

• T H E

Familiar Letter-Writer ;

O R,

YOUNG SECRETARY'S

COMPLETE INSTRUCTOR.

T H E

Familiar Letter-Writer;

O R,

YOUNG SECRETARY'S

COMPLETE INSTRUCTOR.

C O N T A I N I N G .

A great Variety of LETTERS

O N

FRIENDSHIP,
DUTY,
LOVE,



MARRIAGE,
AMUSEMENT,
BUSINESS, &c.

To which are prefixed,

Plain Instructions for writing LETTERS on all
Occasions,

A N D

A Compendious GRAMMAR of the
ENGLISH Tongue.

By *H. W. DILWORTH, M. A.*

L O N D O N :

Printed for G. WRIGHT. 1758.

I N T R O D U C T I O N.

TH E R E is nothing more commendable, and at the same time more useful in life, than to be able to write letters on all occasions with elegance and propriety. When you write to a friend, your letter should be a true picture of your heart, the style loose and irregular; the thoughts themselves should appear naked, and not dressed in the borrowed robes of rhetoric; for a friend will be more pleased with that part of a letter which flows from the heart, than with that which is the product of the mind. I would not however be understood to mean, that the passions themselves may not be dressed in wit, provided it sits easy and natural; and seems rather expressive of the thoughts, than placed there for any beauty of its own.

When you write merely out of compliment, it is done more to please your correspondent than yourself; and therefore you should endeavour to hit his taste: but at the same time never forget to make choice of that subject, if possible, you are the greatest master of. When the subject is determined, you must be careful to fix your eyes on the brightest part of it, that when you have taken all the pains in your power to adorn it, you may have the satisfaction to see it appear pleasing and graceful.

In writing to a stranger, the first thing necessary to be observed, is your correspondent's station in life, and the ceremonies proper to be observed, that every thing may be conducted accordingly. But be his condition what it will, you should be very careful to let an air of good breeding and humanity appear in every expression, which will give a pleasing beauty to the whole.

When you write letters on the common concerns of life, elegance is not required ; ease and perspicuity are the only beauties you should study. Write freely, but not hastily ; let your words drop from your pen, as they would from your tongue when speaking deliberately on a subject of which you are master, and to a person with whom you are intimate.

But be sure to think closely on the subject of your letter before you sit down to write. This is a caution which may perhaps appear unnecessary ; but I will venture to say, that hundreds appear ridiculous on paper thro' hurry and want of thought, for one that is really so for want of understanding.

Before you begin any sentence, ponder the whole in your mind, and make use of the first words that offer themselves to express the meaning ; for they are the most natural, and will, in general, best answer your purpose. Forced expressions will spoil the easy flow of your diction, and render the whole stiff and awkward. But above all things learn to write correct, and never fail to give your letter a careful perusal before you send it. Nor ever be ashamed to amend any thing you find amiss, even when you have not time to transcribe your letter ; for a blot in the writing is by no means so bad as a blunder in the sense.

With regard to letters of business, they should be plain, concise, and to the purpose, but at the same time full and sufficient to express your meaning; for it is a most ridiculous piece of vanity to write in so concise a manner as to render your letter doubtful, and perhaps unintelligible. In short, your language, in all letters of business, should be so natural, that the thoughts may seem to have been conceived in the very words they are expressed in, and your sentiments to have sprung up naturally like the lillies of the field, whose natural beauty excels all the dress of human art.

A COMPENDIOUS
GRAMMAR
OF THE
ENGLISH TONGUE.

GRAMMAR is the art of speaking or writing a language correctly; and is divided into four parts, Orthography, Etymology, Syntax, and Prosody.

Orthography is the art of combining letters into syllables, and syllables into words.

Words consist of one or more letters or syllables, as *I*, *we*, *thou*, *Joseph*, *Abraham*, &c.

The English alphabet consists of twenty-six letters; of which five are vowels, and twenty-one consonants.

A vowel is a letter that makes a full and perfect sound of itself, without the assistance of any other letter, and are the five following, *a*, *e*, *i*, *o*, *u*.

A consonant is a letter that cannot be sounded without the help of a vowel either before or after it. The twenty-one consonants are as follows: *b*, *c*, *d*, *f*, *g*, *h*, *j*, *k*, *l*, *m*, *n*, *p*, *q*, *r*, *s*, *t*, *v*, *w*, *x*, *y*, *z*.

A syllable is the sound of one or more letters expressed in one breath.

If a word has but one syllable, it is called a monosyllable; if two, a disyllable; if three, a tresyllable; and if of more, a polysyllable.

Y is often used instead of *i*; but having then the same sound, there is no necessity of considering it as a distinct vowel. But when *y* comes before a vowel it is a consonant, as in *yet*, *yes*.

In order to spell a word rightly, it is necessary to divide it into distinct syllables. Thus if you should hear the word *philosopher* pronounced, and desire to spell it properly, divide it thus, *phi-lo-so-ph'er*; but in order to this, the three following rules will be necessary.

1. If a consonant comes betwixt two vowels, it must be joined to the latter, as *pa-per*, *a-bide*, *na-ked*, &c. except before the letter *x*, which is always joined to the vowel that precedes it, as in *ox-en*, *ex-cess*, *ex-er-cise*.

2. When two consonants of the same kind come together in the middle of a word, and both are fully pronounced in distinct sounds, they must be divided; that is, one of them must be put to the former, and the other to the latter syllable, as in *bor-row*, *com-mon*, *lit-tle*.

3. When two vowels come together in the middle of a word, and both are fully pronounced in distinct sounds, they must be divided into distinct syllables, as *cre-ate*, *ru-in*, *No-ab*.

Great letters are never to be used in the middle or end of words, nor are they to be used at the beginning of words, except in the following cases.

1. At the beginning of any writing.
2. After a period or full stop, when a new sentence begins.

3. At the beginning of every verse in poetry, or in the Bible.

4. At the beginning of proper names of all kinds, as of men, women, cities, rivers, &c.

5. At the beginning of any remarkable word, as God, King, Sir, &c.

6. The pronoun *I* must always be a capital or great letter.

Of marks used in writing.

There are several characters and marks used in writing, for rendering the sense of the passage more easy to be conceived.

1. A hyphen, marked thus (-). It is placed at the end of a line, when there is not room for all the word, but one or more syllables remain to be written at the beginning of the next line. It is also used in the compounding, or joining two words into one, as *house-keeper*, *market-house*, &c.

2. An apostrophe, marked thus ('), and is used to denote some letter or letters to be omitted, in order to render the pronunciation quicker, as *ev'ry* for *every*, *warp'd* for *warped*, *curs'd* for *cursed*, &c.

3. An asterism, marked thus (*), and is used to direct to some note or remark in the margin, or bottom of the page.

4. An index or hand, marked thus (). The fore-finger pointing signifies that passage to be very remarkable against which it is placed.

5. An oblique or dagger, marked thus (+), is used for the same intention as the asterism.

6. A section or division, marked thus (\$), is used in subdividing a chapter into lesser parts or portions.

6. A quotation, or double comma inverted, marked thus (‘‘). It is placed at the beginning of a line, to denote that the passage is transcribed from some author in his own words.

Of stops used in writing.

1. A comma, marked thus (,), is the shortest pause used, and distinguishes the conjunct members of a sentence ; as, *Hearken unto me, my people, and give ear unto me, O my nation.*

2. A semicolon, marked thus (;), is something longer than a comma, and ought to be placed in the subdivision of a sentence : *As the shadow moves, and we do not perceive it ; or as the tree grows, and we do not apprehend it ; so man, &c.* It is also used in distinguishing nouns of a contrary signification ; as *things public ; things private ; things sacred or profane.*

3. A colon, marked thus (:), is used when the sense is perfect, but the sentence not ended ; as, *Hearken unto me, ye that follow after righteousness, ye that seek the Lord : look unto the rock whence ye are hewn, and to the hole of the pit whence ye are digged.*

4. A period, marked thus (.), is the greatest pause, and is placed at the end of a sentence, when the sense is complete. *The heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament sheweth his handy-work.*

5. A point of interrogation, marked thus (?), is used when a question is asked ; as, *Hath the rain a father ? or who hath begotten the drops of the dew ?*

6. A point of admiration, exclamation, or wonder, marked thus (!), is a note of direction for raising the tone of the voice, the words denoting some vehement passion ; as, *O the folly of men !*

7. A parenthesis serves for the distinction of such an additional part of a sentence, as is not necessary to perfect the sense of it, and is generally expressed by inclosing such words between two curved or crooked lines, marked thus () ; as, *Your kindness to me (which I account a very great happiness) animates my spirits, &c.*

Of E T Y M O L O G Y.

Etymology is that part of grammar which teaches the deduction of one word from another, and the various modifications by which the same word is diversified.

Words are divided into two kinds, primitive and derivative.

A primitive word is that which comes from no other word in our language, as *fish, babe, &c.*

A derivative word is that which comes from some other word in our language ; as, *a fisher, and fishy, from fish ; a brawler, babling, from babe.*

Of the Article.

The English have two articles, *an* or *a*, and *the*.

An or *a* has an indefinite signification, and implies *one* ; as, *This is a good book*, that is, *one among the books that are good*. *An army might enter without resistance*, that is, *any army might enter, &c.*

In the senses where we use *a* or *an* in the singular, we speak in the plural without any article at all ; as, *These are good books*.

When the substantive to which the article is prefixed begins with a vowel or the silent *b*, we use *an* ;

an; but when it begins with a consonant, *a*; as, *an ewe-lamb, an herb, a cow, a goat, &c.*

The has a definite and an indefinite signification: the former restrains the sense of the word it is placed before, to that particular object; the latter leaves the word undetermined, with regard to any particular. Thus, for instance, *The book is good*, that is, *this particular book*. Here *the* has a definite sense: but in the following instance the sense is indefinite, “*He gives fodder for the cattle, and herb for the use of men.*”

Many words are used without an article, particularly proper and abstract names; as *John, Jerusalem, London, virtue, vice, beauty, ugliness, love, hatred, anger, &c.*

Of Nouns.

A noun is the name of a thing; and is either substantive or adjective. A noun substantive is the thing itself, as, *a man, a horse, a hog, &c.* A noun adjective is that which expresses the quality or properties of the thing, as, *a rich man, a large house, a small field*; where *rich, large*, and *small*, are adjectives, because they indicate the properties of the substantives *man, house*, and *field*.

Of Numbers.

Number is the distinction of one from many. There are two numbers, the singular and the plural. The singular number is used when we speak of one single thing; as, *a horse, a cow, a dog, a man, a tree*. The plural number is used when we speak of more things than one, as *horses, cows, men, dogs, trees, &c.* Note, When the singular number ends in *ch, sh, or x*, the plural is formed by

by adding *es*; as *brush*, *brush-es*; *witness*, *witness-es*; *box*, *box-es*: but if the singular number ends in *se*, *ze*, *ce*, or in *ge* pronounced soft, then the *s*, added to form the plural number, cannot be heard in the sound, except it make an entire syllable; as *borse*, *bors-es*; *breeze*, *breez-es*; *face*, *fac-es*; *age*, *ag-es*. The plural of words ending in *j* and *fe* is formed by changing the termination into *ves*; as *calf*, *calves*; *knife*, *knives*; *self*, *selves*; *thief*, *thieves*; *wolf*, *wolves*. There are however many exceptions to this rule; as *roof*, *roofs*; *grief*, *griefs*; *dwarf*, *dwarfs*; and also *ruff*, *muff*, *cuff*, *make ruffs*, &c.; but *staff*; tho' it ends with *ff*, makes *staves* in the plural. Besides these, there are many irregular words in our language, whose plural is formed in a very different manner; as *chick*, *chicken*; *die*, *dice*; *mouse*, *mice*; *goose*, *geese*; *penny*, *pence*; *foot*, *feet*, and several others. It must also be observed, that some words are the same in both numbers, as *sheep*, *hose*, *fern*, &c. and some want the singular number, as *ashes*, *bowels*, *bellous*, *breeches*, *lungs*, *scissars*, *snuffers*, *tongs*, *wages*: while, on the other hand, many words want the plural, as the names of men, women, cities, countries, mountains, rivers, &c.; and also the names of virtues, vices, metals, &c.

Of the Cases.

The Latin, Greek, and other languages, have several cases; but the English only one, namely, the genitive, which ends in the singular and plural in *s* or *es*; as Pope's *Messiah*, Dryden's *Virgil*, Addison's *Cato*, the State's power, the King of Prussia's army, and the like.

Of Gender.

The English language is free from gender, by which means it is rendered much more easy than it would be were it like the Latin, &c. encumbered with cases and genders, that is, with different terminations in the nouns, to express their different significations.

Gender signifies the distinction of sexes, or the difference between male and female. We have four different methods of distinguishing the two genders, or the male and female sex.

1. By different words; as, *buck, doe, bull, cow, cock, hen, horse, mare, man, woman, king, queen, lord, lady, lad, lass, &c.*

2. When one word signifies equally both sexes, we add another word to it, to shew which of the two is intended; as, *a male child, a female child, a he goat, a she goat.*

3. By adding another substantive to the word; as, *a man servant, a maid servant, a cock sparrow, a hen sparrow.*

4. By a different termination in the substantive, in conformity to the Latin; as, *abbot, abbess, heir, heiress, actor, actress, hunter, huntress, ambassador, ambassador, baron, baroness, governor, governess, Jew, Jewess, lion, lioness, patron, patroness, count, countess, prior, prioress, shepherd, shepherdess, poet, poetess, viscount, viscountess.*

But the common and ordinary words used to express the difference of sex, are *he* and *she*.

Of the comparison of Adjectives.

In order to compare adjectives, that is, to make the proper comparison between things, we generally alter the termination. There are three degrees

grees of comparison, the positive, the comparative, and the superlative, as *soft, softer, softest*. The positive degree is the adjective, and used to denote the thing to be simply such, as *soft wool, a fair woman, a large tree*.

The comparative degree is used to denote a thing to be more such than another thing, as *softer wool, a fairer woman, a larger tree*.

The superlative degree is used to denote the thing to be most such, as *the softest wool, the fairest woman, the largest tree*.

In the above examples it may be observed, that the positive degree is nothing more than the adjective itself; that the comparative is formed by adding *er* to the positive; and the superlative, by adding *est* to the positive.

But there is also another manner of comparing adjectives, namely, by the words *more* and *most*; as *beautiful, more beautiful, most beautiful*. But adjectives are also irregular with regard to their degrees of comparison; as, *good, better, best; bad, worse, worst; little, less or fewer, least; much, more, most*.

Of Pronouns.

A pronoun is a part of speech, which is used instead of a noun substantive; and are the following: *I, thou, he, with their plurals we, ye, they; it, who, which, what, whither, whosoever, whatsoever, my, mine, our, ours, thy, thine, your, yours, his, her, hers, their, theirs, this, that, other, another, the same*.

Of the Verb.

A verb is a word that implies *being, doing, or suffering*.

1. *Being* denotes that the thing spoken of is in some posture or situation, as *to stand, to sit, to hang, to lie, &c.*

2. *Doing* signifies all manner of action, as *to write, to walk, to ride, to play, &c.*

3. *Suffering* implies the impressions that persons or things receive, as *to be beat, to be cheated, to lose, &c.*

Those verbs that signify *being* only, are called *essential* verbs; those that signify *doing*, verbs *active*; and those that imply *suffering*, verbs *passive*.

A verb hath two forms of voices, the active and the passive. The active voice expresses what is done by the agent before it, as *I love, I hate*. The passive voice, which is made by the auxiliary verb *am*, expresses what is done to or suffered by the person or agent going before it, as *I am burned, I am hated*.

Grammarians consider three tenses or times, the present, the past, and the future; because every action must be now doing, already done, or to be done hereafter. But English verbs have but two tenses or times distinguished by their terminations, namely, the present, and the preter or past. The present tense is the verb itself, as *mourn*; and the preterite, or past time, is commonly formed by adding *ed* or *d* to it, as *mourn, mourned; walk, walked*.

But the English tongue has a great many irregular verbs, which are conjugated in a very different manner; as *bear, bore, borne; begin, began, begun; bid, bad, bidden; do, did, done; drive, drove, driven; give, gave, given; know, knew, known; rise, rose, risen; see, saw, seen; write, wrote, written*.

Verbs are also divided into active and neuter. A verb active is that which can have after it a

noun

noun implying the subject of the action which the verb is used to denote, as *to receive a bribe*, *to fire a cannon*, *to take a castle*, and the like.

A verb neuter is a word implying the state or being, and sometimes the action of a person or thing; but can have no noun after it; as, *the horse walks*, *the chimney smoaks*, *the dog barks*, &c.

Of the Adverb.

An adverb is a word joined to a verb, adjective, participle, or to another adverb, to express some quality, manner or circumstance belonging to it; as, the horse walks *well*; the man is now good, tho' lately wicked; the boy is idle by *indulging*.

Of the Participle.

A participle is a word, or part of speech, derived from a verb, and implies being, doing, or suffering; as, I was *sitting*; I am *reading* the book; I was *abused* in the streets.

Participles are divided into active and passive: the former ends in *ing*, as *loving*, *hating*, *running*, *walking*, *riding*; and the latter ends in *ed*, as *burned*, *killed*, *loved*, and the like.

Of the Conjunction.

A conjunction is a part of speech that joins words and sentences together, and shews the dependence they have on each other.

Conjunctions are either,

1. Copulative, as *and*, *also*, *both*, *neither*, *nor*.
2. Disjunctive, as *either*, *or*.
3. Concessive, as *though*, *although*, *albeit*.

4. Adversive, as *but*, *yet*, *notwithstanding*, *nevertheless*.
5. Casual, as *for*, *that*, *because*.

Of the Interjection.

An interjection is a word or part of speech which denotes some sudden motion or passion of the soul ; and therefore they are of different kinds, as of joy, grief, wonder, praise, aversion, exclaiming, surprise, imprecation, laughter, calling, silencing, derision, attention ; as, *bey ! brave ! alas ! O strange ! well done ! oh ! ha ! silence ! bark !* and the like.

Of S Y N T A X.

Syntax is the right placing or joining of words together in sentences.

A sentence is any thought of the mind expressed by two or more words, and is either simple or compound. A simple sentence is that which has but one verb finite in it, as *God is just*. A compound sentence, is when two sentences are joined together by some conjunction, as *Riches profit not in the day of wrath ; but righteousness delivereth from death*.

The verb agrees with the substantive in number and person : *The water runneth ; the horses run swiftly*. In the first instance, the substantive *water* is singular, therefore the verb *runneth* is singular also ; but in the second, the substantive *horses* is plural, and thence the verb *run* plural likewise.

When the substantive is collective, that is, comprehends many particulars, the verb may be either in the singular or plural number ; as, *The fleet is*

come to an anchor, or The fleet are come to an anchor; *is* being the singular number, and *are* the plural.

When two substantives, one of which is in the genitive case, come together, that in the genitive case must be put first; as, *the sun's heat*; *the river's brink*; *the mower's scythe*.

Of PROSODY.

Prosody teaches the true pronunciation of words, their accents, and the quantities of syllables. But as there are so many exceptions to every rule that can be given for pronouncing English words, we shall omit them here, and refer the reader to some dictionary of the English tongue where the words are accented, which they are now in most; for by carefully observing to pronounce them according to the accents placed over them, that difficult part of the English language, a proper pronunciation, may be obtained; which is impossible to be done by bare rules only.

The Familiar

LETTER-WRITER.

LETTER I.

A Son's Letter at School to his Father.

Honoured SIR,

I AM greatly obliged to you for all favours; all I have to hope is, that the progress I make in my learning will be no disagreeable return for the same. Gratitude, duty, and a view of future advantages, all conspire to make me thoroughly sensible how much I ought to labour for my own improvement and your satisfaction, and to shew myself, upon all occasions,

Your most obedient,
and ever dutiful son,

ROBERT READ.

LETTER II.

A Letter of Excuse to Father or Mother.

Honoured SIR,

I Am informed, and it gives me a great concern, that you have heard an ill report of me, which I suppose was rais'd by some of my school-fellows, who either envy my happiness, or, by aggravating

my faults, would be thought to seem less criminal
themselves; though I must own I have been a little
too remiss in my school-business, and am now sensi-
tive I have lost, in some measure, my time and
credit thereby; but by my future diligence, I hope
soon to recover both: and to convince you that I
pay a strict regard to all your commands, which I
am bound to as well in gratitude as duty, and hope
I shall ever have leave, with great truth, to sub-
scribe myself,

Your most dutiful son,

WILLIAM COLLINS.

LETTER III.

A young Gentleman's Letter abroad, to his
Father in England.

Honoured Sir,

June 27th, 1754.

THIS is the sixth letter I have sent you by
divers ships, since Michaelmas last; which, I
hope, all came safe to hand. I have nothing
new or particular to communicate, only beg you
would conceive so favourable an opinion of me, as
to believe I prosecute my studies with the utmost
application, well knowing that will prove the best
recommendation to your favour at present, and
most real service to myself in time to come. All
our friends here present their best respects to you;
and that you may continue in health and happiness,
is the constant prayer of,

SIR,

Your most dutiful son,

HENRY JONES.

LAKI

LETTER IV.

rom a young Apprentice to his Father, to let him know how he likes his Place, and goes on.

Honoured SIR,

I know it will be a great satisfaction to you and my dear mother, to hear that I go on very happily in my business ; and my master, seeing my diligence, puts me forward, and encourages me in such a manner, that I have great delight in it, and hope I shall answer in time your good wishes and expectations, and the indulgence which you have always shewn me. There is such good order in the family, as well on my mistress's part as my master's, that every servant, as well as I, knows his duty, and does it with pleasure. So much evenness, sedateness, and regularity is observed in all they enjoin or expect, that it is impossible but it should be so. My master is an honest worthy man ; every body speaks well of him. My mistress is a chearful sweet-temper'd woman, and rather heals breaches than widens them : and the children, after such examples, behave to us all like one's own brothers and sisters. Who can but love such a family ? I wish, when it shall please God to put me in such a station, that I may carry myself just as my master does ; and if I should ever marry, have just such a wife as my mistress : and then, by God's blessing, I shall be happy as they are ; and as you, sir, and my dear mother have always been. If any thing can make me happier than I am, or continue to me my

4 The Familiar LETTER-WRITER.

present felicity, it will be the continuance of your and my good mother's prayers for, honoured sir and madam,

Your very dutiful son.

L E T T E R V.

Letter from a Youth at School to his Parents

Honoured FATHER and MOTHER,

YOur kind letter of the 24th instant I received in due time, and soon after the things you therein mentioned by the carrier, for which return you my sincere thanks. They came very opportunely for my occasions. I hope soon to improve myself at school, though I own it seems a little hard and irksome to me as yet; but my master gives me great encouragement, and assures me I shall soon get the better of the little difficulties that almost every boy meets with at first, and then it will be a perfect pleasure instead of a task, and altogether as pleasant and easy as it is now irksome and hard.

My humble duty to yourselves; and I beg the favour of you to give my kind love to my brothers and sisters, and remember me to all friends and acquaintance: Which is at present all from

Your ever dutiful

and obedient son

CHARLES GOODENOUGH.

L E T.

LETTER VI.

Letter from an Apprentice in Town to his Friends in the Country.

Honoured FATHER and MOTHER,

THE bearer, Harry Jones, came to see me last night, and told me he should set out for home the next morning. I was not willing to let slip the opportunity of sending you a letter by him, to let you know that I am very well, and like both my master and mistress, and, by what I can yet see of it, the business extremely well, and do intend (please God) to use my utmost endeavours to make myself master of every thing that belongs to it, in which I shall have treble satisfaction; first, in pleasing my master; secondly, in pleasing my friends; and thirdly, in benefiting myself. I have but little leisure, nor do I want a great deal, but will take every opportunity to let you know how I go on, and that I am, with great gratitude,

Your ever dutiful
and most obedient son,

T. R.

LETTER VII.

To a Mother, to thank her for her Care and Tenderness.

Honoured MADAM,

I HAVE written twice to my brother, and not doubting but that he would inform you of my being well, I have taken the liberty to omit writing

6 The Familiar LETTER-WRITER.

ing to you. I beg you will be pleased to hear the reasons that weighed with me against a very earnest inclination, that whether you tell I was right or not, you may acquit me of the charge of disobedience, or want of respect as well as gratitude.

The pain with which I saw you parted from me on the road, has made an impression on my heart which time will never wear out; and I hope as it will always keep in my remembrance your tenderness as well as care for me, that beside the natural right all your commands have to obedience from me, I shall, on another principle, avoid every thing that is wrong, lest it should give you disquiet.

I should be unnatural and unpardonable not to have the most sincere regard for the peace of your mind, and for its composure: God prevent that I should do any thing that might affect the first, and I shall hope my true concern will guard me against every thing that might disturb the latter; indeed, madam, the care of this prevented my writing; I feared that a letter from me, be the contents ever so indifferent, might recal my remembrance too fully before you, and that the same pain might attend it, as did your parting with me. This was the only reason of my not writing before; and in the most sincere truth, I have done violence to myself in omitting that testimony of my duty and respect.

As to occasions of writing, I have yet none, more than to tell you that I do not forget to whom I owe my attention; and to say how great an happiness it will be to me to receive your farther thoughts as to things that are about me. I have yet entered into no acquaintance with them, being determined, so far as my youth and scanty judgment

ment may allow of it, to consider them before I mix myself among them: for this purpose I have hitherto kept within the house, where partly from the conversation of my relations, and partly from that of other persons of their acquaintance who visit them, and some of whom are persons of very respectable talents, I settle in myself some character of the several persons I am likely to meet with, and of the occurrences which may fall in my way; but of all this, having not yet established within myself any firm opinion, I shall take the freedom to write to you.

The greatest subjects of my consideration, madam, are the instructions and the cautions you gave me; these will never be out of my remembrance; and although perhaps the tenderness of the parent, or the fears of the mother, may have represented some of these in stronger lights than they are ordinarily seen, yet when I compare them with the observations I have yet had opportunities of making, I find them all most perfectly just, and all very necessary.

No person I am sure ever had the happiness of a more affectionate mother; and I am fully persuaded that the great experience you have had of the world, will render you, more than most people, able to judge of the course of things: I think it a great happiness that so excellent an adviser is so much concerned in my welfare; and I do promise you, madam, in the most sincere manner, that I will always prefer to all other considerations in the world, the admonitions which you shall be pleased to give me. I shall also look upon myself as accountable for the last articles of my conduct to you,

as well as to God and my own heart ; and it will scarce be a greater obligation upon me to do in every thing as I ought, than that any wrong step in my behaviour, besides throwing myself into difficulties, make you unhappy.

You cannot know, madam, how much, and how gratefully I think of your care in placing me where I now am ; where, under the eye of a good and prudent person, I have an opportunity to consider of my future conduct, and to see things before I am placed among them, and to consider this great work before I may be said to make a part of it. I see it as a terrible as well as a profitable scene of action : I have already set down many things which I shall avoid like death, and which I should else perhaps have fallen into heedlessly : I hope my future experience will shew me many more. Indeed, on the little that I see at present, I cannot wonder that of the youths who at my unthinking and rash time of life, are let loose into the danger, and never consider it till they are in the midst of it, if they ever consider it at all, the greater part are ruined. I hope I shall profit even by their misfortunes ; but whatsoever advantages I have over the rest of the young men I meet withal, I shall always remember, with a due gratitude, that I owe them to you.

I pray daily that you may continue in all respects happy. You'll let my brother know, madam, that I shall endeavour to think of all things as he would have me : he has taught me to write long letters ; but if it be not tedious to you, I cannot think the time it has taken me could be more worthily

hily employed; nor can I account that a trouble, which, besides that it is a duty and a satisfaction to myself, will give you pleasure.

I am, honoured madam,
with all duty and affection,
your obedient son.

LETTER VIII.

From a Mother to her Son, in Answer to the former.

Dear CHILD,

I have this moment read your letter, and I am set down to write to you. Where corresponding is a trouble, people may defer it to the latest hour; but why should I deny myself a moment the pleasure of conversing with you? My dear, continue in the thoughts you have at present, and you will add all that can be now thrown into the portion of my happiness. I interrupt myself by casting my eye over and over upon your letter, and the fulness of my heart prevents my informing you of its sensations. If you should see more blots than this which is just now made in my writing, do not wonder, or be uneasy. I will not dissemble to you that they are made by tears; but, dearest son, these are tears that flow from transport, which has no other expression. Sure no mother was ever happier in her children. Your brother is esteemed, nay, he is almost adored by every body: your sister is settled to an advantage that was beyond my utmost expectations: and yet she is so good a woman, that her husband thinks himself under everlasting obligations.

gations. You, my dear Jack, were my only care; and I had more fear for you than all: as the youngest, that is, child, as the latest remembrance of your honoured father, you had a larger share of my tenderness than either, and you was destined to a scene of the greatest danger. Heaven alone can tell what have been my anxieties and fears about you, and how continual my prayers for your security. They are all granted; and instead of being, as I feared you would, an occasion of continual alarm to me, you are adding more than any of them to my contentment. I know your good heart, and I can see what a joy it is to you to perceive you make me happy: in such a mind as yours, there can be wanting no other motive to be good beside the excellence of virtue; but I am sure that if this were not sufficient, the very thought that your mother's peace depended upon your conduct, would keep you in the way of goodness.

My dear child, regard your brother: no person is so able to advise you, and he loves you with more than the common affection of the relation; he admires your good sense, and he esteems your principles. Dear son, think what an honour it is to have the esteem of so excellent a man; think what a happiness it is to have so fine a character at so tender an age as yours; and as you shew me how much my satisfaction is an object of your concern, remember what a transport it must be to me to hear of you so favourably.

I shall not repeat to you, my dear, the cautions which I gave you, for I see you will not need to be put again in remembrance: only reverence truth, be acquainted with no one till you know that he deserves it, and avoid bad women.

If it can give you satisfaction, and I am sure it will do so, to hear that every thought of your heart has my perfect approbation, your hear it truly : but although there is not any the least part of your conduct that does not give me pleasure, there is, although you will be surprised to hear it, something in your brother's, with respect to you, that gives me pain. He told me of your asking his advice upon an inconsiderable subject, and his giving it to you rather honestly than elegantly. Dear child, take care of your heart, and you may be less uneasy about your expression : let your thoughts be good, and never be uneasy about the words you put them in. The books recommended to you may be good for nothing, but you have no occasion for any ; nor is it a pin matter in the affairs of life, whether you put every word where it should be. But this is all a trifle, nor shall I pretend to enter into the matter ; if it be worth any consideration, he is the best judge, so pray mind him ; but what I speak of is the inanner in which he says he wrote of your cousin.

My dear, always respect your elders, and do not let any little school-boy's lesson put you above them in your own opinion, because they have forgotten it : nor because your cousin is a plain man, do you suppose he is less capable to advise you. He is a person of undoubted probity and uprightness of heart, and that is worth all the Greek and Latin of Westminster and Eton : he has made his way to a plentiful fortune, and he has the respect and esteem of all that he ever was concerned with. Would you wish for a better character or better fortune ? God send you may conduct yourself through the world just as he has done : I that would

would weary heaven with prayers for you, wish you nothing better: I do not pretend to say your brother is wrong in his judgment about this matter, for I do not understand the nature of it; all that I know is, you will never write a letter that will please me more than this you have sent already; and I think, had I been in his place, I would not have put any thing into your mind upon an occasion of such little consequence, that should have abated your regard for a person whose advice will be of service to you. But I know you will not do so. Preserve, I desire you, that respect for him which his years, and his integrity, and his success in the world require: and whatsoever you may think about this trifle, do not let it lessen your esteem for one whom your mother recommends to you.

My dear, I have said the more upon this subject, because it seems the only one on which you are in danger to err; and I have thought it the more necessary to say so, because the regard I desired you to pay to your brother, might have rendered it a kind of duty to go into this error: I have spoke to him about it, and he desires me to say, that he is perfectly of my opinion.

Farewel, my dearest boy; you have a very easy task before you; seeing you are already so good, that you need only go on in the same path, to make all that love you happy.

Your affectionate mother.

L E T.

LETTER IX.

From Master BILLY, relating the Particulars
of a signal Escape.

Dear and honoured SIR and MADAM,
I Should not now have written this letter, and perhaps should never have given you the uneasiness of knowing the danger I have been in, if my master had not been hasty in fending you a piece of news, which I am sure has greatly afflicted you, and which must render every thing I can write agreeable, since you will be glad to find that I can write at all. This being the king's birth-day, we had a holiday; and I took a walk with several of my companions in the meadow, attended by the usher. We there found several workmen repairing an old wooden bridge across the river, who soon after left their work, and went home to dinner, only first throwing some loose boards over a large hole they were preparing to mend. Some of my companions crossed over into the other field, and I was following them, when one of those boards, on which I stepp'd, tilting up, I fell into the middle of the river, and was immediately driven away by the swiftness of the current. They all ran to the water-side, calling out for help, and striving to give me assistance, but in vain, and at last gave me up for lost, and were returning slowly home, when they saw honest Robin, whom in his necessity I had, by your assistance, relieved with a few shillings. They mentioned my name, pointed to the river, again burst into tears, and begged him to help me. He flew to my relief; and, stripping off his coat, leaped

leaped from the top of the bank, and soon brought me senseless on shore; then taking me in his arms, ran with me to a public house, and begged the people to put me into a warm bed. As no body expected I should ever recover, some of the scholars went to inform my master of what had happened; and the usher returning with the same news, and the post being ready to set out, he too hastily sent you the melancholy account. All these particulars I was informed of afterwards.

The first person I saw when I opened my eyes, was the honest man who had saved my life, and who, imagining that he had felt some motion about my heart, was rubbing me all over with brandy and warm cloths, and at the same time was lamenting as if I had been his own child. I found myself very sick, but having emptied my stomach, grew much better, and was thinking of getting up, when I saw my shirt very bloody; but my surprize was soon removed by the people's telling me that a surgeon had attempted to bleed me; but as he could get only a few drops, and every body apprehended I was dead, they neglected to bind up my arm. However, this was now done, and through the goodness of God I was soon pretty well, and found no other disorder but a little faintness. I was then advised to drink a glass of hot wine, which I readily complied with, and at the same time ordered some for my deliverer, and soon after fell asleep for about an hour, when I awaked not only much refreshed, but in a manner quite well.

Dear Sir, dear Madam, dear Sister, forgive the uneasiness I have occasioned. My heart is filled with gratitude to God for prolonging my life, and

I have no other concern but for what you feel for me. I was but just awake, when my master and the usher, with some of the scholars, having heard of my recovery, came into the room and embraced me; but having told me what they had written to you, I insisted on getting up immediately, and contradicting the letter, which I have done with as much dispatch as I was able; and finding that the post had not been gone three hours, I got the landlord to send a man and horse, who, if he cannot overtake the post, is to deliver the letter to you. The man is already mounted, and I have only time to assure you that I am quite well, and ever will be,

Dear PAPA and MAMMA,
Most dutifully your's.

L E T T E R X.

The Answer.

My dear CHILD,

WE all rejoice, and bless God for your recovery. You see, my dear, how precarious life is, and how suddenly we may be snatched into that world, where our everlasting fate will be finally determined. Seriously reflect on this important truth; let it put a check upon the follies of youth, and lead you to think on the necessity and advantages of a religious and virtuous life, which will be able to support you under every difficulty here, and render death itself, however sudden, the entrance into never-fading felicity. I hope

hope you will make this use of your recovery; for this your gratitude to the Almighty requires you. God, like a tender parent, only desires your happiness; and all the return you can make to him is to live so as to be happy for ever.

We are all greatly pleased with the gratitude of the honest man, who has been the instrument of your preservation. You see that kind and generous actions are frequently rewarded even in this life; and that none are so mean as not to be worth making our friends. The lowest human being is our fellow-creature, and may equal, and perhaps exceed us in virtue. I have sent the good man a present of five guineas, and would have you tell him, that when his business leads him to town, I shall be glad to see and thank him.

Your eagerness to change our grief into joy, by sending a man and horse with your letter, was at once a convincing proof of your confidence in our love, and the generous sensibility of your heart; and, my dear, we all thank you for the kind concern you have shewn for our grief, and the method which your good sense has prompted you to put a stop to it. I will not say how much I was affected at opening Mr. Thompson's letter. Your mother and sister were present, and seeing me lay it down to wipe my eyes, eagerly cast a look upon it, and immediately burst into tears, and the most affecting lamentations. Alas! I was but little to comfort them! we were all in deep distress: but, just as I was struggling with my sorrow, in order to persuade your poor mother to become more composed, the man arrived with your letter, which he refused to deliver to any body but me: I therefore ordered him to be called in, and received

ceived it from him at the parlour door, when over-hearing your mother's sighs, and your sister's more audible complaints, he cried, as I put the letter carelefly in my pocket; Sir, that letter brings good news. I then desired him to stay and refrcsh himself in the kitchen, saw with joy the super-scription written with your hand, and turned to dry up their tears by reading to them the contents, which, like a precious balm, removed the agony of our minds, and filled us with extasy.

My dear son, God blefs and preserve your pre-cious life, and may you long live a comfort to us all, is the constant prayer of

Your affectionate father.

LETTER XI.

From Master BILLY LEWIS to his Father,
in Reply.

Dear and ever-honoured SIR,
I can find no words to express the sense I have of
your's, my mamma's, and my sister's goodness.
I read your kind letter with many tears, and could
not help being much—very much concerned for the
grief I have occasioned. Yet I do not know how
to make you sensible of the duty and gratitude that
fills my heart; but what is wanting in words, the
actions of my whole life shall better explain. I will
therefore leave them to speak for me. The good
man, my deliverer, was surprised at your genero-
sity, when I gave him the money, and told me
that he was never worth so much money at any one
time in his life. He sends you a thousand thanks;
and

18 The Familiar LETTER-WRITER.

and on my telling him that you would be glad to see him when he came to town, he offered to walk thither on purpose; but I told him I was sure you did not expect him to neglect his business. The honest man has just brought his wife and children, all dressed in new cloaths, that are coarse, plain, and neat, to thank me, and desire me to return their thanks to you. I am, dear sir, with the tenderest brotherly affection for my sister,

Your and my mamma's ever-dutiful son.

-P. S. I have sent my sister a specimen of my drawing. I am also much pleased with the study of geography, and no diversion gives me half the pleasure I find in examining and comparing the situation of places on my master's terrestrial globe, and in resolving the problems he has taught me.

LETTER XII.

From a Daughter to her Father, wherein she dutifully expostulates against a Match he had proposed to her, with a Gentleman much older than herself.

Honoured SIR,

THO' your injunctions should prove diametrically opposite to my own secret inclinations, yet I am not insensible that the duty which I owe you binds me to comply with them. Besides, I should be very ungrateful, should I presume, in any point whatever, considering your numberless acts of parental indulgences towards me, to contest your will and pleasure. Tho' the consequence, therefore,

fore, should prove never so fatal, I am determin'd to be all obedience, in case what I have to offer in my own defence should have no influence over you, or be thought an insufficient plea for my aversion to a match, which, unhappily for me, you seem to approve of. 'Tis very possible, sir, the gentleman you recommend to my choice may be possessed of all that substance, and all those good qualities, that bias you so strongly in his favour; but be not angry, dear sir, when I remind you, that there is a vast disproportion in our years. A lady of more experience, and of more advanc'd age, should, in my humble opinion, be a much fitter help-mate for him. To be ingenuous, (permit me, good sir, to speak the sentiments of my heart without reserve for once) a man almost in his grand climacterick, can never be an agreeable companion for me; nor can the natural gaiety of my temper, which has hitherto been indulged by yourself in every innocent amusement, be ever agreeable to him. Tho' his fondness at first may connive at the little freedoms I shall be apt to take; yet, as soon as the edge of his appetite shall be abated, he'll grow jealous, and for ever torment me without a cause. I shall be debarred of every diversion suitable to my years, tho' never so harmless and inoffensive; permitted to see no company; hurried down, perhaps, to some melancholy rural recess; and there, like my lady Grace in the play, sit pensive and alone under a green tree. Your long-experienced goodness, and that tender regard which you have always express'd for my ease and satisfaction, encourage me thus freely to expostulate with you on an affair of so great importance. If, however, after all you shall judge the inequality of our age an insufficient plea in my favour,

20 The Familiar LETTER-WRITER.

favour, and that want of affection for a husband is but a trifle, where there is a large fortune and a coach and six to throw into the scale; if, in short, you shall lay your peremptory commands upon me to resign up all my real happiness and peace of mind, for the vanity of living in pomp and grandeur, I am ready to submit to your superior judgment. Give me leave, however, to observe, that 'tis impossible for me ever to love the man into whose arms I am to be thrown; and that my complaisance with so detested a proposition, is nothing more than the result of the most inviolable duty to a father, who never made the least attempt before to thwart the inclinations of,

His ever obedient daughter.

LETTER XIII.

To a young Lady, cautioning her against keeping Company with a Gentleman of a bad Character.

Dear NIECE,

THE sincere love and affection which I now have for your indulgent father, and ever had for your virtuous mother, not long since deceased, together with the tender regard I have for your future happiness and welfare, have prevail'd on me to inform you, rather by letter than by word of mouth, that the town rings of your unregarded conduct, and the too great freedom that you take with Mr. Trippit. You have been seen with him (if fame lies not) in the side boxes of both theatres, at the Blue-coat hospital on a Sunday night, and afterwards,

afterwards at a certain tavern, not a mile from thence, which is a house (as I have been credibly inform'd) of no good repute. You have both, moreover, been seen at Ranelagh assembly, Vauxhall gardens ; and what is still more flagrant, at Cuper's fire-works. Don't imagine, niece, that I am in the least prejudic'd, or speak out of any private pique ; but let me tell you, your familiarity with him gives me no small concern, as his character is none of the best, and as he has acted in the most ungenerous manner by two or three very virtuous young ladies of my acquaintance, who entertain'd a too favourable opinion of his honour. 'Tis possible, as you have no great expectancies from your relations, and he has an annuity, as 'tis reported, of 200 l. a year left him by his uncle, that you may be tempted to imagine his addresses an offer to your advantage. 'Tis much to be question'd, however, whether his intentions are sincere ; for, notwithstanding all the fair promises he may possibly make you, I have heard it whispered that he's privately engaged to a rich, old, doating lady, not far from Hackney. Besides, admitting it to be true, that he is really intitled to the annuity abovemention'd, yet 'tis too well known that he is deep in debt ; that he lives beyond his income, and has very little, if any regard for his reputation. In short, not to mince the matter, he's a perfect libertine, and is ever boasting of favours from our weak sex, whose fondness and frailty are the constant topics of his raillery and ridicule.

All things therefore duly consider'd, let me prevail on you, dear niece, to avoid his company as you would a mad-man ; for, notwithstanding I still think you strictly virtuous, yet your good name may be irre-

parably lost by such open acts of imprudence. As I have no other motive but an unaffected zeal for your interest and welfare, I flatter myself you'll put a favourable construction on the liberty here taken, by

Your sincere friend,

and affectionate aunt.

LETTER XIV.

From an elder Brother in the Country, to his younger Brother put Apprentice in London.

I Am very glad to hear you are pleased with the new situation into which the care of your friends has put you; but I would have you pleased not with the novelty of it, but with the real advantage. It is natural for you to be glad that you are under less restraint than you were; for a master neither has occasion nor inclination to watch over a youth so much as his parents: But if you are not careful, this, although it now gives you a childish satisfaction, may, in the end, betray you into mischief; nay, to your ruin. Though your father is not in sight, dear brother, act always as if you were in his presence: and be assured, that what would not offend him, will never displease any body.

You have more sense, I have often told you so, than most persons at your time. Now is the opportunity of making a good use of it: and take this for certain, every right step you enter upon now will be a comfort to you for life. I would have

have your reason, as well as your fancy, pleased with your new situation, and then you will act as becomes you. Consider, brother, that the state of life that charms you so at this time will bring you to independance and affluence, and that you will, by behaving as you ought now, be at one time master of a house and family; have every thing about you at your own command, and have apprentices as well as fervants to wait upon you. The master with whom you are placed was some years ago in your situation; and what should hinder you from being hereafter in his? All that is required, is patience and industry; and these, brother, are a very cheap price at which to purchase so comfortable a condition.

Your master, I am told, had nothing to begin the world withal: in that he was worse than you; for, if you behave well, there are those who will set you up in a handsome manner. So you have a sufficient inducement to be good, and a reward always follows it. Brother, farewell. Obey your master, and be civil to all persons; keep out of company, for boys have no occasion for it, and most that you will meet with is very bad. Be careful and honest, and God will bless you. If ever you commit a fault, confess it at once; for the lie in denying it is worse than the thing itself. Go to church constantly; and write to us often. I think I need not say more to so good a lad as you, to induce you to continue so.

I am your affectionate brother.

L E T -

LETTER XV.

Advice from a Father to a young Beginner,
what Company to chuse, and how to be-
have in it.

Dear ROBIN,

AS you are now entering into the world, and will probably have considerable dealings in your business, the frequent occasion you will have for advice from others, will make you desirous of singling out, among your most intimate acquaintance, one or two, whom you would view in the light of friends.

In the choice of these, your utmost care and caution will be necessary; for, by a mistake here, you can scarcely conceive the fatal effects you may hereafter experience. Wherefore it will be proper for you to make a judgment of those who are fit to be your advisers, by the conduct they have observed in their own affairs, and the reputation they bear in the world. For he who has by his own indiscretions undone himself, is much fitter to be set up as a land-mark for a prudent mariner to shun his courses, than an example to follow.

Old age is generally slow and heavy, youth headstrong and precipitate; but there are old men who are full of vivacity, and young men replete with discretion; which makes me rather point out the conduct than the age of the persons with whom you should chuse to associate; though, after all, it is a never-failing good sign to me of prudence and virtue in a young man, when his seniors chuse his company, and he delights in theirs.

Let your endeavours therefore be, at all adventures, to comfort yourself with men of sobriety, good sense, and virtue; for the proverb is an unerring one that says, A man is known by the company he keeps. If such men you can single out, while you improve by their conversation, you will benefit by their advice: And be sure remember one thing, That though you must be frank and unreserved in delivering your sentiments, when occasions offer; yet that you be much readier to hear than to speak; for to this purpose it has been significantly observed, that nature has given a man two ears, and but one tongue. Lay in, therefore, by observation and modest silence, such a store of ideas, that you may, at their time of life, make no worse figure than they do; and endeavour to benefit yourself rather by other people's ills than your own. How must those young men expose themselves to the contempt and ridicule of their seniors, who, having seen little or nothing of the world, are continually shutting out, by open mouths and closed ears, all possibility of instruction, and making vain the principal end of conversation, which is improvement? A silent young man makes generally a wise old one, and never fails of being respected by the best and most prudent men. When, therefore, you come among strangers, hear every one speak, before you deliver your own sentiments; by this means you will judge of the merit and capacities of your company, and avoid exposing yourself, as I have known many do, by shooting out hasty and inconsiderate bolts, which they would have been glad to recall; when, perhaps, a silent genius in company has burst out upon them with such observations, as have struck consciousness and

and shame into the forward speaker, if he has not been quite insensible of inward reproach.

I have thrown together, as they occurred, a few thoughts, which may suffice for the present, to shew my care and concern for your welfare. I hope you will constantly, from time to time, communicate to me whatever you shall think worthy of my notice, or in which my advice may be of use to you: for I have no pleasure in this life equal to that which the happiness of my children gives me. And of this you may be assured; for I am, and ever must be,

Your affectionate father.

LETTER XVI.

To a Friend, on Occasion of his not answering his Letters.

Dear SIR,

IT is so long since I had the favour of a line from you, that I am under great apprehensions in relation to your health and welfare. I beg you, sir, to renew to me the pleasure you used to give me in your correspondence, for I have written three letters to you before this; to which I have had no answer, and am not conscious of having any way disengaged you. If I have, I will most willingly ask your pardon; for no body can be more than I am,

Your affectionate and faithful

friend and servant.

L. E. T.

L E T T E R XVII.

In Answer to the preceding.

Dear SIR,

YOU have not, cannot disoblige me; but I have greatly disoblige myself, in my own fault remissness: I cannot account for it as I ought. To say I had business one time, company another, was distant from home a third, will be but poor excuses, for not answering one of your kind letters in four long months. I therefore ingenuously take shame to myself, and promise future amendment, and that nothing shall ever, while I am able to hold a pen, make me guilty of the like neglect to a friend I love. Forgive me then, my good, my kind, my generous friend; and believe me ever

Your highly obliged humble servant.

L E T T E R XVIII.

From a Father to a Son, on his Negligence
in his Affairs.

Dear JEMMY,

YOU cannot imagine what a concern your carelessness and indifferent management of your affairs give me. Remissness is inexcusable in all men, but in none so much as in a man of business, the soul of which is industry, diligence, and punctuality.

Let me beg of you to shake off the idle habits you have contracted; quit unprofitable company, and unseasonable recreations, and apply to your compting-house with diligence. It may not be

yet too late to retrieve your affairs. Inspect therefore your gains, and cast up what proportion they bear to your expences ; and then see which of the latter you can, and which you cannot contract. Consider, that when once a man suffers himself to go backward in the world, it must be an uncommon spirit of industry that retrieves him, and puts him forward again.

Reflect, I beseech you, before it be too late, upon the inconveniences which an impoverished trader is put to, for the remainder of his life, which, too, may happen to be the prime part of it ; the indignities he is likely to suffer from those whose money he has unthinkingly squandered ; the contempt he will meet with from all, not excepting the idle companions of his folly ; the injustice he does his family, in depriving his children, not only of the power of raising themselves, but of living tolerably ; and how, on the contrary, from being born to creditable expectation, he sinks them into the lowest class of mankind, and exposes them to the most dangerous temptations. What has not such a father to answer for ! and all this for the sake of indulging himself in an idle, a careless, a thoughtless habit, that cannot afford the least satisfaction beyond the present hour, if indeed that ; and which must be attended with deep remorse, when he comes to reflect. Think seriously of these things, and, in time, resolve on such a course as may bring credit to yourself, justice to all you deal with, peace and pleasure to your mind, comfort to your family ; and which will give, at the same time, the highest satisfaction to

Your careful and loving father.

L E T.

LETTER XIX.

From a young Gentleman at the University,
to a Family-Acquaintance, to borrow Mo-
ney.

SIR,

THE death of my father soon after his put-
ting me to this place of education, and many
other accidents in which my own conduct has had
no concern, have involved me in difficulties,
which threaten altogether to impede my progress
in my studies, and prevent the means which I
hoped were in my power to get my bread ; for thro'
the utter want of friends, under which I labour,
I cannot expect preferment. But with this, sir, I
should be satisfied. The reason of my writing to you
upon the melancholy occasion is, sir, what I have
already mentioned, my entire want of friends. I
know you are so distant a relation, that I can
have no right to expect any favour from you upon
that account ; but I have heard my father often
mention your name, and always with the greatest
respect. Sir, if you entertain the same remem-
brance of him that he always did of you ; and if
your fortune is so plentiful as I am told, perhaps
you will not only pardon the present application, as
strange as it may seem from one you never saw,
but may comply with my request of supplying me
with fourteen pounds seven shillings, which will
answer all my present demands, and perhaps, be-
fore new difficulties fall upon me, I may find some
friend to relieve me farther. I only request of you,
sir, if you decline this, not to be offended at the

presumption of the application; because I would avoid nothing so carefully, as offending those whom my father valued. I am,

With the greatest respect,

SIR,

Your most obedient humble servant

LETTER XX.

From a substantial Tradesman to a very distant relation asking Money. In Answer to the former.

Dear Cousin,

If you knew what was the nature of the friendship with which your father honoured me, your letter would have been written in a style of less humility: or if I had known he had a son unprovided for, the occasion of such a letter would have been prevented.

Sir, whatsoever be the ease of my present circumstances, I owe it all to your father, and God forbid I should not return it to you. Your father, sir, advanced the money with which I was put out; and when I was out of my time, the same friend lent me the sum with which I set up, and assisted me afterwards in all my difficulties: It is true, I repaid him the money, but the obligation can never be repaid. I have ordered twenty pounds to be paid to the stage-coachman, who will take charge of it, and bring it to you; and I pray you to let me know the nature of your affairs at college, for my low education has given me no knowledge of this, and whatever is necessary, you shall

shall most willingly receive from me. Look no farther, sir, for a friend, for you shall want no other. When it is your time of coming away for your holidays, let my house be your home; and, dear young man, if you can condescend to humble yourself so far, be for the future my son. A wise restriction from your father prevented my marrying when I was very young; since that time my mind has been taken up with business; and at the years I am now, I am sure I never shall. He little supposed, that in preventing my marrying foolishly, he was providing a father for a destitute son of his own; but heaven orders all things right. Pray write to me again immediately. I am

Your faithful friend.

LETTER XXI.

From a Town Tenant to his Landlord, excusing Delay of Payment.

Honoured SIR,

I Am under a great concern that I cannot at present answer your just expectations. I have sustained such heavy losses, and meet with so many disappointments of late, that I must intrude another quarter on your goodness. Then, whatever shifts I am put to, you shall hear to more satisfaction than at present, from,

SIR,

Your most humble servant.

LETTER XXII.

From a Country Tenant to the same Purpose.

Honoured SIR,

THE season has been so bad, and I have had such unhappy accidents to encounter with in a sick family, loss of cattle, &c. that I am obliged to trespass upon your patience a month or two longer. The wheat-harvest, I hope, will furnish me with the means to answer your just expectations, which will be a great contentment to

Your honest tenant, and humble servant.

LETTER XXIII.

The Landlord's Answer.

Mr. WILLIAMS,

I HAVE your's: I hope you will be as good as your word, at the expiration of the time you have mentioned. I am unwilling to distress any honest man; and I hope, that I shall not meet with the worse usage for my forbearance; for lenity abused, even in generous tempers, provoke returns, that some people would call severe; but should not be deemed such, if just. I am

Your's, &c.

L E T-

LETTER XXIV.

A young Woman in Town to her Sister in the Country, recounting her narrow Escape from a Snare laid for her on her first Arrival, by a wicked Procureress.

Dear SISTER,

WE have often, by our good mother, been warned against the dangers that would probably attend us on coming to London; though I must own, her admonitions had not always the weight I am now convinced they deserved.

I have had a deliverance from such a snare, as I never could have believed would have been laid for a person free from all thought of ill, or been so near succeeding upon one so strongly on her guard, as I imagined myself. And thus, my dear sister, the matter happened.

Returning, on Tuesday, from seeing my cousin Atkins, in Cheapside, I was overtaken by an elderly gentlewoman, of a sober and creditable appearance, who walked by my side some little time before she spoke to me; and then guessing, by my asking the name of the street, that I was a stranger to the town, she very courteously began a discourse with me; and, after some other talk, and questions about my country, and the like, desired to know, if I did not come to town with a design of going into some genteel place? I told her, if I could meet with a place to my mind, to wait upon a single lady, I should be very willing to embrace it. She said, I looked like a creditable, sober, and modest body; and, at that very time,

she knew one of the best gentlewomen that ever lived, who was in great want of a maid to attend upon her own person ; and that if she liked me, and I her, it would be a lucky incident for us both.

I expressed myself so thankfully, and she was so very much in my interest, as to intreat me to go instantly to the lady, lest she should be provided, and acquaint her I was recommended by Mrs. Jones ; not doubting, as she said, but, on inquiry my character would answer my appearance.

As that, you know, was partly my view in coming to town, I thought this a happy incident, and determined not to lose the opportunity ; and so, according to the direction she gave me, I went to enquire for Mrs. C——, in J——'s-Court, Fleet-Street. The neighbourhood looked genteel, and I soon found the house. I asked for Mrs. C—— ; she came to me, dressed in a splendid manner ; I told her what I came about ; she immediately desired me to walk into the parlour, which was elegantly furnished ; and, after asking me several questions, with my answer to which she seemed very well pleased, a servant soon brought in a bowl of warm liquor, which she called negus, consisting of wine, water, orange, &c. which she said was for a friend or two she expected presently ; but as I was warm with walking, she would have me drink some of it, telling me it was a pleasant innocent liquor, and she always used her waiting-maids as she did herself. I thought this very kind and condescending, and being warm and thirsty, and she encouraging me, I took a pretty free draught of it, and thought it very pleasant, as it really was. She made me sit down by her, saying, pride was not her talent, and that she

should

should always indulge me in the like manner, if I behaved well, when she had not company ; and then slightly asked what I could do, and the wages I required. With my answers she seemed well satisfied, and granted the wages I asked, without any offer of abatement.

And then I rose up, in order to take my leave, telling her I would, any day she pleased of the ensuing week, bring my cloaths, and wait upon her.

She said, that her own maid being gone away, she was in the utmost want of another, and would take it kindly, if I would stay with her till next day, because she was to have some ladies to pass the evening with her. I said this would be pretty inconvenient to me ; but, as she was so situated, I would oblige her, after I had been with my aunt, and acquainted her with it. To this she replied, that there was no manner of occasion for that, because she could send the cook for what I wanted, who could, at the same time, tell my aunt how matters stood.

I thought this looked a little odd ; but she did it with so much civility, and seemed so pleased with her new maid, that I scarcely knew how to withstand her : but the apprehension I had of my aunt's anger for not asking her advice, in what so nearly concerned me, made me insist upon going, though I could perceive displeasure in her countenance when she saw me resolved.

She then plied me very close with the liquor, which she again said was innocent and weak ; but I believe it was far otherwise ; for my head began to turn round, and my stomach felt a little disordered. I entreated the favour of her to permit me go, on a firm promise of returning immediately ;

But

but then my new mistress began to raise her voice a little, assuring me, I should on no account stir out of her house. She left the room in a sort of pet ; but said she would send the cook to take my directions to my aunt ; and I heard her take the key out of the outward door.

This alarmed me very much ; and in the instant of my surprize, a young gentlewoman entered the parlour, dressed in white fettin, and every way genteel : She sat down in a chair next me, looked earnestly at me a while, and seemed going to speak several times, but did not. At length she rose from her chair, bolted the parlour-door, and, breaking into a flood of tears, expressed herself as follows :

Dear young woman, I cannot tell you the pain I feel on your account ; and, from an inclination to serve you, I run a hazard of involving myself in greater misery than I have yet experienced, if that can be. But my heart is yet too honest to draw others, as I am desired to do, into a snare which I have fallen into myself. You are now in as notorious a brothel as any in London ; and, if you escape not in a few hours, you are inevitably undone. I was once as innocent as you seem to be. No apprehension you can be under for your virtue, but I felt as much : My reputation was as unspotted, and my heart as unversed in ill, when I first entered these guilty doors, whither I was sent on an errand, much like what I understand has brought you hither. I was by force detained the whole night as you are designed to be ; was robbed of my virtue ; and knowing I should hardly be forgiven by my friends for staying out without their knowledge, and in the morning being at a loss,

all

all in confusion as I was, what to do, before I could resolve on any thing, I was obliged to repeat my guilt, and had hardly time afforded me to reflect upon its fatal consequences. My liberty I intreated to no purpose, and my grief served for the cruel sport of all around me: In short, I have been so long confined, that I am ashamed to appear among my friends and acquaintance. In this dreadful situation, I have been perplexed with the hateful importunities of different men every day; and, tho' I long resisted to my utmost, yet downright force never failed to overcome. Thus, in a shameful round of guilt and horror, have I lingered out ten months; subject to more miseries than tongue can express. The same sad lot is intended you, nor will it be easy to shun it: however, as I cannot well be more miserable than I am, I will assist you what I can; and not, as the wretched procress hopes, contribute to make you as unhappy as myself."

You may guess at the terror that seized my heart on this sad story, and my own danger. I trembled in every joint, nor was I able to speak for some time; at last, in the best manner I could, I thanked my unhappy new friend, and begged she would kindly give me the assistance she offered: which she did; for the first gentleman that came to the door, she stepped up herself for the key to let him in, which the wretched procress gave her; and I took that opportunity, as she directed, to run out of the house, and that in so much hurry and confusion, as to leave my hood, fan, and gloves behind one.

I told my aunt every circumstance of my danger and escape, and received a severe reprimand for

38 The Familiar LETTER-WRITER.

for my following so inconsiderately, in so wicked a town as this, the direction of an entire stranger.

I am sure, sister, you rejoice with me for my deliverance ; and this accident may serve to teach us to be upon our guard for the future, as well against the viler part of our own sex, as that of the other.

I am, dear POLLY,

Your truly affectionate sister.

N. B. This shocking story is taken from the mouth of the young woman herself, who so narrowly escaped the snare of the vile procress, and is fact in every circumstance.

LETTER XXV.

From a Maid-Servant in Town, acquainting her Father and Mother in the Country with a Proposal of Marriage, and asking their Consents.

Honoured FATHER and MOTHER,

I think it my duty to acquaint you, that I am addressed to for change of condition, by one Mr. John Brittle, who is a glazier, and lives in the neighbourhood by us. He is a young man of a sober character, and has been set up about two years ; has good business for his time, and is well-beloved, and spoken well of by every one. My friends here thinks well of it, particularly my master and mistress ; and he says, he doubts not, by God's blessing on his industry, to maintain a family very prettily : and I have fairly told him how

how little he has to expect with me. But I would not conclude on any thing, however, till I had acquainted you with his proposals, and asked your blessings and consents; for I am, and ever will be,

Your dutiful daughter,

ANNE LOVEGLASS.

LETTER XXVI.

From the Parents in Answer to the preceding.

Dear NANNY,

WE have received your dutiful letter. We can only pray to God to bless and direct you in all your engagements. Our distance from you must make us leave every thing to your own discretion; and as you are so well satisfied in Mr. Brittle's character, as well as all friends, and your master and mistress, we give our blessings and consents with all our hearts: We are only sorry we can do no more for you. But let us know when it is done, and we will do some little matter, as far as we are able, towards house-keeping. Our respects to Mr. Brittle. Every body joins with us in wishes for your happiness; and God bless you, is all that can be said by,

Your truly loving father and mother.

L E T-

LETTER XXVII.

From the same, acquainting her Parents with her Marriage.

Honoured FATHER and MOTHER,

I Write to acquaint you, that last Thursday I was married to Mr. Brittle, and am to go home to him in a fortnight. My master and mistress have been very kind, and have made me a present towards house-keeping of three guineas. I had saved twenty pounds in service, and that is all. I told him the naked truth of every thing, and, indeed, did not intend to marry so soon; but when I had your letter, and shewed it him, he would not let me rest till it was done. Pray don't straighten yourselves out of love to me. He joins with me in saying so, and bids me present his duty to you, and tell you, that he fears not to maintain me very well. I have no reason to doubt of being very happy. And your prayers for a blessing on both our industry, will, I hope, be a means to make us more so. We are, and ever shall be, with respects to all friends,

Your most dutiful son and daughter.

L E T.

LETTER XXVIII.

From a Country Chapman beginning Trade,
to a City Dealer, offering his Correspondence.

SIR,

THE time of my apprenticeship with Mr. Walker of this town being expired, I am just going to begin for myself in Preston, having taken a shop there for that purpose. And as I know the satisfaction you always gave to my master in your dealings, I make an offer to you of my correspondence, in expectation that you will use me as well as you have done him, in whatever I may write to you for. And this I rather expect, as you cannot disoblige Mr. Walker by it, because of the distance I shall be from him; and I shall endeavour to give you equal content with regard to my payments, &c. Your speedy answer, whether or no you are disposed to accept of my offer, will oblige

Your humble servant.

LETTER XXIX.

In Answer to the foregoing.

SIR,

I Have received your's of October 20, and very chearfully accept the favour you offer me. I will take care to serve you in the best manner I am able, and on the same footing with Mr. Walker, not doubting you will make as punctual returns as he does; which intitles him to a more favourable usage

usage than could otherwise be afforded. I wish you success with all my heart, and am

Your obliged servant.

L E T T E R XXX.

A pressing and angry Letter from a City Dealer,
to his Correspondent in the Country.

Mr. THOMPSON,

I Am sorry your ill usage constrains me to write to you in the most pressing manner. Can you think it is possible to carry on business after the manner you act by me? You know what promises you have made me, and how, from time to time, you have broken them; and can I depend upon any new ones you make? If you use others as you do me, how can you think of carrying on business? If you do not, what must I think of a man, who deals worse with me than he does with any body else? If you think you may trespass more upon me, than you can on others, that is a very bad compliment to my prudence, or your own gratitude; for surely good usage should be intitled to good usage. I know how to allow for disappointments as well as any man; but can a man be disappointed for ever? Trade is so dependent a thing, you know, that it cannot be carried on without mutual punctuality. Does not the merchant expect it from me, for those very goods I send you? And can I make a return to him, without receiving it from you? What end can it answer to give you two years credit, and then be at an uncertainty for goods, which I sell at a small profit,

profit, and have not six months credit for myself? Indeed, sir, this will never do. I must be more punctually used by you, or else must deal as little punctually with others; and what then must be the consequence? In short, sir, I expect a handsome payment by the next return, and security for the remainder; and shall be very loth to take any harsh methods to procure this justice to myself, my family, and my own creditors. For I am, if it be not your own fault,

Your faithful friend and servant.

LETTER XXXI.

In Answer to the preceding.

SIR,

I Must acknowledge I have not used you well, and can give no better answer to your just expostulations, than to send you the inclosed draught for fifty pounds, which you will be pleased to carry to my credit; and to assure you of more punctual treatment for the future. Your letter is no bad lesson to me; I have conned it often, and hope I shall improve by it. I am ready to give you my bond for the remainder, which I will keep paying every month something, till all is discharged; and what I write to you for in the interim, shall be paid for on receipt of the goods. This, I hope, sir, will satisfy you for the present. If I could do better, I would; but shall be straightened to do this: but, I think, in return for your patience, I cannot do less, to convince you that I am now at last in earnest. I beg you will con-

tinue

tinue to me the same good usage and service I have met with from you hitherto ; and that you will believe me to be unfeignedly,

Your obliged humble servant.

L E T T E R XXXII.

From an Insolvent Doctor, to desire the Acceptance of a Composition.

SIR,

IT is with great concern I now inform you, that some losses I have lately suffered render it impossible for me to carry on business any longer. I am sorry, sir, that your debt is so large, and the composition I am able to make so small ; for I am able to pay but five shillings in the pound. I have, however, the comfort of being conscious that my intentions were always honest, and that it would have given the highest pleasure to me fully to have discharged every debt I have contracted. If, upon the inspection of books, you will accept of such a dividend as I am able to make, my other creditors, I have reason to hope, will follow your example. They are to have a meeting next Tuesday, at the feathers in our town, and a favourable line from you, who are my principal creditor, will have much weight with them, and lay me under the greatest obligation, and I shall think myself bound in honour and conscience, if ever Providence should place me in a prosperous situation, to make good what you and my other creditors will lose by accepting the composition. I am, sir,

Your most unhappy, and most humble servant.

LETTER XXXIII.

The Answer.

SIR,

I Am really concerned for your unhappy situation, and readily consent to accept of the composition you mention. I have appointed Mr. Lawson, a very honest attorney of your town, to act for me in your affairs, and have wrote to him accordingly. I always thought you a very honest man, and have therefore desired him to exert himself in your behalf with your other creditors in order to bring them to amicable terms. He is also to examine your books, and to make such enquiries as he shall judge necessary; and if every thing turns out as I wish, I shall very readily give you fresh credit. I heartily wish you better days, and am

Your real friend,

WILLIAM LEWIS.

LETTER XXXIV.

From a Gentleman in London, to his Friend in the Country, on the New-Year.

Dear SIR,

IT is now the season to wish you a good end of one year, and a happy beginning of another: but both these you know how to make yourself, by only continuing such a life as you have been long accustomed to lead. As for good works, they

they are things I dare not name, either to those that do them, or to those that do them not; the first are too modest, and the latter too selfish, to bear the mention of what are become either too old-fashion'd, or too private, to constitute any part of the vanity or reputation of the present age. However, it were to be wished people would now and then look upon good works as they do upon old wardrobes, merely in case any of them should by chance come into fashion again; as ancient fardingales revive in modern hoop'd petticoats, which may be properly compared to charities, as they cover a multitude of sins.

They tell me that at Colehill certain antiquated charities and obsolete devotions are yet subsisting: that a thing called christian chearfulness (not incompatible with christmas-pies and plumb-broth) whereof frequent is the mention in old sermons and almanacks, is really kept alive and in practice: that feeding the hungry, and giving alms to the poor, do yet make a part of good house-keeping, in a latitude not more remote from London than fourscore miles: and lastly, that prayers and roast-beef actually make some people as happy as a whore and a bottle. But here in town, I assure you, men, women and children have done with these things. Charity not only begins but ends at home. Instead of the four cardinal virtues, now reign four courtly ones: we have cunning for prudence, rapine for justice, time-serving for fortitude, and luxury for temperance. Whatever you may fancy, where you live in a state of ignorance, and see nothing but quiet, religion, and good-humour, the case is just as I tell you where people under-

stand the world, and know how to live with credit and glory.

I wish that heaven would open the eyes of men, and make them sensible which of these is right ; whether, upon a due conviction, we are to quit faction, and gaming, and high feeding, and all manner of luxury, and take to your country way ; or you to leave prayers and alms-giving, and reading, and exercise, and come into our measures. I wish (I say) that this matter were as clear to all men, as it is to

Your affectionate, &c.

LETTER XXXV.

From a young Tradesman to a Lady he had seen in Publick.

MADAM,

PERhaps you will not be surprized to receive a letter from a person who is unknown to you, when you reflect how likely so charming a face may be to create impertinence ; and I persuade myself that when you remember where you sat last night at the play-house, you will not need to be told this comes from the person who was just before you.

In the first place, madam, I ask pardon for the liberty I then took of looking at you, and for the greater liberty I now take in writing this letter : But after this I beg leave to tell you that my thoughts are honourable, and to inform you who I am : I shall not pretend to be any better. I keep a shop, madam, in Henrietta-Street, and though but two years in trade, I have tolerable custom : I do not doubt

doubt but it will increase, and I shall be able to do something for a family. If your inclinations are not engaged, I should be very proud of the honour of waiting on you, and in the mean time, if you please to desire any friend to ask my character in the neighbourhood, I believe it will not prejudice you against,

Madam, your most humble servant,

LETTER XXXVI.

From a Relation of the Lady, in answer to the last.

SIR,

There has come into my hands a letter which you wrote to Miss Maria Stebbing : She is a relation of mine, and is a very good girl ; and I dare say you will not think the worse of her for consulting her friends in such an affair as that you wrote about. Besides, a woman could not well answer such a letter herself, unless it was with a full refusal, and that she would have been wrong to have done until she knew something of the person that wrote it ; as wrong as to have encouraged him.

You seem very sincere and open in your designs ; and as you gave permission to enquire about you among your neighbours, I being her nearest friend, did that for her. I have heard a very good account of you ; and from all that I see, you may be very suitable for one another. She has some fortune ; and I shall tell you farther, that she took notice

notice of you at the play, and does not seem at all disinclined to think favourably of you.

I am with respect,

SIR,

Your friend and servant.

LETTER XXXVII.

An Offer of Assistance to a Friend, who had received great Losses by a Person's Failure.

Dear SIR,

I Am exceedingly concerned at the great loss you have lately sustained by the failure of Mr. Potts. I hope you behave under it like the man of prudence you have always shewn yourself, and as one who knows how liable all men are to misfortunes. As I am really desirous of giving you consolation, I chearfully offer my service to answer any present demand, and you are at liberty to draw upon me to the amount of 200 l. which you may have the use of for a twelvemonth or more, if your affairs require it. In accepting of which you will give great pleasure to

Your sincere friend.

LETTER XXXVIII.

The Friend's Answer, on accepting the generous Offer.

My dear FRIEND,

I Am at a loss to find words to express the grateful sense I have of this instance of true generous friendship. My loss indeed is heavy, but I

50 The Familiar LETTER-WRITER.

find that so kind a friend is capable of making it light. I thankfully accept of a part of your generous offer, and am ready to give you my bond for 100 l. payable in a year. This sum is all I shall have occasion for; and if I did not know I could then return it, I would not accept of your favour. I am, dear sir,

Your most faithful

and obliged humble servant.

LETTER XXXIX.

The same Offer being also made to another Friend, who had no Occasion for the Money, he returned the following Answer.

Dear SIR,

I Return you a thousand thanks for your generous offer. I have indeed been much affected at the unexpected failure of a man, whom I thought in very happy circumstances; but at present have no occasion for your friendly assistance. If I should, I know no one in the world to whom I should sooner choose to be obliged. I am, sir, with the warmest gratitude,

Your most obliged,

and most humble servant.

L E T T E R XL.

From a young Woman just gone to Service,
to her Mother at Home.

Dear MOTHER,

TIS a fortnight, this very day, that I have been at Mr. Johnson's; and, I thank God, I begin to find myself a little easier than I have been: but, indeed, I have suffered a great deal, since I parted from you and all the rest of my friends. At our first coming hither, I thought every thing look'd so strange about me: and when John got upon his horse, and rode out of the yard, methought every thing looked stranger and stranger; so I got up to the window, and looked after him, 'till he turned into the London road, (for you know we live a quarter of a mile on the farther side of it) and then I sat down and cried; and that always gives me some relief. Many a time have I cried since; but I do my best to dry up my tears, and to appear as cheerful as I can.

Dearest mother, I return you a thousand thanks for all the kind advice you were so good as to give me at parting, and I think it over often and often: but yet, methinks, it would be better if I had it in writing: that would be what I should value above all things. But I am afraid to ask for what would give you so much trouble. So with my duty to you and my father, and kind love to all friends, I remain ever,

Your most dutiful daughter.

LETTER XLI.

Her Mother's Answer.

My dear CHILD,

I Am very sorry that you have suffered so much since we parted: but 'tis always so at first; and will wear away in time. I have had my share too, but I bear it now pretty well; and hope you will endeavour to follow my example in this, as you used to say you loved to do in every thing. You must consider, that we should never have parted with you, had it not been for your good. If you continue virtuous and obliging, all the family will love and esteem you. You will get new friends there; and I think I can assure you, that you will lose no love here: for we all talk of you every evening; and every body speaks of you as fondly, or rather more fondly than ever they did. In the mean time, keep yourself employed as much as you can; which is the best way of wearing off any concern. Do all the business of your place; and be always ready to assist your fellow-servants where you can in their business. This will both fill up your time, and help to endear you to them: and then you will soon have as many friends about you there, as you used to have here. I don't caution you against speaking ill of any body living, for I know you never used to do it: but if you hear a bad story of any body, try to soften it all you can; and never tell it again, but rather let it slip out of your mind as soon as possible. I am in great hopes that all the family are kind to you already, from the good character I have heard of them; but I should be glad to see it confirmed by your next;

next; and the more particular you are in it, the better. If you have any time to spare from your business, I hope you will give a good share of it to your devotions: that's an exercise which gives comfort and spirits without tiring one. My prayers you have daily; I might have said hourly: and there is nothing that I pray for with more earnestness, than that my dearest child may do well. You did not mention any thing of your health in your last; but I had the pleasure of hearing you are well, by Mr. Yetes, a young man, who said he called upon you in his way from London, and that you looked as fresh as a rose, and as bonny as a blackbird.—You know James's way of talking.—However, I was glad to hear you was well; and desire you would not forget to mention your health yourself in your next letter. Your father desires his blessing, and your brothers their kind love to you: heaven bless you, my dear child, and continue you to be a comfort to us all, and more particularly to

Your affectionate mother.

LETTER XLII.

Upon the Death of a near Friend, from a Relation.

Dear MADAM,

Though I am sensible that to a real grief nothing can be so impertinent as the ceremony of condolance, yet I think from relations and friends so strictly united as we have been, something may be allowed, because a great deal is re-

quired of them. When I judge by myself, I consider with what distaste and aversion I should look upon the ceremony of grief from those who neither knew the deceased enough, nor cared enough for me to be concerned about it ; yet when I consider how true a satisfaction any notice from you would be in that melancholy situation ; nay, when I recollect (for it assuredly would be so) that this would be one of the greatest comforts of which I was capable, I cannot deny myself the mournful indulgence of writing to you.

I am not about to blame that sorrow which shuts you from the day-light, and from the company even of your nearest friends ; the cause is worthy of it ; and you owe no less to his memory, who would have paid no less to yours. Do to his remembrance this justice ; but remember, when you have paid the tribute, that something is also due to yourself ; or could you suppose that you might neglect that, to your children.

You have no right to impair your own health ; and in a constitution so tender as yours, this is easily done ; nor had you, could you answer it to those who want a guide and guardian, and who can have none so interested in their good, or so able to promote it as you, if you neglect any care of yourself.

I know to reasfon with you would be to engage with an antagonist too powerful for me on any other occasion ; but I also know, that when I press this on you as a duty, and assuredly I have a right so to do, you will be convinced, and yield to the superiority of the cause. Dear cousin, we are all interested in this, and therefore you must give me leave to press the consideration upon you. Dis-
charge

charge your duty to the dead; but remember you owe it also to the living; and that these little ones have a claim to your care of your own health. I shall say no more: perhaps, less would have become me better; but you will excuse a fault, if it be one, which has so honest a motive. Give me leave to assure you, that none is more solicitous of your welfare than,

Dear MADAM,

Your most obedient and humble servant.

LETTER XLIII.

To a Friend gone for the Summer into the Country.

Dear SIR,

YOU left me your commands, when you took your leave of us, to write to you once in a fortnight, and give you the news of the town: but you that make the news are gone; and what is there worth your attention among the inconsiderable people that remain here? Shall I write you word the king is gone to Kensington; you know he resolved it before you went: or that the duke is at Windsor; you are as well acquainted with that as I am. Shall I describe to you, the new equipage of the princess of Wales; the news-papers have done it already: or if I were inclined to give you the scandal of the people that are left in this desolate place, the pamphleteers have spread that also. The French parliament had bribed madam de Pompadour on their side; but the king discovered the conspiracy, and he forbade the one his sight,

and turned the other out of doors. The clergy were a match for their lay antagonists on this occasion. If only a mistress was to effect the matter, the holy panders did not scruple to do the office; and his most christian majesty is at this moment probably, for it is morning though I am writing to you, at rest in the arms of the daughter of an Irish shoemaker. O ill-star'd Fanny, that did not stay for such an incident; but she was never in favour with the churchmen.

Mr. Sullen is more than ever out of humour with his wife; but he cannot be more eager to get rid of her, than her lover is to get to her. The lady will not be long without a protector. It is expected that it will come to this; but when, no mortal can tell. She is agreeable, though she is a baggage; and the husband is in the condition of Prior's thief, who often took leave, but was loth to depart.

I do not know that there is any thing else here to tell you of. As to your friends, you have most of them with you, and the rest are not here. What remain in Grosvenor-Street are well; but they had rather be well in any other part of the earth. I am apt to believe that we are as much in love with green trees, as you are tired of them. With all your boast of ease, and solitude, and retirement, and contemplation, I fancy you would be very glad to change the scene for bustle and business, if there were any people here to make it. But you seem all of you to have betrayed yourselves, and one another; to have got away from town in pursuit of what you do not find in the country, now you are no more together in it. Dear sir, I have written, as you will perceive, rather because it was

proper I should write, than that I had any thing to say. But there is a merit in obedience; and when it is to your commands, there will always be a pleasure also in it, to

Your most obedient and

most humble servant.

LETTER XLIV.

From a Friend in the Country, to an Acquaintance in Town, in Answer.

My dear SIR,

I Do not know that when I engaged you to write to me twice a month, I promised to answer you as often: at least I imagine neither you expected to have any thing to hear, nor I to have any thing to write from the country, more than we are all well and at your service, and we thank you, and pray tell us the news. But I find the turns of business have changed hands; and this is the place of bustle, while you are quiet.

The contests between the French king and his parliament, are nothing to those of our mayor and his court of aldermen. The representative of the town-interest has been taking the necessary and usual methods to prepare for the ensuing election; but whether the mayor has lost his popularity, whether the aldermen have had their minds poisoned by some bad reports, or whether they have, in their own hands, reasfons as weighty as mr. mayor's, I cannot tell; they are determined to oppose the re-election of this worthy gentleman. They say

they do not know who will offer in his place ; but this I am afraid is apocryhal.

The game associations have also created as much confusion as the election ; and they are in this particular circumstance united with it. The representative has been one of the star and garter club ; and he has, I think, forfeited his seat at Westminster, to preserve the hares and partridges about his seat in the country. Whether he will think himself a gainer by this exchange, his banker will, I suppose, inform us.

You will say peace and quietness are not what we retire to in the country ; but to people used to contests between parties and their heads, between power and power, and in which the fate of kingdoms is involved, this bustle about it is amusing. My dear sir, farewell. Continue to write to me as I requested you ; for when you have least to say, you still have something.

Yours most truly,

LETTER XLV.

The Daughter to her Mother.

Dear MOTHER,

THough we begin to have such cold weather, I am got up into my chamber to write to you. God be thanked I am grown quite easy, which is owing to my following your good advice, and the kindness that is already shewn me in the family. Betty and I are bedfellows ; and she, and Robin, and Thomas, are all so kind to me, that I can scarce say which is the kindest. My master is

sixty-

sixty-five years of age next April; but by his look you would hardly take him to be fifty. He has always an easy, smiling look; and is very good to all his servants. When he has happened to pass by me, as I have been dusting out the chambers, or in the passage, he generally says something to encourage me; and that makes one's work go on the more pleasantly. My mistress is as thin as my master is plump: not much short of him in age; and more apt to be a little peevish. Indeed that may easily be; for I have never yet heard my master say a single word to any one of us, but what was kind and encouraging. My master, they say, is vastly rich; for he is a prudent man, and laid up a great deal of money while he was in business, with which he purchased this estate here, and another in Sussex, some time before he left off: and they have, I find, a very good house in London, tho' I don't at all desire to go there. As to my fellow-servants, 'tis thought Betty (who is very good-natured, and as merry as the day is long) is to be married to the jovial landlord over the way; and, to say the truth, I am apt to believe that they are actually promised to one another. Our coachman, Thomas, seems to be a truly good worthy man; you may see by his eyes, that it does his heart good whenever he can do a kind thing for any of the neighbours. He was born in the parish, and his father has a good farm of his own in it, and rents another. Robin the footman is good-natur'd too; he is always merry, and loves to laugh as much as he loves to eat; and I am sure he has a good stomach. But I need not talk of that, for now mine is come again, I eat almost as hearty as he does. With such fellow-servants,

and

and such a master, I think it will be my own fault, if I am not easy. Well in health I assure you I am, and begin to be pretty well in spirits, only my heart will heave a little still every time I look toward the road that goes to your house. Heaven bless you all there! and make a deserving daughter of so good a mother.

M. C.

LETTER XLI.

The Mother's Answer, and Advice.

Dear CHILD,

" THE next piece of advice that I give you,
" is, to think often how much a life of
" virtue is to be preferred to a life of pleasure;
" and how much better, and more lasting, a good
" name is than beauty."

If we called things by their right names, there is nothing that deserves the name of pleasure so truly as virtue: but one must talk as people are used to talk; and, I think, by a life of pleasure, they generally mean a life of gaiety.

Now our gaieties, God knows, are at best very trifling; always unsatisfactory; often attended with difficulties in the procuring them, and fatigue in their very enjoyment; and too often followed by regret and self-condemnation. What they call a life of pleasure, among the great, must be a very laborious life: They spend the greatest part of their nights in balls and assemblies, and fling away the greatest part of their days in sleep. Their life is too much opposed to nature, to be capable of

of happiness: 'Tis all a hurry of visits, twenty or thirty perhaps in a day, to persons for whom there are not above two or three that they have any real friendship or esteem (supposing them to be capable of either); a perpetual seeking after what they call diversions; an insipidity, and want of taste, when they are engaged in them, and a certain languishing and restlessness when they are without them. This is not living, but a constant endeavour to cheat themselves out of the little time they have to live: for they generally inherit a bad constitution, make it worse by their absurd way of life, and deliver a still weaker and weaker thread down to their children. I don't know any one thing more ridiculous than the seeing their wrinkled sallow faces all set out with diamonds. Poor mistaken gentlewomen! they should endeavour to avoid peoples eyes as much as possible, and not to attract them; for they are really a quite deplorable sight, and their very faces are a standing lesson against the strange lives that they lead.

People in lower life, 'tis true, do not act so ridiculously as those in higher; but even among them too there's a vast difference between the people that live well, and the people that live ill; the former are more healthy, in better spirits, fitter for business, and more attentive to it; the latter are more negligent, more uneasy, more contemptible, and more diseased.

In truth, either in high or low life, virtue is only another name for happiness, and debauchery is the high road to misery; and this, to me, appears just as true and evident, as that moderation is always good for us, and excesses always hurtful.

But

But is it not a charming thing to have youth and beauty ? to be followed and admired ? to have presents offered from all sides to one ? to be invited to all diversions, and to be distinguished by the men from all the rest of the company ?—Yes, my dear child, all this would be charming, if we had nothing to do but to dance, and receive presents, as if this distinction of you was to last always. But the mischief of it is, that these things cannot be enjoyed without increasing your vanity every time you enjoy them, and swelling up a passion in you, that must soon be baulked and disappointed. How long is this beauty to last ? there are but few fair faces that can keep it to the other side of five and twenty : and how would you bear it, after having been used to be thus distinguished and admired for some time, to sink out of the notice of people, and be neglected, and perhaps affronted by the very persons who used to pay the greatest adoration to you ?

Do you remember the gentleman that was with us last autumn, and his presenting you with that pretty flower one day, on his coming out of the garden ? I don't know whether you understood him or not ; but I could read it in his looks, that he meant it for a lesson to you. 'Tis true, the flower was quite a pretty one ; but though you put it in water, you know it faded, and grew disagreeable in four or five days ; and had it not been cropp'd, but suffered to grow on in the garden, it would have done the same in nine or ten. Now a year is to a beauty, what a day was to the flower ; and who would value themselves much on the possession of a thing, which they are sure to lose in so short a time ?

Nine or ten years is what one may call the natural term of life for beauty in a young woman: but by accidents, or misbehaviour, it may die long before its time. The greater part of what people call beauty in your face, for instance, is owing to that air of innocence and modesty that is in it: if once you should suffer yourself to be ruined by any base man, all that would soon vanish, and assurance and ugliness would come in the room of it.

And if other bad consequences should follow, (for other bad ones there are, of more sorts than one) you would lose your bloom too, and then all is gone. But keep your reputation, as you have hitherto kept it; and that will be a beauty which will last to the end of your days; for it will be only the more confirmed and brightened by time. That will secure your esteem, when all the present form of your face is vanished away; and will be always mellowing in greater and greater charms. These my sentiments you'll take as blessings, and remember they come from the heart of a tender and affectionate mother,

E. C.

LETTER XLVII.

From an Apprentice who married without the Consent of his Relations, to his Uncle.

Honoured UNCLE,

YOur great kindness and affection, which I have so often experienced, by the favour of which I have hardly been suffered to feel the loss

loss of my father and mother, emboldens me to write to you upon an occasion which gives me the greatest trouble of mind, and which I have too long kept secret; in that, adding to the fault I at first committed.

Sir, not to presume to keep you in suspence, I most humbly confess to you that I am married. The person I have chosen is not of family, nor possessed of any fortune; wherefore I have hitherto kept it a secret, fearing your displeasure, but at present I cannot retain it so any longer; and although your displeasure, which I greatly fear, may make me repent of what I have done, I have no other cause to be sorry.

Sir, it is now more than a year that I have been married, in which time having had sufficient opportunities of seeing the conduct and temper of my wife, and that sometimes under difficult and not agreeable circumstances, I have reason to say that she is one of the best and the worthiest women I ever knew. I wish, sir, I may find it as easy to reconcile you to this match, as I find it to make myself content without the advantages of a fortune, which I might have obtained with another, and twice which such a one would probably have spent.

The occasion, sir, of my writing to you at this time, is the same which rendered it necessary for me to confess my marriage to you, which otherwise I should have feared to do; and this, sir, I hope you will consider favourably. The allowance you are pleased to make me for my pocket, together with the industry of my wife, has very well supported us hitherto; for loving only her company, I have no other expence but the care of her.

But,

But, sir, she is now near her lying-in, and the necessary charge of such a time is more than I have had opportunities to provide.

I am not ignorant, sir, that too many having those opportunities to do ill, perhaps unperceived, that I have, would have kept this secret still at the expence of their honesty; but there is no hazard I shall not run preferably to this: not even the incurring your displeasure, which, should it happen, would break my heart. I have presumed, sir, to trouble you with a long letter, and I am afraid the least agreeable to you in its contents of any that I have written. You will see, sir, that although there is scarce any thing I would not do rather than venture to displease you; yet I have run that hazard preferably to the being dishonest. To reconcile you to my marriage there is only one way, which is, that you will be pleased to see my wife; but, as she is not in a condition to travel at this time, I presume to beg of you some little assistance toward the expence which is coming upon me.

Sir, I dread your answer, and yet I must wish for it impatiently: I most humbly request of you not to express your displeasure at a thing which, although it were wrong, is now past, and cannot be recovered, and which I am to bear the consequences of, and am willing to bear them. I dare not trespass farther upon your patience, but beg leave to subscribe myself,

Honoured Sir,

Your most dutiful nephew.

LETTER XLVIII.

From an Uncle to his Nephew, who had married imprudently.

NEPHEW,

I Have read your letter with the greatest concern: It is a grief to me not less than it would have been to your father, were he living, that you have done the only act of disobedience that cannot be forgiven. I shall not refuse you the trifle you ask of me, because I pity the person you have married, although I cannot think you deserve that consideration. You will receive by the coach a parcel, in which are fifteen guineas. I have paid the coachman for taking charge of it; so see that you find it there; and God bless you.

I would not write cruelly to you, for I am inclined to love you tenderly; but at the same time I cannot help telling you, that you must expect nothing more from me: nor must you flatter yourself that a reconciliation can ever be brought about. Here was a match provided for you, and when you should have been of a proper age, you would have heard of it. This would have made us all happy: but if I could get those who had intended you so favourably to overlook the disappointment, and forgive the insult, for they will consider it as no other, yet it would be impossible to receive into our families and acquaintance a mean person, for so your silence on that head, beside what you have confessed, declare your wife to be: and it is therefore impossible you can be received upon the footing that you have been among them.

You

You see that I am not influenced by any start of passion or resentment in what I write to you. This is the natural light in which the thing must be seen ; an indiscretion. I wished and expected to have seen you a credit to your friends by your industry and success, although in a sphere below theirs ; and to have met you every where well received by them : but it is impossible. For my own part, I am, as you very well know, under no obligations to provide for you ; but your good behaviour, and my own good opinion of you, prevailed with me to do so much as has been done. You are now very nearly out of your apprenticeship, and, as a journeyman, will be in a situation to earn as much as I have been used to allow you ; therefore that charge upon me is no longer necessary, nor must you expect it. I hoped to have seen you in a better station ; but this is what you have chosen for yourself, and I am afraid is what you are most fit for.

I wish you not to write to me after this, for I have given you my thoughts at large in this letter ; and, as they are not the effects of passion, they will not be altered by any thing you can add to what you have already said. I am truly concerned for you, and am

Yours, &c.

L. F. T.

LETTER XLIX.

From a Friend who had undertaken to adjust
a Difference ; on the Part of the Aggressor.

SIR,

HERE may require many apologies from an entire stranger, who presumes to write to you on a subject, in which, although it is of some consequence to you, he has no immediate concern : but if I had not heard greatly of your candor, I should not have written at all ; and as that has been the occasion of my adventuring to do it, the less an excuse seems necessary.

Not to detain you with ceremony, Mr. Nichols, for whom I have a particular friendship, and who was once honoured with your esteem, has been speaking in such a manner, of some unpleasing things which have lately passed between you, that, I am sure, if you had heard him, you would have forgotten every thing in which he may have been to blame.

I have always found, that animosities between those who have been friends, are carried on with the greatest violence : nor is this a wonder ; since we naturally regard an offence less in respect to itself, than to the relation in which the person stood with us, who was guilty of it. I believe, if you will please to recollect without passion ; (for though all cannot do this under provocations, yet I have been very imperfectly informed concerning you, if you have not that command of yourself) if you will reflect coolly, I believe you will find, that where resentments, on ever so just occasions, have been carried to the greatest lengths, the consequences have

have been such as neither of the persons would have wished, when out of the influence of passion : and I cannot doubt, but you will rather do yourself justice by receiving an honourable submission, than pursue a resentment, even upon a justifiable foundation, to the last extremity.

You will pardon me, sir, that my good will to the person who has given you offence has carried me thus far: he is sensible that he was to blame, and he is willing to acknowledge it. It was my opinion, that a third person could better speak on such an occasion than himself ; and he has joined with me in it. 'Though I have not the honour to be known to you, I flatter myself my name is. If you will permit me to wait on you on this occasion, I shall be happy to be the instrument of an honourable satisfaction ; and (for I cannot doubt but that will be the consequence) of a perfect reconciliation between two persons, who, notwithstanding this unlucky misunderstanding, I do believe to be the most worthy in the world of each other's friendship.

I am, with the greatest respect,

SIR,

Your very humble servant.

L E T T E R L.

Upon receiving the Offer of a Submission, in consequence of an Offence ; in Answer.

SIR,

MMR. Nichols could have no step in this matter so agreeable to me as the applying to you ; since whatsoever is agreed by your advice, cannot but be to both our honours. I am also happy,
that

that the effect of so disagreeable an incident is, that I shall have the honour to see a person to whom I have always thought it a misfortune that I was not personally known.

It gives me great pleasure that this matter will be accommodated with a man with whom I have had so long a friendship, and for whom I entertain so true an esteem ; nor shall I think him less the man of honour for confessing a mistake, than if he had, knowing it to be wrong, defended it with obstinacy. I impatiently expect the honour of your visit,

And am, with the greatest respect,
SIR,

Your obedient servant.

LETTER LI.

To a Friend, whose Indiscretion had engaged him in a Dispute likely to end in Law.

Dear CHARLES,

I take the liberty of writing to you, though I know beforehand my letter must be disagreeable ; but is to serve, and not humour you in a thing where you are wrong. You know I was present when there happened to pass some words between you and Mr. Nicholas, and I hear since that he has been consulting an attorney to know if what you said was not actionable. You never have been in law, else you would be in more care than you seem about it. Take it for granted, trying a cause is like boxing out a dispute ; which ever gets the better, both are heartily beaten.

As

As to the words you said, they certainly reflected upon his character, and therefore you may depend upon it he will have his remedy. I grant you it was all true that you spoke; but that is the reason why he feels so much. People are always nicest about their characters who have no characters at all: and one thing I must tell you, that very likely you do not know already, which is, that a thing is not less scandal in law because it is true.

I say all this to you first, dear Charles, that you may take my advice about your conduct. I would have you make it up by any means in the world, before it goes farther. Ask his pardon at the club where you spoke it, and own you was in liquor, or you should not have said it: and if this will not do, offer him ten pounds to drop it, for he is a dirty fellow, and will take it. It is more, perhaps, than he would get by a verdict, but then it would cost you an hundred.

I know, dear Charles, you are of a passionate temper, and you will not be ready to give up a point, especially when you are in the right; but it is better to do that, than be plagued with a law-suit that will take up all your time, and cost you heaven knows what into the bargain. Do be advised, and get the better of yourself, tho' you are in the right; for it is much better to do so, than to be ruined by one's obstinacy. I beg you will do as I desire you, for your family's sake: for if you once get into the lawyers hands, you know not what will be the end of it.

I am,

Dear CHARLES,

Your friend and servant.

LETTER LII.

From a Person engaged in a Dispute with a bad Man, to a Friend whom he desires to interfere.

My dear FRIEND,

I Received your letter, and am convinced you are in the right. It is the most unfortunate thing in the world to have to do with bad people in any respect, and nothing is worse than to quarrel with them. I am sure all I said was true, and I can bring proof of it: but notwithstanding that, I am sensible of the prudence of your advice, and am resolved to follow it. I am willing to do any thing that is necessary to make up the matter; and will give more money than you mention, if that be necessary; but I do not know how to speak to the fellow myself. As you have been so kind in your advice, I beg you will talk to him. Whatever you settle with him I will agree to; and shall always remember how much I am obliged to your friendship,

I am,

Dear SIR,

Your most humble servant.

LETTER LIII.

From a Son to a Father, asking his Advice about offering himself a Candidate for a Place in the Gift of a Number.

Honoured SIR,

MY neighbour, Mr. Wilkins, is dead since I wrote to you last; and as he was in possession of a post under the governors of the London hospital, and many of the most considerable live in this ward, I have been advised by my friends to offer myself as a candidate to succeed him. I have reason to think I am respected in the place; and I am sure I have some friends that will assist me: but I am quite unexperienced in the thing, and know not how to go about it. I would not attempt any thing that should make my name public in this manner, without your approbation; and for that reason, as well as my inexperience in such matters, I make it the first thing to write you word of it. I beg, sir, you will first tell me whether you approve of my attempting it; and then, if you do so, that you will give me your advice in what manner I am to do it: but in this I beg you would not lose any time; because if any application is made, it must be immediately, as others will be ready to make it; and often a first request carries it, though made by a stranger. I beg you will be pleased to answer me this morning.

I am,

honoured sir,

your obedient son.

LETTER LIV.

From a Father to a Son, asking his Advice about putting up for a Place. In Answer to the former.

Dear Son,

I think you cannot do better than to follow the advice of your friends on this occasion. I heartily recommend it to you to put up, and will take all the pains possible among my friends to speak to those they know. It is always right to try, where it is no discredit to lose; and as to the making your name public, it is nothing but advantage. You did not intend to practise your business in private, and the more people know of you, the better: besides, it is some credit to stand for a thing which it is so much credit to obtain. Use your own and your friends interest thoroughly, and beg of them all to be earnest in their recommendation. Consider, if you do not succeed in this, still it is being made known to many families, and that in the most favourable manner, and they may employ you afterwards.

My dear Harry, you will find every thing of this kind depends upon the general good behaviour of the person; therefore I would recommend it to all young people to try often for such employments. You do not need any cautions or guards upon your conduct; but they will do you no harm. I do not suppose you will succeed, for few, I believe, ever have on the first attempt; but you will make yourself an interest: you are young enough to see more vacancies; and if you preserve that interest you set out with, the advantage of so many votes at the next, is always a recommendation to those that have stood before.

You

You now see my thoughts fully upon this matter, and you will find that I shall give you more than my advice ; for I will do every thing that is possible to serve you. You must be industrious in your application ; for this is a rule, my dear son, that in all things to be obtained from a number of votes, the most bustling man generally carries it, whither he be the most deserving or not. God send you success.

I am,

your affectionate father.

LETTER LV.

From a Father to his Son in Trade, at the Time of an approaching Election.

Dear JAMES,

YOU have hitherto shewn every mark of prudence that your friends could expect of you in the management of business, and in your behaviour. You may be sure it is a pleasure to me to see this, and that I have no satisfaction like the hearing others speak of it. An affable behaviour, James, I always told you, was more than every thing in the conduct of life ; and you have found that it is truth. There is a way of refusing what is required of you, that yet will not give the person who is refused opportunity to be angry ; and you have found the way to this among other articles of prudence : for though I know you have been led by prudence to deny credit to some that asked you, which is certainly the most difficult thing in the world, yet I hear every one speak kindly of you.

I give you no more commendation than I find you have deserved in this particular ; but I must give you advice in a thing that you have not yet experienced : there will be request made to you now, which will be the most difficult of all others to be denied ; and yet, if it be possible, you must refuse them. You have occasion for all the caution that can be given you, with respect of these, for they will be pressed upon you with the greatest warmth ; and to a young person, as you are, will seem to be the most friendly in the world, and you will expect the greatest consequences from them ; but you will find none, at least no good ones.

The election of a member of parliament is coming on at your town ; and it is the request of your vote, about which I am giving you this caution. It will be asked by both candidates, and they will get their friends to ask it of you also ; but, if it be possible, James, you should give it to neither. There are places where the whole town is divided into parties, as violent and outrageous as if they were enemies at war ; but this is not quite the case with yours ; and therefore I think you may with conduct keep yourself from making enemies : but it will require all your prudence to do this. In many places hatreds of the most implacable kinds arise from this source ; and the feuds of one election do not subside till another : but, it is not quite so with you. You are too young to have experience of this, and therefore I advise you so fully upon it.

The gentlemen who are candidates are strangers to you, therefore you may easily refuse them both. If you tell each of them, that it is not for want of respect, but that you wish to make yourself no enemies, and assure them that you shall not vote on the other side, you will decline the request as civilly as it is

is made to you, and they will perhaps neither of them take offence. If you are pressed by your customers of consequence to vote on either side, according to their interest, the more strong that solicitation is, the more prudent it is to decline ; because in proportion to that, you are sure to disoblige the party against whom you gave it. In this case, I would have you wait upon the principal customers of each party, and tell them how much you are asked also by the other. Represent to them that your single vote can be of no consequence either way, and how fearful you are of giving offence, where you are so much obligated. You have so good a way of making an excuse, that I hope you will prevail : I am sure any man who has candour will approve of your conduct : and it is happy for you, as I said before, that yours is not one of the most violent towns on this subject. If all this fail, and you find you must give a vote on one side, for fear of disobliging both, it is better to lose half your customers than to lose them all ; so do it. In this case, mind not the promises on either side ; but you will know what are the principles of each of the candidates ; and I charge you give your vote according to your conscience.

You will have great promises from both, but you are not to mind either. No good ever came of elections ; at least, it is very little good that ever came of them, and that to the worst people in the world : and I am sure you never will get it in the manner they have done. You will lose by voting ; you must chuse the least of the two evils. To declare yourself on one side, is always to disoblige half your customers ; but there are places, where to refuse is also to disoblige ; and then you lose them all. I have given you my thoughts at large upon it ; and as this is what experience has shewn me, I hope you will re-

gard it. Conduct yourself with prudence in this, as all you have done already is nothing.

I am,

dear James,

your affectionate father.

LETTER LVI.

To a Widow Lady in London, to dissuade her from a Marriage.

Dear Cousin,

I Was accidentally in company the other day, where you was mentioned with great respect: but it was said that you were about to marry again. I may be impertinent in what I have to say on this subject, because the observations may come too late: yet I think that hardly can be the case, because this is the first time I have heard of your designing it, and then but casually. I know how ready the world is to interpret the slightest acquaintance into courtships; and I think, had this been any more, I should have heard of it earlier, and with more certainty; nay, I will not believe but you would have written to me of it yourself.

As I will persuade myself from these reasons, that you have not gone so far in this matter, if you have made any step in it, as to have made it too late to go back, I shall with all that freedom which our acquaintance and affinity supports me in using, give you my reasons why I think you do wrong. You are very happy at present, and those who do not know when they are well commonly change for the worse. It is a maxim

a maxim among the gamesters, that nobody ought to play but those who have nothing to lose ; and I think it ought to hold as good with those who marry after they are thirty. When there is a bloom of youth upon the face, a man must be tempted to do a great many things to purchase it ; but when that is gone, I should be always afraid that the desire of winning the bet might go farther than the love of play. If that is the matter, wretched is she who is caught ; for the winner will be as ready in this case, as the losers in the other, to break the tables.

But to talk in plain words, and argue the matter like people of this world, I should imagine that any woman who had been married a dozen years, let it have been ever so happily, would have seen enough of the condition not to be in a humour to enter upon it again when the best season of it was over. I talk very freely to you, cousin, but I love you, and you know it : you will therefore excuse me ; nay, I believe you will thank me. I advise you against marriage, but I do not know who you are going to marry. There is one test of affection, and there is but one, and if your lover's affairs will bear that, why I shall give up half my objections. The man who has nothing may deceive you when he says he loves you, whether you have nothing, or have a fortune ; for in the one case he may just like you enough for a month's living together, and, as it is all one to him where he lives, he may resolve upon bidding good-bye to you afterwards : in the other, he may very reasonably be in love with your fortune, and may think no incumbrance of your person too much for the advantage. But if the lover have a fortune more than equal to your own, take it for granted he is in earnest, and give yourself no trouble but about his constancy. It would not be worth while to marry a man you was

sure liked you to-day, but who, it was fifty to one, might change his mind to-morrow: and as to him, whom it was impossible to know whether he liked you or no, you, who will be too wise to fall into absolute green-sickness love, would be distracted to venture upon.

Which of these, or whether either of these descriptions belongs to your present admirer, I am entirely ignorant. You see I am a great enemy to your marrying at all; but I have told you there is a sort of a man that I think you may venture upon: she will have good luck, however, that finds him.

It would be easy to be grave upon this subject; but, dear cousin, it is not easy to be grave without being dull; and I have not a mind you should throw away my letter without reading it. You have a great many years probably to come, and you have a right to be happy in them. You have the means in your own hands, and in the name of wisdom keep them there. You have relations who will want your money, when you can make no more use of it; and why should you rob them of it in favour of a stranger? besides, I have that true affection for you, that I should be unhappy to see you in difficulties; and why should you wish to make a man miserable, because he deserves better at your hands?

Consider all these things, for you have gratitude and generosity; and consider yourself, for you have prudence: you may be happy in yourself, and a blessing to others these forty years; or you may be miserable, and a burthen to your relations: this is the chance, and, I protest, I believe the choice is now before you. Dear cousin, farewell; I only repeat it to you, consider.

Yours most affectionately.

L. E. T.-

LETTER LVII.

From a Lady to a Stranger, enquiring the
Character of an upper Maid-Servant.

MADAM,

I think myself unhappy that I have not the pleasure of being known to you, as I have a request to make; on your complying with which I place a great dependance. The occasion of this letter is nothing more than the common form of enquiring the character of a servant; and I am very sensible that in the general way this signifies little; for whatsoever was the fault the person committed, she begs pardon when she goes away, and her lady promises her a character upon a belief that she will mend. But, madam, I beg leave to mention to you, that I am too sensible how much injury may be done by the tattling of one of these creatures, much more by her wickedness, if she is bad enough to take bribes from designing persons. Madam, I have a daughter grown up to woman's estate, who is as dear to me as a child can be to a parent; I have omitted no care in her education; and I think she wants no kind of goodness. I should be very unhappy to see such a character sacrificed to the malice of a servant; or the child (for she has some fortune) attempted by needy persons, because they can command enough to engage such a person in their service.

I beg pardon for troubling you with so long a letter on such an occasion; but I entreat the favour of you to inform me whether the person whom you discharged a fortnight since, Susannah Clark by name, is fit for me.

I have the honour to be,
with the greatest respect
madam,
your most obedient servant.

E S

L E T.

LETTER LVIII.

From a Lady, giving the Character of an upper Maid-Servant. In Answer to the foregoing.

MADAM,

AFTER the letter you have written to me, I should be unpardonable to say any thing to you but the most perfect truth. I know it is a custom with ladies to be too favourable to discharged servants, but it is a bad one. I would not be too kind to them on this occasion, in any case; but in the present I shall think it a duty to speak without the least reserve.

The servant who has offered herself to you, madam, has left my place about six weeks: the occasion of her being discharged, was some expressions that I thought did not carry a proper respect; but they were spoken to me, and not behind my back. I will do her the justice also to acknowledge, that, perhaps, she might have some provocation. However, if I had been sensible I was in fault myself, I would not have kept the servant afterwards. As to the circumstances you mention, I have no cause to suspect them: I believe her to be very discreet and honest. How far what I have mentioned may plead against her, I cannot say; you are the judge of it; but, I think as it is all that can be objected to a person, otherwise very desirable; and is all I have to charge her with, who have had opportunities of seeing whatever faults she has; I should not, as the world of servants goes, expect a better.

I am,

madam,

your very humble servant.

L E T-

LETTER LIX.

To a Stranger, asking the Character of a Servant.

SIR,

A Person, whose name is James Wilkins, has applied to me, on hearing there was a vacancy in my family, to serve as footman. His greatest recommendation is, that he has lived a considerable time with you, and behaved himself well in your service: if this be true, it is indeed sufficient; but this, as well as his occasion of leaving you (which, he says, was to see his friends) is so common an account for people to give of themselves, that I place no value upon it, till I am favour'd with a confirmation of it by you.

I know it is too common in gentlemen of humane dispositions, to promise a better character to servants than they have deserved, upon their promise of amending the faults they had been guilty of; but I am afraid this is oftener kept on the first part, than on the latter. Sir, I have troubled you thus far only to acquaint you that mine is a family, into which it would be particularly improper to take a bad man; and having said so much, I shall perfectly depend upon what you are pleased to tell me in respect of him.

I am, Sir,

your obedient,

and very humble servant.

LETTER LX.

The Answer: containing the Character of a Servant.

I Am very sensible of the propriety of all you say in respect to the abuse in characters given with servants. If there were not the particular occasion which you intimate in this case, I should still, after such a letter as you have written to me, be careful to say no more or less of the man than he deserves; since I think that candour from one gentleman to another, is more necessary than partiality to servants.

The person you mention lived in my family about ten months; a time, perhaps, not so long as he is willing to have it thought; and the occasion of my discharging him was some disagreement with the other servants: this sir, is the truth of it. As the excuses he has made to you are very common, I think, if I were in your place, I should not construe them particularly to his disadvantage. The time that he was with me is sufficient to judge, in some degree, of a person in his station; and from that I think very well of him. I should not have parted with him on my own account; nor do I know who was to blame in the dispute which occasioned my discharging him; only as the other servants had lived longer with me, I was less inclined to part with them. This, sir, is exactly the truth, as to his behaviour, while with me, and as to his leaving me. I believe he will make you a very good servant, and am,

Sir,
your very obedient humble servant.

L E T.

LETTER LXI.

From a Person in Trade to his late Master,
on Account of a bad Debt.

Honoured SIR,

THERE is but one thing in the management of my business, in which I find myself now at a loss for your instruction ; but there is no one to whom I can so properly apply for advice. The only part of your conduct, of which you left me uninformed, was that with respect to the getting in your bills ; and this I am sensible the secrecy that is due to those who are indebted is a sufficient reason never to divulge. I beg you however, now, sir, to instruct me in my own affairs, although I had no right to enquire into yours. I am in great uneasiness about a debt that is due to me, and I will relate the circumstances. The person I have trusted so deeply is a physician ; he seems to be in considerable business, and is very much respected by every body ; but I have heard some whispers that he has answered some demands but very indifferently. A part of my debt is money lent out of pocket. This I can less afford to lose than the money due in trade ; and the time of payment is elapsed a considerable time ago. I have asked him more than once, and he has put me off for a certain time, and when that time is expired, I am not at all nearer than I was. I must confess that it would be a very difficult thing for me to spare the money, and I beg you'll tell me what step I should take. I am pressed by one or two who know the matter to arrest him ; but I have no mind to do such

such a thing. I beg you to tell me what is the best course I can take. I hope you will not, sir, take amiss this application, for I believe there is no person who wishes me better than you do. I return you my humble thanks for your many favours, and am,

Sir,

your most obedient
and humble servant.

LETTER LXII.

The Answer.

Dear WILLIAM,

THERE is one very good rule I shall give you about what you ask, and that is, to take care never to make bad debts. I assure you, this has been the great secret of my conduct, and I owe what success I have had in the world more to this than to any thing else whatever. Nobody in trade ever refused so many customers as I have done; but, William, one bad debt runs away with the profit of many good ones: for this reason I have less experience than you think in these matters, but I shall give you my advice as well as I can.

I am not of opinion you should arrest the gentleman by any means. It is a very good method where people have money and will not pay; but there are two reasons against it in such a case as you speak of: it is cruel, and it answers no purpose. Instead of getting the money now, it will prevent his ever being able to pay you at all; for a man that

that has nothing but his business, will never make much of that in the rules of a prison. Never lend money to your customers for the future ; for it is a common maxim, and it is too true, that those who borrow money seldom pay it.

I would have you depend in this matter upon frequent asking for your money ; and tell the gentleman that you are distressed in your own circumstances. I have known some people, who, when they were uneasy about a large debt, have insisted upon the debtor's finding some persons to be security that he should pay them : this is getting bail without going to law ; but I believe it is very seldom that they are able to obtain this. A man would sooner bid them do their worst, and give in bail to an action, because he can then pretend some dispute about the demand, and it is an excuse for asking, and the law will give him as much time as the creditor is generally inclined to allow ; for if you arrest the gentleman to-morrow, you will not be able to recover your money this twelvemonth : nay, most likely you would never get it at all ; for the law allows all that delay ; and then the debtor, if he cannot pay, is only to live in St. George's-Fields, or the Borough, a place that thousands of people chuse.

Take care, William, how you have any dealings, for the future, with people that are at all dubious : If you get them into your books, never let them get far ; and, whatever you do, never lend money to those who are in your debt already. These are the best rules I can give you for your future conduct : as for the present, it is my opinion, the best way is to dun continually. Plead the necessity of your own affairs ; and take any thing, if

it

it be ever so little at a time : he will find that he is obliged to you not to distress him farther ; and as you never design to do it, never threaten : this is the greatest of all folly in a creditor : if he designs to proceed to law, he never should tell the person of it before hand, for it is bidding him keep out of the way ; and if he does not intend to do it, it is only making him hate him as well as fear him, and never answers any purpose. By civil behaviour, and constant application, you will get in your money by degrees, as fast as he can pay it, and, in the mean while, you will have him for a customer with ready money.

I have wrote you a long letter ; but as you asked my advice, I was willing to give you my reasons for it : besides, I think you have a right to know every thing that I do, relating to trade ; and, if you had not, I have a respect for you that would make me comply with any such request, or readily do any thing to serve you.

I am

your faithful friend.

LETTER LXIII.

A Letter of Advice to a Person in Trade,
from the Master to whom he served his Ap-
prenticeship.

Dear WILLIAM,

YOU will forgive me that I address you by a name which calls up my remembrance of your good qualities, though Mr. Aylworth might seem a title of more respect ; I mean this as a name

name of friendship: besides, I design to advise you, and therefore may be supposed still to keep up something of the master.

I meet with you upon change every day, and you seem the busiest man at the place: I know your affairs cannot be so very numerous there; nor indeed are they who have the most numerous, those whom one sees in the greatest bustle in transacting them. I am afraid you confuse yourself in all this bustle; and fearing that I have in this article omitted to give you the due instruction while you was with me, I hold it an act of duty as well as friendship to do it now. I believe you have seldom seen me perplexed and hurried by my business, and yet nobody knows better than you how considerable a share I have had of it: and you know also that I have gone through it well. The method I used was always to set down in the morning what was to be done in the day, and the order in which it was to be done; and he that does this will never have any trouble, because he will always be doing only one thing at a time, and he will know what to do next.

I will set it right before you in a very plain instance: suppose you were making interest for a place, and were to wait upon a great number of persons in different parts of the town; you would take a list of their names, and run from one another at random; and when you had seen one, the time it would take to go to the next would be lost in settling which you should next go to. Now, if another man of more years and experience was to set about the same thing, he would spend the first morning in taking a new list of them in their divisions, according as they lie, so as to go readily from

from one to another. Your hurrying temper would think this time lost; but though you get twenty before him the first day, he would have gone through the whole before you had done half: it is just so in business. If you only remember, in a general manner, that you have such and such things to do, you will be confused which to set about next, and leave half of them undone; but if you bestow one quarter of an hour thus in the morning, you will never be hurried in the rest of the day. You well know three things that contain all the secrets of business: first, what you have to do; secondly, how much of it you can do that day; and thirdly, what time to set about each part of it.

I am under some concern to see you pushing every body about upon the Change, and all in heat and hurry the whole time; when you see Mr. Gordon, who has a hundred times your business, walking about as leisurely as if he was in his compting-house, and yet doing it all; while yours is left undone, though there is so little of it.

I hope you will take this friendly, as it was meant, and as you used to observe me when it was a duty, that you will now do it by choice.

I am

your sincere friend.

L E T-

L E T T E R L X I V.

From a Person in Trade to his late Master,
thanking him for friendly Advice. In An-
swer to the former.

SIR,

I Should be wanting in civility, as well as gratitude, if I did not take the first opportunity of returning you my thanks for your kind advice. Sir, I look upon it as the greatest obligation, and shall obey it strictly. I have been used to hear persons say, that when the doctor knows the disease, he is half way towards the cure of it; and this, I assure you, is fairly the case between you and me. I am sensible that what you say is exactly the case with me, and I shall begin to-morrow to pursue the course which you prescribe for the cure.

I do not wonder you have taken notice of my hurry upon the change; I have been many times ashamed of it, but I never knew to what it was owing till you told me. I shall shew my gratitude in the best manner by avoiding it for the future, and I am, with the greatest sincerity,

Sir,

your most obliged servant.

L E T.

LETTER LXV.

To a Person who had done a bad Thing by
an unexperienced Servant.

Mr. JAMES,

I Have a great deal of good-will for you, and that is the occasion of my writing this letter. You know I saw you win the money of lady Phillips's servant; and I have seen the young man since, and can tell you, you must take care of yourself, for I fear what is doing. The man does not suspect any harm of you, but there are those that will. He told me all the matter, and I would advise you, for your own sake, to give him the money again, if you expect to stay in your place, or get a character.

The money that he paid you, he told you was his lady's, and that's the truth. He is afraid to be called to an account, and has wrote to his father to come and speak to his lady about it. You may be sure this will come to your master's ears, and if he does not turn you away, it is well if you are not taken up for winning the money in an unlawful manner. As I hear the story, it is altogether against you. I have nothing to do in it, only as I wish you well, I tell you what you ought to do.

Your humble servant.

L. E. T.

LETTER LXVI.

From a Person who had done a bad Thing,
sensible of it, and desirous to make amends.
In consequence of the former.

Mr. WILLIAM,

I AM very sensible now how bad a thing I did
in insisting upon your paying me the money,
which belonged to your lady, when I won so much
of you at cards. If you will come to our house, I
am desirous to make it up with you, and will give
you any satisfaction you please to require. As to
the money you won of me, I let you get it on pur-
pose to make you play more; and all that I have won
of you, I won fairly: but, however, as you cannot
play the game at all, it was not an even match, and
I shall willingly return it.

Whereas, I hear you have sent for your father
out of the country, to come up and speak to your
mistress about it, I desire you will not let him say
any thing concerning it; as I shall make you sa-
tisfaction, your lady will not know any thing that
has happened, and it would only hurt my char-
acter to have it talked of. I am sure it will make
your father easy to see all is well on your side, and
I dare say it will be example enough to you as it
is; and as for my part, I shall never do so foolish
a thing again. So all things being made up, I de-
sire of you as the greatest favour, that nothing may
be said about it, and am

your humble servant:

LETTER LXVII.

[From a respectful Lover to his Mistress.

Dear MADAM,

I HAVE long struggled with the most honourable and respectful passion that ever filled the heart of man : I have often try'd to reveal it personally ; as often in this way ; but never till now could prevail upon my fears an' doubts. But I can no longer struggle with a secret that has given me so much torture to keep, and yet hitherto more, when I have endeavoured to reveal it. I never entertain the hope to see you, without rapture ; but when I have that pleasure, instead of being animated as I ought, I am utterly confounded. What can this be owing to, but a diffidence in myself, and an exalted opinion of your worthiness ? And is not this one strong token of ardent love ? Yet if it be, how various is the tormenting passion in its operations ? since some it inspires with courage, whilst others it deprives of all necessary confidence. I can only assure you, madam, that the heart of man never conceived a stronger or sincerer passion than mine for you. If my reverence for you is my crime, I am sure it has been my sufficient punishment. I need not say my designs and motives are honourable : who dare approach so much virtuous excellence, with a supposition that such an assurance is necessary ? What my fortune is, is well known ; and I am ready to stand the test of the strictest enquiry. Condescend, madam, to embolden my respectful passion, by one favourable line ; that if what I here profess, and hope further to

to have an opportunity to assure you of, be found to be unquestionably truth, then my humble address will not quite be unacceptable to you ; and thus you will for ever oblige, dear madam,

Your affectionate admirer,

and devoted servant.



LETTER LXVIII.

The Answer.

SIR,

IF modesty be the greatest glory of our sex, surely it cannot be blame-worthy in yours. For my own part, I must think it the most amiable quality either man or woman can possess. Nor can there be, in my opinion, a true respect, where there is not a diffidence of one's own merit, and an high opinion of the persons we esteem.

To say more, on this occasion, would little become me : to say less, would look as if I knew not how to pay that regard to modest merit, which modest merit only deserves.

You, sir, best know your own heart ; and if you are sincere and generous, will receive as you ought this frankness from

Your humble servant.

L E T.

LETTER LXIX.

A Gentleman to a Lady, professing an Aversion to the tedious Formality in Courtship.

Dear MADAM,

I Remember that one of the antients, in describing a youth in love, says, he has neither wisdom enough to speak, nor to hold his tongue. If this be a just description, the sincerity of my passion will admit of no dispute: And whenever, in your company, I behave like a fool, forget not that you are answerable for my incapacity. Having made bold to declare thus much, I must presume to say, that a favourable reception of this, will, I am certain, make me more worthy of your notice; but your disdain would be what I believe myself incapable ever to surmount. To try by idle fallacies, and airy compliments, to prevail on your judgment, is a folly for any man to attempt who knows you. No, madam, your good sense and endowments have raised you far above the necessity of practising the mean artifices which prevail upon the less deserving of your sex: you are not to be so lightly deceived; and if you were, give me leave to say, I should not think you deserving of the trouble that would attend such an attempt.

This, I must own, is no fashionable letter from one who, I am sure, loves up to the greatest hero of romance: but as I would hope that the happiness I sue for should be lasting, it is certainly most eligible to take no step to procure it but what will bear reflection; for I should be happy to see
you

you mine, when we have both out-lived the taste for every thing that has not virtue and reason to support it. I am, madam, notwithstanding this unpolished address,

Your most respectful admirer,
and obedient humble servant.

LETTER LXXX.

The Lady's Answer, encouraging a farther Declaration.

SIR,

I AM very little in love with the fashionable methods of courtship: sincerity with me is preferable to compliments; yet I see no reason why common decency should be discarded. There is something so odd in your stile, that when I know whether you are in jest or earnest, I shall be less at a loss to answer you. Mean time, as there is abundant room for rising, rather than sinking, in your complaisance, you may possibly have chosen wisely to begin first at the lowest end. If this be the case, I know not what your succeeding addresses may produce: but I tell you fairly, that your present make no great impression, yet perhaps as much as you intended, on

Your humble servant.

LETTER LXXI.

The Gentleman's Reply, more openly declaring his Passion.

Dearest MADAM,

NOW I have the hope of being not more despised for my acknowledged affection, I declare, to you with all the sincerity of a man of honour.

nour, that I have long had a most sincere passion for you; but I have seen gentlemen led such dances, when they have given up their affections to the lovely tyrants of their hearts, and could not help themselves, that I had no courage to begin an address in the usual forms, even to you, of whose good sense and generosity I had nevertheless a great opinion. You have favoured me with a few lines, which I most humbly thank you for. And I do assure you, madam, if you will be pleas'd to encourage my humble suit, you shall have so just an account of my circumstances and pretensions, as I hope will intitle me to your favour in the honourable light in which I profess myself, dear madam,

Your most obliged,

and faithful admirer.

P. S. Be so good as to favour me with one line more to encourage my personal attendance, if not disagreeable.

LETTER LXXII.

The Lady's Answer to his Reply, putting the Matter on a sudden Issue.

SIR,

AS we are both so well inclined to avoid unnecessary trouble, as well as unnecessary compliments, I think proper to acquaint you, 'that Mr. Richardson of Winchester, has the management of all my affairs; and is a man of such probity and honour, that I do nothing in any matters without him. I have no dislike to your person; and if you approve of what Mr. Richardson can acquaint you with, in

re-

relation to me, and I approve of his report in your favour, I shall be far from shewing any gentleman, that I have either an insolent or a sordid spirit, especially to such as do me the honour of their good opinion. I am,

Sir,

Your humble servant.

LETTER LXXIII.

A facetious young Lady to her Aunt, ridiculing her serious Lover.

Dear AUNT,

I Am much obliged to you for the kindness you intended me, in recommending Mr. Slyboots to me for a husband : but I must be so free as to tell you, he is a man no way suited to my inclination. I despise, 'tis true, the idle rants of romance ; but am inclinable to think there may be an extreme on the other side of the question.

The first time the honest man came to see me, in the way you were pleas'd to put into his head, was one Sunday after sermon-time. He began with telling me, what I found at my fingers ends, that it was very cold ; and politely blow'd upon his. I immediately perceived, that his passion for me could not keep him warm ; and, in complaisance to your recommendation, conducted him to the fire side. After he had pretty well rubbed heat into his hands, he stood up with his back to the fire, and, with his hand behind him, held up his coat, that he might be warm all over ; and looking about him, asked, with the tranquillity of a man a twelve-month married, and just come off a journey, how all friends did

in the country? - I said, I hoped very well; but would be glad to warm my fingers. Cry mercy, madam!—And then he shuffled a little farther from the fire; and after two or three hems, and a long pause—

I have heard, said he, a most excellent sermon just now: Dr. Thomas is a fine man truly: did you ever hear him, madam? No, sir, I generally go to my own parish-church. That's right, madam, to be sure: what was your subject to-day? The pharisee and the publican, sir. A very good one truly: Dr. Thomas would have made fine work upon that subject. His text to-day was, "Evil communications corrupt good manners." A good subject, sir; I doubt not the doctor made a fine discourse upon it. O, aye, madam, he can't make a bad one upon any subject. I rung for the tea-kettle; for thought I, we shall have all the heads of the sermon immediately.

At tea he gave me an account of all the religious societies, unask'd; and how many boys they had put out 'prentices, and girls they had taught to knit, and sing psalms. To all which I gave a nod of approbation, and was just able to say (for I began to be horribly in the vapours) it was a very excellent charity. O, ay, madam, said he again (for that's his word, I find) a very excellent one truly; it is snatching so many brands out of the fire. You are a contributor, sir, I doubt not. O, ay, madam, to be sure; every good man would contribute to such a worthy charity, to be sure. No doubt, sir, a blessing attends upon all who promote so worthy a design. O, ay, madam, no doubt, as you say: I am sure I have found it; blessed be God! and then he twang'd his nose, and lifting up his eyes, as if in an ejaculation.

O, my good aunt, what a man is here for an husband? At last came the happy moment of his taking leave;

leave; for I would not ask him to stay supper: and moreover, he talk'd of going to a lecture at St. Helen's. And then (tho' I had an opportunity of saying little more than yes, and no, all the time; for he took the vapours he had put me into, for devotion, or gravity, at least, I believe so) he press'd my hand, look'd frightfully kind, and gave me to understand as a mark of his favour, that if, upon further conversation, and inquiry into my character, he should happen to like me as well as he did from my behaviour and person; why, truly, I need not fear in time being blessed with him for my husband!

This, my good aunt, may be a mighty safe way of travelling towards the land of matrimony, as far as I know; but I cannot help wishing for a little more entertainment on our journey. I am willing to believe Mr. Slyboots an honest man, but am, at the same time, afraid his religious turn of temper, however in itself commendable, would better suit with a woman who centers all desert in a solemn appearance, than with, dear aunt,

Your greatly obliged kinswoman.

LETTER LXXIV.

Her Aunt's Answer, rebuking her ludicrous Turn of Mind.

Cousin JENNY,

I Am sorry you think Mr. Slyboots so unsuitable a lover. He is a serious, sober, good man: And surely when seriousness and sobriety make a necessary part of the duty of a good husband, a good father, and a good master of a family; those characters

should not be the subjects of ridicule, in persons of our sex especially, who would reap the greatest advantage from them. But he talks of the weather when he first sees you, it seems ; and would you have him directly fall upon the subject of love the moment he beheld you ?

He visited you just after sermon, on a Sunday : and was it so unsuitable for him to let you see, that the duty of the day had made proper impressions upon him ?

His turn for promoting the religious societies, which you speak so slightly of, deserves more regard from every good person ; for that same turn is a kind of security to a woman, that he who had a benevolent and religious heart, could not make a bad man, or a bad husband. To put out poor boys to 'prentice, to teach girls to sing psalms, would be with very few a subject for ridicule ; for he that was so willing to provide for the children of others, would take still greater care of his own.

He gave you to understand, that if he liked your character on inquiry, as well as your person and behaviour, he should think himself very happy in such a wife ; for that I dare say was more like his language, than what you put in his mouth : and let me tell you, it would have been a much stranger speech, had so cautious and serious a man said, without a thorough knowledge of your character, that at the first sight he was over head and ears in love with you.

I think, allowing for the ridiculous turn your airy wit gives to this first visit, that, by your own account, he acted like a prudent, a serious, and a worthy man, as he is, and like one that thought flatly compliments beneath him, in so serious an affair as this.

I think,

I think, cousin Jenny, this is not only a mighty safe way, as you call it, of travelling towards the land of matrimony, but the land of happiness, with respect as well to the next world as this. And it is to be hoped, that the better entertainment you so much wish for on your journey, may not lead you too much out of your way, and divert your mind from the principal view which you ought to have to your journey's end.

In short, I could rather have wish'd, that you could bring your mind nearer to his standard, than that he should bring down his to your level. And you'd have found more satisfaction in it than you imagine, could you have brought yourself to a little more of that solemn appearance, which you treat so lightly, and which, I think, in him is much more than mere appearance.

Upon the whole, cousin Jenny, I am sorry that a woman of virtue and morals, as you are, should treat so ludicrously a serious and pious frame of mind, in an age, wherein good examples are so rare, and so much wanted; tho' at the same time I am far from offering to prescribe to you in so arduous an affair as a husband; and wish you and Mr. Slyboots too, since you are so differently disposed, matched more suitably to each other's mind, than you are likely to be together: for I am

Your truly affectionate aunt.

LETTER LXXV.

To a Father, on his Neglect of his Childrens Education.

Dear SIR,

I Am under a concern to see such a remissness, as every body takes notice of, in the education of your children. They are brought up, 'tis true, to little offices in your business, which keep them active, and may make them in some degree of present, tho' poor, use to you; but I am sorry to say, of none to themselves, with regard to their future prospects, which is what a worthy parent always has in view.

There is a proper time for every thing; and if children are not early initiated into their duty, and those parts of learning which are proper to their particular years, they must necessarily be discouraged, and set behind every one of their school-fellows, tho' much younger than themselves; and you know not, sir, what a laudable emulation you by this means destroy, than which nothing is of greater force to children, to induce them to attend to their books; nor what disgrace you involve them in with respect to children among children, for the biggest and eldest to be so much outdone by the least and youngest.

Nor is the consequence of this defect confin'd to the school-age, as I may call it; for as they grow up, they will be look'd upon in an equally discouraging and disadvantageous light, by all who converse with them: which must of course throw them into the company of the dregs of mankind; for how will they be able to converse or correspond with those whose acquaintance it is most worth their while to cultivate? And indeed they will probably be so conscious of their unsit-

unfitness to bear a part in worthy conversation, that, to keep themselves in countenance, they will, of their own accord, shun the better company, and associate with the worst: and what may be the consequence of this, a wise man, and a good father, would tremble to think of, especially when he has to reflect upon himself as the cause of it, let it be what it will.

Then, sir, it is to be consider'd, that without a tolerable education they can be only fit for mean and sordid employments. Hear what the wise man says to this very purpose: “ How can he get wisdom; that holdeth the plough, and that glorieth in the goad, that driveth oxen, and is occupied in their labours, and whose talk is of bullocks? He giveth his mind to make furrows, and is diligent to give the kine fodder. So every carpenter and workmaster, that laboureth night and day—The smith also fitting by the anvil, and considering the iron-work, the vapour of the fire wasteth his flesh —The noise of the hammer and the anvil is ever in his ears—So doth the potter fitting at his work, and turning the wheel about with his feet—He fashioneth the clay with his arm, and boweth down his strength before his feet.” These, as he observes, are useful in their way; but their minds being wholly engross'd by their labours, “ they shall not be sought for in public council, nor sit high in the congregation —they cannot declare justice and judgment, and they shall not be found where parables are spoken.” That is, they shall be confin'd to the drudgery of their own servile station, and will be intitled neither to honour nor respect, as they might have been, had they had an education to qualify them for more respectable businesses. And you will consider, sir, in a closer light, as to us who

live in the present age, and in this great city, that there is hardly a creditable or profitable employment in London, where a tolerable knowledge of accompts, and penmanship, in particular, is not required. Consider also, what opportunities they may lose by this neglect of their education, in case they should fail in the business they are put to, of getting a comfortable and genteel support in some merchant's compting-house, or in some one of the several offices about this great metropolis ; as book-keepers, clerks, accomptants, &c.

And with regard more immediately to yourself, how can you expect, when they know you could do better for them, but that their behaviour to you will be of a piece with the rest ? For if they are not polish'd by learning, but are left to a kind of instinct rather, is it to be expected that they should behave to you, and their mother, with that sense of their obligations which learning inculcates ? Nor, indeed, will they have those obligations to you, which other children have to their parents, who take care to give them opportunities of improvement, which are denied to yours. Consider, dear sir, what a contemptible character, even among the sordid vulgar, that of an illiterate fellow is ; and what respect, on the contrary, a man of letters is treated with, by his equals, as well as inferiors. And when you lay all these plain reasons and observations together, I make no doubt but you will endeavour to retrieve lost time, and be advised in this material point (which I can have no interest in) by

Your sincere friend and servant.

L E T-

LETTER LXXVI.

From a young Maiden, abandoned by her Lover for the sake of a greater Fortune.

Mr. JOHN,

I Must take up my pen and write, tho' perhaps you will only scoff at me for so doing ; but when I have said what I have to say, then I shall have eased my mind, and will endeavour to forget you for ever. I have had so many cautions give me against the false hearts of men, and was so often told how they will vow and forswear themselves, that I ought to have been on my guard, that's true : and indeed, so I was a great while : you know it well. But you courted me so long, vowed so earnestly, and seemed so much in love with me, that it was first pity in me, that made me listen to you ; and, oh ! this nasty pity, how soon did it bring—But I won't say love neither. I thought, if all the young men in the world besides proved false, yet it was impossible you should. Ah ! poor silly creature that I was, to think, tho' every body flatter'd me with being fightly enough, I could hold a heart so foddily bent on interest, as I always saw yours to be ! But that, thought I, tho' 'tis a meanness I don't like, yet it will be a security of his making a frugal husband in an age so fruitful of spendthrifts.

But at length it has proved, that you can prefer Polly Bambridge, and leave poor me, only because she has a greater portion than I have.

I say nothing against Polly. I wish her well. Indeed I do. And I wish you no harm neither. But as you knew Polly before, why could you not have made to yourself a merit with her, without going so

far

far with me? What need you have so often begg'd and pray'd, sigh'd and vow'd (never leaving me, day nor night) till you had got me foolishly to believe and pity you? And so, after your courtship to me was made a town-talk, then you could leave me to be laugh'd at by every one I slighted for you! Was this just, was this well done, think you?

Here I cannot go out of doors but I have some one or other simpering and sneering at me; and I have had two willow-garlands sent me; so I have— But what poor stuff, in some of my own sex too, is this, to laugh at and deride me for your baseness? I can call my heart to witness to my virtue in thought, in word, and in deed; and must I be ridiculed for a false one, who gives himself airs at my expence, and at the expence of his own truth and honour? Indeed you cannot say the least ill of me, that's my comfort. I defy the world to say any thing to blast my character: why then should I suffer, in the world's eye, for your baseness?

I seek not to move you to return to the fidelity you have vow'd; for by this time, mayhap, you'd be as base to Polly as you have been to me, if you did; and I wish her no willow-garlands, I'll assure you. But yet, let me desire you to speak of me with decency. That is no more than I deserve, well you know. Don't (to brave thro' the perfidy you have been guilty of) mention me with such fleers, as, I hear, you have done to several; and pray call me no more of your poor dear girls! And, I hope she won't take it to heart, poor thing!—with that insolence that so little becomes you, and I have so little deserved. I thought to have appeal'd to your conscience, on what has passed between us when I began. I thought to have put the matter home to you! But I have run out into this length, and now don't think

think it worth while to write much more : for what is conscience to a man who could vow as you have done, and act as you have done ?

Go then, Mr. John, naughty man as you are ! I will try to forget you for ever. Rejoice in the smiles of your Polly Bambridge, and glad your heart with the possession of an hundred or two of pounds more than I have ; and see what you'll be the richer or happier a few years hence. I wish no harm to you. You conscience will be a greater trouble to you than I wish it to be, if you are capable of reflecting. And for your sake, I will henceforth set myself up to be an adviser to all my sex, never to give ear to a man, unless they can be sure that his interest will be a security for his pretended affection to them. I am, tho' greatly injured and deceived, naughty Mr. John,

Your well-wisher.

LETTER LXXVII.

From a Gentleman to his Mistress, who,
seeing no Hopes of Success, respectfully
withdraws his Suit.

MADAM,

I Make no doubt but this will be the welcomest letter that you ever received from me ; for it comes to assure you, that it is the last trouble you will ever have from me. Nor should I have so long withheld from you this satisfaction, had not the hope your brother gave me, that in time I might meet with an happier fate, made me willing to try every way to obtain your favour. But I see, all the hopes given me by his kind consideration for me, and those that

that my own presumption have made me entertain, are all in vain: And I will therefore rid you of so troublesome an importuner, having nothing to offer now, but my ardent wishes for your happiness; and these, madam, I will pursue you with to my life's latest date.

May you, whenever you shall change your condition, meet with a heart as passionately, and as sincerely, devoted to you as mine! And may you be happy for many, very many years, in the man you can honour with your love! For, give me leave to say, madam, that in this, my end will be in part answer'd, because it was most sincerely your happiness I had in view, as well as my own, when I presumptuously hoped, by contributing to the one, to secure the other. I am, madam, with the highest veneration,

Your most obedient humble servant.

LETTER LXXVIII.

From a Lady to a Gentleman, who had obtained all her Friends Consent, urging him to decline his Suit to her.

SIR,

YOU have often importuned me to return marks of that consideration for you, which you profess for me. As my parents, to whom I owe all duty, encourage your address, I wish I could. I am hardly treated by them, because I cannot. What shall I do? Let me apply to you, sir, for my relief, who have much good sense, and, I hope, generosity. Yes, sir, let me bespeak your humanity to me, and justice to yourself, in this point; and that shall be all I will

I will ask in my favour. I own you deserve a much better wife than I shall ever make ; but yet, as love is not in one's own power, if I have the misfortune to know I cannot love you, will not justice to yourself, if not pity to me, oblige you to abandon your present purpose ?

But as to myself, sir, why should you make a poor creature unhappy in the displeasure of all her friends at present, and still more unhappy, if, to avoid that, she gives up her person, where she cannot bestow her heart ? If you love me, as you profess, let me ask you, sir, is it for my sake, or is it your own ?—If for mine, how can it be, when I must be miserable, if I am forced to marry where I cannot love ?—If for your own, reflect, sir, on the selfishness of your love, and judge if it deserves from me the return you wish.

How sadly does this love already operate ! You love me so well, that you make me miserable in the anger of my dearest friends !—Your love has already made them think me undutiful ; and instead of the fondness and endearment I used to be treated with by them, I meet with nothing but chidings, frowns, slights, and displeasure.

And what is this love of yours to do for me hereafter ?—Why hereafter, sir, it will be turned into hatred, or indifference at least : for then, tho' I cannot give you my heart, I shall have given you a title to it, and you will have a lawful claim to its allegiance. May it not then, nay, ought it not to be treated on the foot of a rebel, and expect punishment as such, instead of tenderness ? Even were I to be treated with mercy, with goodness, with kindness by you, and could not deserve or return it, what a wretch would your love make me ! How would it involve me in the crying sin of ingratitude ! How would

How would it destroy my reputation in the world's eye, that the best of husband's had the worst of wives!—The kindest of men, the unkindest of women!

Cease then, I beseech you, this hopeless, this cruel pursuit!—Make some worthier person happy in your addresses, that can be happy in them!—By this means, you will restore me (if you decline as of your own motion) to the condition you found me in, the love of my parents, and the esteem of my friends. If you really love me, this may be a hard task; but it will be a most generous one—And there is some reason to expect it; for who that truly loves, wishes to make the object of his love miserable? This must I be, if you persist in your addresses; and I shall know by your conduct, on occasion of this uncommon request, how to consider it, and in what light to place you, either as the most generous, or the most ungenerous of men. Mean time I am, sir, most heartily, tho' I cannot be what you would have me,

Your well-wisher, and humble servant.

LETTER LXXIX.

The Gentleman's Answer to the Lady's uncommon Request.

Dear MADAM,

I Am exceedingly concern'd, that I cannot be as acceptable to you, as I have the good fortune to find myself to your honoured parents. If, madam, I had reason to think it was owing to your prepossession in some happier man's favour, I should utterly despair

despair of it, and should really think it would be unjust to myself, and ungenerous to you, to continue my address. As therefore you have, by your appeal to me, in so uncommon a way, endeavour'd to make me a party against myself, and I have shewn so much regard to you, as to be willing to oblige you, as far as I can, may I not hope the favour of you to declare generously, whether I owe my unhappiness to such a prepossession, and whether your heart is given to some other? If this be the case, you shall find all you wish on my part; and I shall take a pride to plead against myself, let me suffer ever so much by it, to your father and mother: but if not, and you have taken any other disgusts to my person or behaviour, that there may be hope my utmost affection and assiduity, or a contrary conduct, may, in time, get the better of, let me implore you to permit me still to continue my zealous respects to you; for this I will say, that there is not a man in the world who can address you with a sincerer and more ardent flame, than, dear madam,

Your affectionate admirer, and humble servant.

LETTER LXXX.

The Lady's Reply in case of a Prepossession.

SIR,

I thank you for your kind assurance, that you will befriend me in the manner I wish; and I think I owe it to your generosity to declare, that there is a person in the world, that, might I be left to my own choice, I should prefer to all other men. To this, sir, it is owing, that your address cannot

cannot meet with the return it might otherwise deserve from me. Yet are things so circumstanced, that while my friends prefer you, and know nothing of the other, I should find it very difficult to obtain their consents. But your generous discontinuance, without giving them the true reason for it, will lay an obligation, greater than I can express, on

Your most humble servant.

LETTER LXXXI.

The Lady's Reply in case of no Prepossession,
or that she chooses not to avow it.

SIR,

I Am sorry to say that my disapprobation of your address is insuperable—Yet I cannot but think myself beholden to you for the generosity of your answer to my earnest request. I must beg you, sir, to give over your application: but how can I say, while I cannot help being of this mind, that it is or is not owing to a prepossession; when you declare, that in the one instance (and that is very generous too) you will oblige me; but in the other you will not? If I cannot return love for love, be the motive what it will, pray, sir, for your own sake, as well as mine, discontinue your address—In case of prepossession, you say you can, and you will oblige me. Let my unworthiness, sir, have the same effect upon you, as if that prepossession were to be avow'd. This will inspire me with a gratitude that will always make me

Your most obliged servant.

LETTER LXXXII.

To a Lady, inviting her into the Country for the Summer.

My dear HARRIOT,

I Don't know whether I flatter myself with an opinion of your speaking to me the other day with an uncommon air of friendship, or whether I am so happy to hold that place, of which I should be so ambitious, in your esteem. I thought you spoke with concern at our parting for the summer, on our families retiring into the country. For heaven's sake, my dear, what can you do all the dull season in London ? Vauxhall is not for more than twice ; and I think Ranelagh one would not see above half a dozen times in the year. What is it then you find to entertain you in an empty town for four or five months together ? I would fain persuade you not to be in love with so disagreeable a place, and I have an interest in it ; for I am a petitioner to you to stay the summer with us ; at least, I beg you will try. We go, my dear, on Monday. Will you go with us ? for there is a place in the coach : or will you come when we are settled ? I am greatly of opinion that it will please you. I am sure I need not tell you we shall do all we can to render it agreeable, or that you will make us very happy in complying with the invitation.

You have not seen our house ; but it is a very pleasant one. There are fine prospects from the park, and a river runs through the garden ; nor are we quite out of the way of entertainment. You know there is a great deal of company about that place ; and we have an assembly within a mile of

116 The Familiar LETTER-WRITER.

us. What shall I say else to tempt you to come? why, I will tell you that you will make us all the happiest people in the world; and that when you are tired you shall not be teased to stay. Dear Harriot, think of it; you will confer an obligation on her, who is, with the truest respect,

Your most affectionate friend.

LETTER LXXXIII.

To a Lady, inviting her to a Party of Pleasure.

Dear MADAM,

PEOPLE are interested who invite you to be of their parties, because you are sure to make them happy. This is the reason why you will not perhaps always comply when you are asked to be of them; but it is certainly a cause of your being solicited oftener than any woman in the world. After you were gone yesterday, Mr. Bohun proposed an expedition to Richmond for to-morrow; and he requested me (for he thought he had no title to such a liberty himself) to tell you that we all understood you to be of the party, though you happened to be out of the way when it was proposed.

I hope you are not engaged; the weather promises to be favourable, and your company you know how we value. I need not tell you that we shall suppose it a matter of form, if you are absent. What we shall think of it if you go with us, you will know when you remember what every body thinks, who has the pleasure of your company. I beg you will not invent an excuse, but go with us.

I am, with the greatest sincerity,

Dear MADAM,

Your most obedient humble servant.

L E T -

LETTER LXXXIV.

To a young Lady, cautioning her against keep Company with a Gentleman of a bad Character.

Dear NIECE,

THE sincere regard I have for your happiness and welfare has prevailed on me to inform you, rather by letter than by word of mouth, that people censure your unguarded conduct, and the too great freedoms you take with Mr. *Trippit*. You have been seen with him at both theatres, at *Ranelagh* assembly, *Vauxhall* gardens, and at *Cuper's* fireworks. Don't imagine, niece, that I am in the least prejudiced, or speak out of any private pique; but, let me tell you, your familiarity with him gives me no small concern, as his character is none of the best; and as he has acted in the most ungenerous manner by two or three very virtuous young ladies of my acquaintance, who entertained too favourable an opinion of his honour. 'Tis possible, as you have no great expectancies from your relations, and he has an annuity, as 'tis reported, of 200*l.* a year left him by his uncle, that you may be tempted to imagine his addresses an offer to your advantage. 'Tis much to be question'd, however, whether his intentions are sincere; for, notwithstanding all the fair promises he may possibly make you, I have heard it whisper'd, that he is privately engaged to a rich, old, doating lady not far from *Hackney*. Besides, admitting it to be true, that he is really intitled to the annuity abovementioned; yet 'tis too well known, that he is deep in debt; that he lives beyond his income, and has very little, if any regard for his reputation. In short, not to mince

mince the matter, he is a perfect libertine ; and is ever boasting of favours from our sex, whose fondness and frailty are the constant topics of his raillery and ridicule.

All things therefore duly considered, let me prevail on you, dear niece, to avoid his company, as you would that of a mad man ; for, notwithstanding I still think you strictly virtuous, yet your good name will be irreparably lost by such open acts of imprudence. As I have no other motive, but an unaffected zeal for your interest and welfare, I flatter myself you will put a favourable construction on the liberty here taken by,

Your affectionate aunt.

LETTER LXXXV.

From a Father to a Son, on his Negligence in his Affairs.

Dear SAMMY,

IT is impossible to express the concern your carelessness in the management of your affairs gives me. Remissness is inexcusable in all men, but in none so much as in a man of business ; the very profession of which implies industry, diligence and punctuality.

Let me intreat you to shake off the idle habits you have contracted ; quit unprofitable company and unseasonable recreations, and apply to your compting-house with diligence. It may not be yet too late to retrieve your affairs. Inspect therefore your gains, and cast up what proportion they bear to your expences ; and then see which of the latter you can, and which you cannot contract. Consider, that when once a man suffers himself to go backward in the world,

world, it must be an uncommon spirit of industry that retrieves him, and puts him forward again.

Réflect, I beseech you, before it be too late, upon the inconveniences which an impoverished trader is put to for the remainder of his life ; which too may happen to be the prime part of it ; the indignities he is likely to suffer from those, whose money he has unthinkingly squandered ; the contempt he will meet with from all, not excepting the idle companions of his folly ; the injustice he does his family, in depriving his children not only of the power of raising themselves, but of living tolerably ; and how, on the contrary, from being born to a creditable expectation, he sinks them into the lowest class of mankind, and exposes them to the most dangerous temptations. What has not such a father to answer for ! and all this for the sake of indulging himself in an idle, a careless, a thoughtless habit, that cannot afford the least satisfaction beyond the present hour, if in that ; and which must be attended with deep remorse, when he comes to reflect. Think seriously of these things, and in time resolve on such a course, as may bring credit to yourself, justice to all you deal with, peace and pleasure to your own mind, comfort to your family ; and which will give, at the same time, the highest satisfaction to

Your careful and loving father.

LETTER LXXXVI.

The Son's Answer.

Dear and honoured SIR,

I return you my sincere thanks for your seasonable reproof and advice. I have indeed too much indulged myself in an idle, careless habit, and had already

already begun to feel the evil consequences of it; when I received your letter, in the insults of two or three creditors, from whom I expected kinder treatment. Indeed they wanted but their own; and I ought only to blame myself, who had brought their rough usage upon me. Your letter came so seasonably upon this, that I hope it will not want the desired effect; and, as I thank God, it is not too late, I am resolved to take another course with myself and my affairs, that I may avoid the ill consequences you so justly and so kindly mention, and give to my family and friends the pleasure they so justly deserve at my hands; and particularly that satisfaction to so good a father, which is owing to him by

His most dutiful son.

LETTER LXXXVII.

To Colonel *R----s* in *Spain*, from his Lady
just before her Death.

My DEAR,

BEFORE this can reach the best of husbands and the fondest lover, those tender names will be no more of concern to me. The indisposition in which you, to obey the dictates of your honour and duty, left me, has increased upon me; and I am acquainted by my physicians I cannot live a week longer. At this time my spirits fail me; and it is the ardent love I have for you that carries me beyond my strength, and enables me to tell you the most painful thing in the prospect of death, is, that I must part with you. But let it be a comfort to you, that I have no guilt hangs upon me, no unrepented folly that retards me; but I pass away my last hours in

in reflection upon the happiness we have lived in together, and in sorrow that it is so soon to have an end. This is a frailty, which I hope is so far from criminal, that methinks there is a kind of piety in being so unwilling to be separated from a state, which is the institution of heaven, and in which we have lived according to its laws. As we know no more of the next life, but that it will be a happy one to the good, and miserable to the wicked, why may we not please ourselves at least, to alleviate the difficulty of resigning this Being, in imagining that we shall have a sense of what passes below, and may possibly be employed in guiding the steps of those with whom we walked with innocence when mortal? Why may not I hope to go on in my usual work, and, though unknown to you, be assistant in all the conflicts of your mind? Give my leave to say to you, O best of men, that I cannot figure to myself a greater happiness than in such an employment! To be present at all the adventures to which human life is exposed; to administer slumber to thy eyelids in the agonies of a fever, to cover thy beloved face in the day of battle; to go with thee a guardian angel, incapable of wound or pain, where I have longed to attend thee when a weak and fearful woman: these, my dear, are the thoughts with which I warm my poor languid heart: but indeed I am not capable, under my present weakness, of bearing the strong agonies of mind I fall into, when I form to myself the grief you will be in upon your first hearing of my departure. I will not dwell upon this, because your kind and generous heart will be but the more afflicted, the more the person for whom you lament offers you consolation. My last breath will, if I am myself, expire in a prayer for you. I shall never see thy face again. Farewell for ever.

LETTER LXXXVIII.

To a young Gentleman on the Death of his Father.

Dear SIR,

I know no part of life more impertinent than the office of administering consolation: I will not enter upon it, for I cannot but applaud your grief. The virtuous principles you had from that excellent man whom you have lost, have wrought in you as they ought, to make a youth of three and twenty incapable of comfort, upon coming into the possession of a great fortune. I doubt not but you will honour his memory by a modest enjoyment of his estate; and scorn to triumph over his grave, by employing in riot, excess, and debauchery, what he purchased with so much industry, prudence, and wisdom. This is the true way to shew the sense you have of your loss, and to take away the distress of others upon the occasion. You cannot recall your father by grief, but you may revive him to your friends by your conduct. I am, &c.

LETTER LXXXIX.

On the Manner of conferring a Benefit.

SIR,

LET others consider you for those ample possessions you enjoy: suffer me to say, that it is your application of them alone, which renders either them or you valuable in my estimation. Your splendid roofs and elegant accommodations I can view without the least emotion of envy: but when

when I observe you in the full power of exerting the noble purposes of your exalted generosity,—it is then, I confess, I am apt to reflect, with some regret, on the humbler supplies of my own more limited finances. To be able to soften the calamities of mankind, and inspire gladness into a heart oppressed with want, is indeed the noblest privilege of an enlarged fortune: but to exercise that privilege in all its generous refinements, is an instance of the most uncommon elegance, both of temper and understanding.

In the ordinary dispensations of bounty, little address is required: but when it is to be applied to those of a superior rank and more elevated mind, there is as much charity discovered in the manner, as in the measure of one's benevolence. It is something extremely mortifying to a well-formed spirit, to see itself considered as an object of compassion; as it is the part of improved humanity to humour this honest pride in our nature, and to relieve the necessities without offending the delicacy of the distressed.

I have seen charity (if charity it might be called) insult with an air of pity, and wound at the same time that it healed. But I have seen too the highest munificence dispensed with the most refined tenderness, and a bounty conferred with as much address as the most artful would employ in soliciting one.

Suffer me, sir, upon this single occasion, to gratify my own inclination in violence to yours, by pointing out the particular instance I have in my view; and allow me, at the same time, to join my acknowledgments, with those of the unfortunate person I recommend to your protection, for the generous assistance you lately afforded him. I am, &c.

F I N I S.

John Lane Photo Book

(Beginning) May 29 1996

