfect. Distinguished from those of an inferior Kind, by clearer and more distinct Perceptions ; by more comprehensive Views both of Nature and Art ; by a more ardent Love and higher Admiration of what is excellent ; by a firmer Attachment to Virtue, and the general Good of the World ; by a lower Regard for all inferior Beauties, compared with the Supreme ; consisting in Rectitude of Conduct, and Dignity of Behaviour ; by a greater Moderation in Prosperity, and a greater Patience and Courage under the Evils of Life ; the real Philosopher, though not absolutely perfect, sets the Grandeur of human Genius in the fairest Light.

But not only in this exalted Character ; in those also of an inferior Order, the Excellence of human Reason and Genius renders itself conspicuous.

By Statuary we bring distant Objects to Sight, and recal past Scenes ; we form Images of Men, and other Animals, which appear to breathe, feel, and live.

With greater Art the Painter represents all Kinds of solid Bodies upon a Plane. Though no Image can be felt upon the smooth Surface, we behold with Admiration Heights and Hollows, Mountains and Vallies, Men and Cattle, which bear a perfect Resemblance to what they are in Nature.

By Music we so strike and agitate the invisible Substance of Air, and direct its imperceptible Motions with so divine an Art, as raises an enchanting Harmony, which composes, exalts, and ravishes the Soul.

By a numerous Train of mechanical Arts, Mankind have provided for the Dignity, for the Pleasure, and for the Conveniency of Life. They measure their Time accurately by Dials, Clocks, and Watches : By Pendulums they correct and adjust the Inequalities of the Sun's Motions : By Telescopes and Microscopes they
enlarge

enlarge the Objects of Sight; while through the Machinery of Glasses, as by Magic, they descry the minute and concealed Parts of Nature, or force the most distant Objects to appear in their Presence, and to expose themselves to View: By the Help of polished Mirrors they draw the most exact Pictures in the Twinkling of an Eye; and not only mimic the Forms, but the quickest Motions of every Object which is exposed before the Mirrors.

By Planting, Sowing, and all the various Operations in Agriculture and Gardening; by Pasturing, Fishing, and Hunting; and by all the Arts of preparing Food; Mankind at once display their Genius, and provide plentifully for the Necessities and Comforts of human Life.

There is nothing so common that does not demonstrate the Force of human Genius: It is this which has directed us so distinctly to communicate our Thoughts to one another by articulate Sounds, and to form a Variety of Languages. Instructed by the same happy Genius, we easily convey our Thoughts to the absent, or transmit them to Posterity by an Alphabet of twenty-four Letters. By the Art of Printing we multiply the Copies of our Thoughts without End. None of all these Things could have been brought to the Perfection in which we find them, without the most profound Sagacity and deepest Attention.

Nor is it enough for the daring Genius of Mankind to erect Monuments of their Glory every-where upon the Land; they likewise raise Trophies in the Midst of the Sea, and ride upon its proud Billows: By a curious Machinery of wooden Vessels they float upon the Surface of the Waters, and cut their Way among the Waves. Rivers, Lakes, and Seas cannot stop their Passage: They cross from Coast to Coast, and exchange the Commodities of different Regions. Instead of shutting them up, and preventing their mutual Commerce, as in early Times, the liquid Element is forced to promote

mote their Commerce, and facilitate an Intercourse among the most distant Nations.

In a Word, who can enumerate all these agreeable, curious, and useful Arts, which are now so common in the World? To what lucky Chance, or happy Genius, shall we ascribe their Invention? By what profound Observation and Sagacity must they have been carried to the high Perfection, at which they have at length happily arrived? May it not be reckoned Arrogance to attribute them to human Genius alone? Shall we not rather with the Ancients ascribe them to the Divinity, and derive them from the secret Inspiration of the All-wise, "*Who is wonderful in Counsel, and excellent in Working?*" In Truth, these excellent Arts may justly be called Divine; and, while they display the Capacity of the human Mind, at the same Time declare the Perfections of the *Creator*. For human Art is nothing but a Ray of the Divine; is originally derived from the *Father of Lights*; from whom every good and perfect Gift cometh down, and is variously dispensed among the innumerable Objects of his Providence.

But, whatever Display of the Divine Wisdom and Energy is made by those Acts which are known among Men, there is a more illustrious Display of Wisdom in the Works of Nature. Compared with the Divine, all human Art vanishes. The largest and most glorious Machines, contrived and erected by human Skill, may be counted as nothing, when laid in the Balance with the magnificent System of the natural World; in which so many, and such various Bodies, both great and small, have performed their different Operations during so many Ages, with such an admirable Steadiness and Regularity, as manifests an Energy, Wisdom, Beauty, and Grandeur, beyond Expression and beyond Thought.

F. I. N. S.

