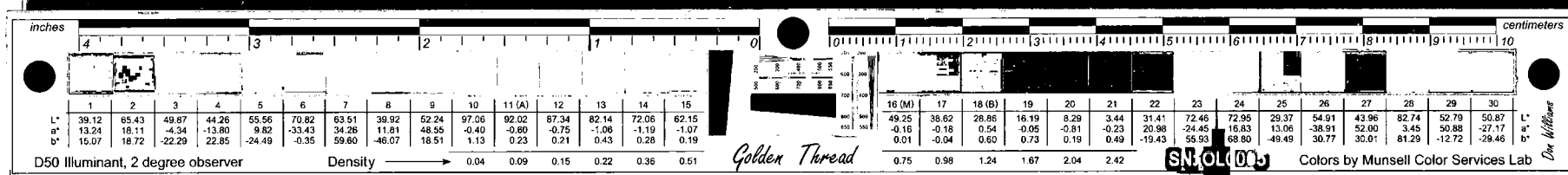




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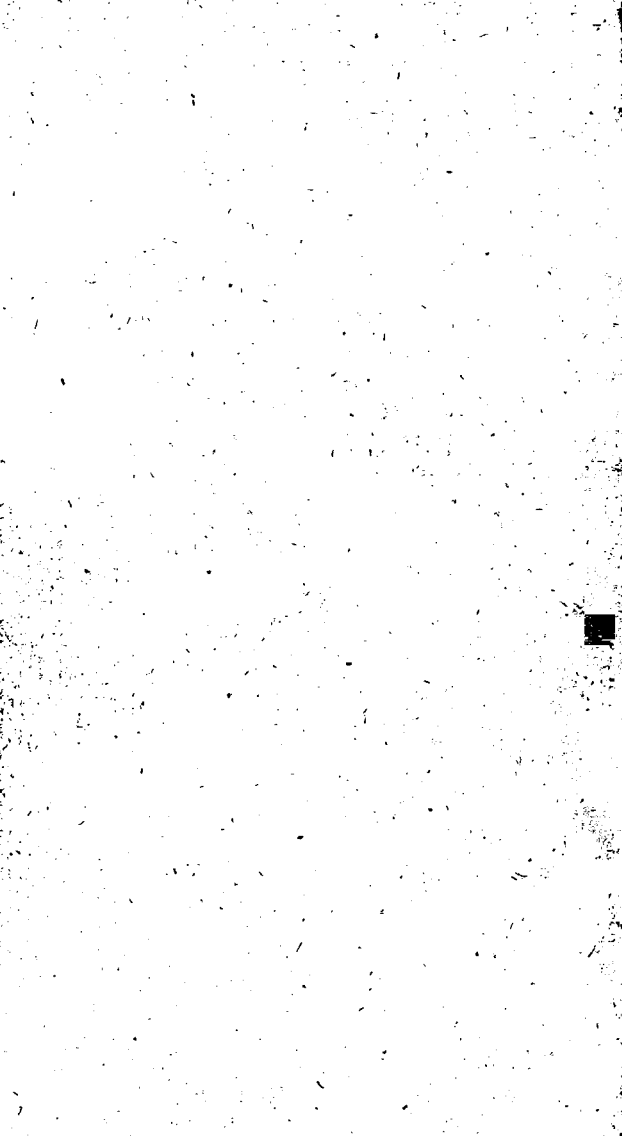
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THE
GODFREY F. SINGER
MEMORIAL
PRESENTED BY
MR. AND MRS. JACOB SINGER





T H E
H I S T O R Y
O F
MELINDA HARLEY,
Y O R K S H I R E.

L O N D O N :

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M,DCC,LXXVII.

SECRET

SECRET

INTRODUCTION.

AS it has been often observed, that the style of most Novels is rather calculated to warm the passions, and to raise the hero or heroine far beyond the level of common life, instead of endeavouring to instruct or inform the mind, by such sentiments and examples, as may be of real use to them in life; so I have, to the best of my poor abilities, pursued an opposite plan, and I may venture to assure my fair readers, that they will at least receive no hurt or prejudice from the perusal of the following pages. The more learned part of my readers will, I hope, show a good natured indulgence to such faults or mistakes in the language as may appear to them, though I flatter

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myself,

iv . INTRODUCTION.

myself, that they will not be viewed with a microscopic eye. As my intentions are good, and none of my characters are drawn to give offence to any particular person ; so I sincerely wish, that none may be disobliged at them.

M E.

MELINDA HARLEY, &c.



LETTER I.

My Dear AMANDA,

ACCORDING to my promise, I now sit down to give you some account of this charming place, where I have already spent three weeks in a most agreeable manner. The house is situated on a small eminence, in the midst of a delicious valley interspersed with trees, and watered by a very fine river, which appears, from the windows, in many separate and unconnected spots. The gardens are laid out with exquisite taste, and contain the choicest fruits and flowers;

in short, wherever you turn your eye, noble woods, spreading waters, and elegant temples strike the view, and exhibit, to a serene and tranquil mind, an image of paradise itself. Sir Robert and Lady Wandle seem to be very fond of each other, and at great pains to show the utmost attention to their guests. Their children obey them through love, being fully convinced that nothing is required of them, but what is conducive to their happiness and instruction. We have had a good deal of company since I came here, and a continued round of diversions, such as balls, concerts of music, fishing, &c. have been the consequence. My spirits are almost exhausted, and I begin to wish for the quieter scenes of life again. I am glad to hear from my aunt Lady Wandle, that we shall soon
be

be enabled to enjoy them, as most of the company are going home to prepare for London. I will soon write you again; in the mean time, believe me with sincere esteem, yours,

MELINDA HARLEY.

Wotton-hall, }
Oct. 16. 1775. }

LETTER II.

To the same.

WE are now, my dear friend, got into the gloomy month of November, when, according to one of the French writers, the English people begin to hang and drown themselves: What pity it is that the sin of suicide should be much more frequent in this our happy Island

Island than in other countries groaning under the iron rod of oppression? We are indeed too often unhappy in spite of all our blessings, and ill deserve the many mercies we enjoy: Most of our wants are artificial, and his happiness is much better assured who has learned to contract his desires, than he who gives them full scope, though he has wherewith to supply them. Were a foreigner, however, to step in amongst us here, he would see nothing of that gloomy disposition, and, I hope, would be inclined to think that the charge made against us was either unjust or too general. Last week most of the company left us; and yesterday we had a visit from Mr Viner, a young gentleman who has lately succeeded to an estate of L. 500 a-year, left him by an old uncle who was an intimate

mate

mate friend of Sir Robert's. The young man seems to have had a genteel education, is very modest, and when he gives his opinion, delivers himself with that degree of diffidence which puts me in mind of Mr Pope's caution on that head, *viz.*

Be cautious always when you trust your sense,
And speak, though sure, with seeming diffidence.

It has been often observed, that the conversation of most people is defective, not so much for want of sense or learning, as for want of good breeding and discretion. I know nothing more agreeable than to be in company with well bred people, who are always endeavouring to please and to gain the favourable opinion of one another; nor is it necessary in
doing

doing this to sacrifice our sincerity ; for though blunt truths need not be spoken at all times, yet there is no necessity, in point of politeness, to speak contrary to the truth. I believe few people are offended at the mere difference of opinion, provided that you do not treat their sentiments with a degree of contempt or ridicule. True politeness, then, must consist in an easy stream of conversation, without vehemence or airs of superiority, and in pleasing without flattery, or contradicting without provoking. Remember me kindly to your mother, and believe me to be, your's sincerely,

MELINDA HARLEY.

L E T-

LETTER III.

To Miss HARLEY.

HOW much am I indebted to my dear Melinda for the two letters with which she has lately favoured me from Wotton-hall. The company of such agreeable people as you describe, cannot fail to cheer the mind, and to make the winter glide insensibly away. How much might we increase the happiness, and sooth the miseries of one another, were we sincerely inclined to it ; instead of which how often does it happen, that, in the midst of ease and affluence, we suffer the demon of discord to sow jealousies, piques, and animosities, amongst ourselves, so as to imbitter our enjoyments,

enjoyments, and impair our pleasures. “Hail ye small sweet courtesies of life,” says the benevolent Stern, for smooth do you make the road of it. I do sincerely agree with you in thinking, that the company of well-bred people is one of the greatest pleasures in life. You must remember Mr Meriot, who was deservedly respected as an honest upright man ; but, as he wanted the gentle virtues, I never could love him ; his own children seemed only to obey him through fear, and were under a constant restraint in his company. Morose and surly, he always gave his opinion as a dictator. Indeed he was generally left at liberty to enjoy his own opinion, though ever so absurd, as few people were at the pains to contradict him. Such people, you’ll observe, are generally indifferent to music

fic and chearful amusements. What is related by Polybius, of two people in Arcadia, is remarkable, the one nation being as much hated for brutality as the other was beloved for benevolence ; and this difference was imputed by him, to the one cultivating a taste for music, and the other despising it : Yet, my dear, this passion for music may be carried too far, as in Italy, where sentiment gives way to the luxury of sound ; the harmony of which is preferred to painting, sculpture, and other liberal arts much more useful. *A propos*, I have heard that Mr Viner has a fine taste for music, and performs sweetly on the German flute ; but for this I rely on your judgment, as your taste and skill in that enchanting art is so generally acknowledged to be just and true by the best connoisseurs.

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noisseurs. I am told likewise, that Mr Viner has a most engaging address, which makes him a great favourite of the ladies. Be sure to let me know if all this be true, and if he has any faults to balance so many agreeable qualities. We have no news here since you left us, except that Miss Sidley, the rich heiress, was last week married to young Lord Modish; it was a mere Smithfield bargain, concluded by their respective parents, so probably in a year or two they will not give sixpence for one another. Tom Rawley is the same good-humoured unthinking creature that ever he was, and, though he has spent most of his fortune, he appears gay and unconcerned; he is really a true christian in this, that he never thinks of to-morrow, but allows

lows it to provide for the things of itself. Adieu, my dear,

AMANDA BEAUFORT.

Morton Abbey, }
Nov. 15. 1775. }

LETTER IV.

To Miss BEAUFORT.

THANKS to my dear Amanda, for her kind letter: I was out walking in the garden, when my maid brought it to me; I knew the hand, and immediately flew to my room, and there feasted upon it. Believe me, nothing can give me greater pleasure than to hear from you. We have been now long accustomed to unbofom our minds to one

B 2 another,

another, with unsuspecting confidence. I have been, for some time past, indisposed with a cold in my head, but thank God, am now well and in good spirits. Sir Robert and Lady Wandle are very kind and attentive, they seem to vie in anticipating my very wishes. The eldest Miss Wandle, though but fifteen years of age, is already qualified to be a companion to any woman: She has studied geography, and has made herself pretty well acquainted with the Roman history, as well as that of her own country, by which she can form comparisons of men and manners. Is it not strange, that young girls in general are so ignorant of the history of their own country, a piece of education, which even the French women, in spite of all their levity and dissipation, are ashamed of

of being deficient in. External accomplishments, such as dancing, dressing, music, &c. are no doubt necessary in a certain degree, but should this be our only care, while little or no pains is taken to cultivate the mind. We cannot always be young and handsome; so surely we should endeavour to qualify ourselves for being reasonable companions, and not bestow our whole attention upon the body, which, in less than a year, may become the prey of worms. We are told, by a late genteel and entertaining traveller, of a remarkable instance of female fortitude, in a Bologna beauty, who, when dying, bequeathed her body to the public view, in order to curb the vanity of others. Mr Brydone saw the skeleton. You desire to know about Mr Viner. It is ve-

ry true, that he has a genteel taste in music, and plays remarkably well upon the German flute. We sometimes have a little concert. Sir Robert and he play first and second, while Lady Wandle and I accompany them with our voices : Mr Viner is deservedly a favourite of all who know him, because he does what he can to keep you in good humour with yourself, while he never seems to over-rate his own talents ; but that which is the best proof of his character, is a generous and compassionate regard for the miseries of his fellow creatures. Show me a man of sensibility and compassion, and I see a thousand good qualities besides. Of this happy disposition in Mr Viner, I will just give you one instance which I had from my aunt. My Lord Squeezum has lately raised his
estate

estate more than double, in consequence of which, five hundred people are oppressed to gratify the luxury of one man ; for you know, my dear Amanda, that avarice must grow on the roots of luxury. Most of the old tenants are gone, and their places are filled up by new comers, who have little or nothing to lose ; so we now hear of nothing but impounding and distraining, while the flatterers and sycophants about court, are continually crying out to his Lordship, that this is owing to their want of industry. Among those unhappy people, was a poor widow, whose husband died two years ago, after a tedious illness, leaving six children, all under age. A disease spread amongst her cattle, and, in a few months, she lost eight of her best cows, and one of her horses returning

turning with a load of lime, sprained his foot, so became unfit for service. In this manner, struggling with grief and poverty, she fell in arrears sixty pounds of her rent, for which all her cattle and implements of husbandry were lately seized in order to be sold, and orders given to turn her out of the farm. Indeed, from what I can learn, my Lord himself was unacquainted with the particulars of her story, for he naturally does not want humanity, but has unfortunately, like many others, given himself up to indolence, and leaves the management to commissioners and factors. Words, however, cannot express the distress of the poor woman and her family, when they heard of their cruel fate. Mr Viner, hearing of her situation, mounted his horse, and, like a guardian angel,

angel, flew to her relief; he paid the debt, and dismissed the hard-hearted messengers of the law; then put into her hands L. 40 more, which in all made out the sum of L. 100, for which, indeed, he took her bill, only with a view to quicken her industry. I believe it may be difficult to tell, which of the two felt the most pleasure, she in receiving, or he in giving; but I will venture to say, that none of the great ever enjoyed so much real happiness, either in the purchase of a fine horse, or in the building of a dog-kennel. We are told, that when the Duke of Luxemburgh was dying, some of his friends complimented him upon his many warlike achievements; to which he answered, that he then would rather have it to say, that he had given a cup of cold water
to

to a person in distress, than to have gained all his victories. Adieu, as I believe that I have left myself little enough time, before dinner, to write to my mother; besides I am afraid that I have tired you; but the time slips away insensibly, when writing to so dear a friend. I ever am, yours,

MELINDA HARLEY.

P. S. As to Mr Viner's faults, I have not yet found them out, though I make no doubt but he has some; for, where is the man or woman free of failings and human weaknesses; happy are they who have balm in their blood, and whose good qualities greatly overbalance their infirmities.

L E T.

LETTER V.

To Miss HARLEY.

YESTERDAY I was made very happy, on my return home from a course of visiting, to find a letter from my dear Melinda. How can you talk of tiring me by the length of your letters! The reading of which, constitutes one of the chiefest sources of unwearyed pleasure to me. There lies the difference betwixt mental and sensual enjoyments; the first, by proper care, is always increasing, while the other, deriving no assistance from the mind, surfeits, and soon cloyes the possessor: In this our kind Creator, as well as in every thing else, manifests his goodness, that man may be led, from a proper
 sense

sense of his own happiness, to a nearer
 and more close resemblance to the Deity.
 Intellectual improvement shuts up the
 avenues to vice, and must gradually tend
 to moral improvement, or to the perfec-
 tion of the will and appetites. What a
 fine character do you give of Mr Viner!
 I begin to suspect, that you are already
 half in love with him ; no wonder, tho'
 in point of birth and fortune, as an only
 child, you have no doubt a title to look
 at much higher game. Your notions
 of female education are very just, and I
 still hope to see a more rational system
 introduced and encouraged by the men.
 It is generally allowed that nature has
 done her part, and that we even excel
 the men in fancy and quickness of ap-
 prehension. We should surely endea-
 vour, then, to wipe off that aspersions
 thrown

thrown upon our sex, by a late celebrated writer, who avers that no flattery is too gross for us, and that he never knew a woman who could either reason or act consequentially for 24 hours together. We have lately had a melancholly scene in this neighbourhood; last Sunday, when the rest of the family were at church, except an old servant woman, Miss Julia Finchley, third daughter to Mr John Finchley of Morton, went off in a post chaise with Captain Brian, second brother to Sir Harry. He is a man of fore honour, and has already fought two duels; the first because his veracity was questioned; and the other, because he was put in mind of a debt which he owed to one of his companions; so making the honourable support the dishonourable part of his character;

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and

and now he proves himself a man of spirit, at the expence of the peace and happiness of a worthy family. The poor old father set off on his return from church, in quest of his daughter; but returned home the next day, having learned from some of the country people that the seducer had provided himself with four horses to his chaise, and was seen driving fast away on the road to London, where probably the poor victim will soon be left to shame and misery, as I hear that the Captain is ordered for America in the spring. I have been to visit Mrs Finchley, and to give her all the comfort that I could. My heart bled for her, I really thought she would have died; for three days she has not tasted victuals, and, with much difficulty, has been prevailed on to take

a glass or two of wine. I am glad to hear, that Sir Harry loudly exclaims against his brother, and swears that he never will see him again, if he can help it. Were all honest men, in a proportionable degree, to show their resentment at such a base action, the villain would indeed be punished; for few men, be they ever so wicked, can stand against the contempt of society; our tongues can avail little, but were it the fashion for every bad man to be ill looked upon, there would be some hopes of a reformation. I have dwelt too long on this melancholly subject, especially as I know your tender feelings. May all happiness attend you, my dear friend,

AMANDA BEAUFORT.

Morton Abbey, }
Dec. 22. 1775. }

C 2 .

P. S.

P. S. My mother joins me in best respects to Sir Robert and Lady Wandle, with the compliments of the season to you all.

LETTER VI.

TO MISS BEAUFORT.

LAST week I received my dear Amanda's favour, the latter part of which has given me the most sensible concern. I have read your account of the Finchley family to Sir Robert and my aunt, who have often since expressed the utmost abhorrence and indignation at the vile seducer. Indeed it frequently becomes the subject of our conversation.

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How much do I pity Mr and Mrs Finchley, as well as the deluded unhappy girl. I make no doubt but the villain made warm protestations of unalterable love, and has promised to marry her in London ; but I suppose he looks upon his promises as free donations, and himself at liberty to put what constructions he pleases upon them. Though I am by no means disposed to palliate his conduct, yet I am afraid that she has been deficient in that modest reserve and retiring delicacy, which rather shuns the public eye, and keeps such men at a due distance. Indeed I always thought her too brisk and forward, instead of showing that sweet sollicitude to please, by every gentle and decent attraction. I have likewise been often surprized at her parents too great indulgence, in allowing

her indiscriminate fondness for novels and romances to be so much gratified. Instead of endeavouring to gain useful knowledge, she always delighted in that kind of reading which warms the fancy, and softens the heart. She was too often gauding abroad, where, instead of conversing with a dignified modesty, her behaviour was too unreserved, which, however innocent in the main, probably at first might encourage her seducer. I am afraid, my dear friend, that you will begin to think me too severe a critic, and with justice did I deliver my sentiments publicly in this manner to all of my acquaintances ; but I delight to unbosom myself to you ; for the keeping all secret is the maxim of a little mind, and a cold heart. As there is a levity and dissipation in the present age, there

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is surely nothing so proper to check this as a proper sense of religion, one of the chief securities for female virtue; and without which we are apt to contract a hard and masculine temper, the most disgusting of all our faults, to men of taste and sensibility. Much depends, likewise, on the proper management of our time, which in general should be divided betwixt reading, working, walking, and genteel amusements; early rising, due exercise, and proper amusements are necessary to preserve health and good humour, while works of taste and fancy, with the assistance of useful books, infuse habits of virtue, and a due sense of decorum. We are told, my dear, that the Romans, before luxury crept in amongst them, dreaded nothing so much as idleness, being more afraid of that than

than of the enemy. You will think, no doubt, that I have got into a very serious moralizing strain, which I believe is partly owing to your last letter, and to the company of Mr Randolph our chaplain here : He is one of the best of men ; chearful without levity ; his conversation is at once entertaining and improving : Most of the country people submit their differences to him ; he spends a great part of his time in visiting the sick and afflicted, by which his own mind is more and more subjected to the feelings of humanity, and he has it in his power to render them much service, by representing their situation to those who are willing and able to give. As the weather has been bad for some days past, Sir Robert sent word to all his tenants in the neighbourhood, that they might come
and

and hear sermon on Sunday last : Accordingly we had a very good audience assembled in the great hall ; and the honest preacher, as far as I could learn, acquitted himself to the satisfaction of all present : He has promised me a copy of his discourse, and, if it can in the least gratify your curiosity, you shall have it sent to you by the first good opportunity. Before I close my letter I must answer you concerning Mr Viner : You say, then, that you suspect me to be half in love with him : Indeed, my dear Amanda, I frankly own that I respect and esteem him, otherwise I should be insensible to real merit ; he is very attentive to every body, and particularly so to me, but you know my sentiments on that head, that I never will suffer my affections to be engaged, without previously acquainting

acquainting my parents ; they have been always good and kind to me, and I should ill deserve a continuance of their tenderness, if I ventured on so material a step in life without their concurrence and approbation. Sir Robert and Lady Wandle join me in best compliments and kind wishes for your health and prosperity, and many happy returns of the new year. Adieu.

MELINDA HARLEY.

P. S. I beg that you may present my best compliments to poor Mrs Finchley, and tell her how sincerely I condole with her : May she accept of the wine and oil which we are all ready to pour into her wounds ; and may that Being, who has thus permitted her to be so severely bruised, endue her with that degree of fortitude

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tude necessary to bear her up in her present distress, until time shall gradually weaken or obliterate the memory of this unhappy incident, and afford her comfort by the prudent and good conduct of the rest of her children.

LETTER VII.

TO MISS HARLEY.

I HAVE read my dear Melinda's kind and sympathizing letter to Mrs Finchley, except that part of it relative to Mr Viner ; she returns you her sincere thanks, and, to prove that she is no ways offended at the freedom you have taken, has requested a copy of your letter, which

which I could not refuse. Mr Finchley, good man, is determined, if possible, to convert the present misfortune to the future good of his family : He has made a diligent search after all the foolish plays and novels in the house, and yesterday he committed them all to the flames ; but, in honour to Richardson, Fielding and Dr Smollet, has preserved Pamela, Clarissa, Tom Jones, Humphrey Clinker, and a few others excepted. All the family who are in health, are to rise at six in Summer, and seven in winter. Every morning one of the girls, by turns, reads aloud a paper of the Spectator ; and, while the rest are at work in the parlour, another reads aloud, an hour before dinner, Hume's history of England. Before supper another paper of the Spectator or Guardian is read again, except on Sunday,

day, when one of Fordyce's sermons to young women is then preferred. Sir Harry has sent a very kind letter to Mr Finchley, professing his readiness to serve him in every thing that lies in his power, and declaring, at the same time, the utmost abhorrence of his brother's conduct. You have excited my curiosity much to see the late sermon which good Mr Randolph gave you at Wotton-hall, so pray make out your promise in sending me a copy by the first opportunity, especially if it is a short one, for you know I never was fond of long sermons ; I am quite in love with the character you give of the good old man. May heaven long preserve so valuable a life, as a blessing to mankind, and may he at last, as he surely will, receive that joyful sentence, " Well done good and faithful servant,

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" enter

“ enter thou into the joy of thy Lord.”
 Your answer concerning Mr Viner shows that good sense and sensibility which always distinguished you ; and, at the same time, is expressive of that tender regard and duty which you owe to the best of parents. May kind providence guide and protect you in all your ways, and may you glide gently down the stream of life, without anxious or uneasy cares ; though a moderate share is, I believe, highly necessary to rouse us into action, and to prevent our thoughts being too much fixed on the vanities of this world. Adieu, my dear friend, and neglect no opportunity of writing to me, I pray.

MELINDA HARLEY.

L E T.

LETTER VIII.

To Miss BEAUFORT.

MY dear Amanda's last letter gave me much pleasure, as by it I find, that Mr and Mrs Finchley are not quite overwhelmed with the blow they have received; but, on the contrary, have introduced such new regulations into the family, as I hope will have the desired effect. We have lately had a wedding here, and a very merry one I do assure you. Sir Robert has a very laudable custom, in my opinion, of giving a wedding dinner to all his tenants as they enter into the matrimonial state. They all consult him beforehand, and the day preceding the marriage, the

D 2 steward,

steward, by Sir Robert's order, carries a suit of cloaths to the bridegroom, and Lady Wandle sends, by one of her maids, a gown to the brîde. Those cloaths are spun in the house, out of Sir Robert's own wool, and are just adapted to the station of those people. The whole expence, Sir Robert assures me, does not cost him above 40 or L. 50 a-year, which is amply made up by the conscious pleasure he receives, in being so instrumental to their happiness. Another good custom he has, which I think wise and political. On the first day of the new year, they all come to pay their rents, when a dinner is prepared for them. After dinner, Sir Robert goes down to them, and enquires particularly about their families ; in the doing of which, he has something kind and obliging

ing to say to every one of them. You may easily guess what effects this must produce ; they all love him, and there is scarce an instance of one of them falling in arrears of rent. Sir Robert has, within these few years, raised his estate from L. 2500 to L. 3000 a-year, being of opinion that a moderate rise of rent stimulates industry, whereas the too general custom of doubling and tripling of rents, destroys it altogether, occasions broken tenants, and even hurts the morals of the people, by blunting the sense of truth and justice in their minds. It is then they have recourse to cunning and chicane, and think that all got off the landlord is fair ; besides, says he, can there be a greater pleasure to a man of an easy and affluent fortune, than to see his tenants with good coats and

smiling faces, enjoying the fruits of their own industry, and paying their rents punctually : But to return to the wedding. After dinner we all went downstairs, and joined our endeavours to increase the happiness of the rustic pair, by dancing, singing, &c. Mr Viner had come before dinner, by express invitation, and brought his German flute ; he played some Scotch tunes, which Lady Wandle and I accompanied with our voices, to the seeming surprize of the rural band, some of whom humbly requested to hear the tune of *I'll never leave thee*, twice repeated. At nine in the evening they left us, and went home quite enraptured with the pains we had taken to entertain them. This young couple are well look'd, and descended of creditable parents ; from what I could learn, they
have

have a very good prospect of peace and happy contentment. Next morning, Lady Wandle acquainted me, at breakfast, that Sir Robert and she intended to pass six weeks in London, and, as they purposed to set out next week, would be glad of my company ; I professed myself much obliged to them, and consented, provided that my parents had no objections ; accordingly I have written to my mother by this post, and have little doubt of their refusing me the jaunt along with such good company. Shall I tell you, my dear Amanda, that, upon my aunt's proposal, I did observe Mr Viner change his colour, but he soon resumed his presence of mind, though I thought he continued graver than usual until he left us to go home, which was about an hour after ; he would not be persuaded to stay
dinner,

dinner, as he said that he had some business upon hand, but would do himself the honour of seeing us before we went away. When he was gone Lady Wandle rallied me a little upon the late appearances, and I endeavoured to laugh it off as well as I could, until Sir Robert came into the room, which broke off the conversation for that time. This moment John Ranby has called, to ask my commands to our house at Dalberry, and I have given him the sermon, which I hope will answer your expectation. Mr Randolph, who has been absent some days on a visit, has often lamented, in conversation, the narrow ways of thinking, so common among the lower class of people, in matters of religion, and the little pains taken by most preachers for eradicating those prejudices, by inculcating the great duties

ties of morality, one after another, upon their minds : Like the Jews of old, he says, they value themselves too much on their privileges, and confine the mercy of God to their standard of faith.—A most ungenerous notion, as if the supreme Being was not the common Father of mankind ! The Gentoos in India, whom we affect to despise, have much more liberal and enlarged ideas of the divine mercy, as they compare heaven to a vast palace situated on an eminence, where are many different avenues, all leading to the same happy place, and open to all nations where there are honest men, who fear God and work righteousness. Indeed Mr Randolph thinks, that our Confession of Faith, in some articles, gives them too much room to indulge those confined notions, and to trust

too

too much to borrowed or imputed righteousness ; though our Saviour himself plainly lays down the terms of our salvation, and shows, that not the hearers only, but the doers of his will, are to expect grace and favour with his Father in heaven. Adieu, my dear friend, for the present, and be assured that you shall hear from me very soon after our arrival in London.

MELINDA HARLEY.

LETTER IX.

To the same.

THOUGH now removed to a greater distance from my dear Amanda, I still think that I enjoy her company and conversation

conversation when I sit down to write to her. In five days after my last letter we set off from Wotton-hall, after I had received an express from Dalberry, with my parents permission; they had not the least objection, but, on the contrary, seemed pleased that I had an opportunity of seeing London in such good company; and, at the same time, my father sent me an order on his banker for 100 guineas. We arrived here on the 18th, after an easy journey of less than four days in Sir Robert's own coach. The day after Mr Viner left us, we had a very genteel card from him, requesting the honour of our company to dinner at Manden house, (for that is the name of the Mansion house left him by his uncle.) The house is small, but very neat and elegant; every thing about it being laid out

out with taste and judgment. Mr Viner, during the two years that he has been in possession of the estate, has made several gravel walks, and other improvements, much for the better. After seeing the building at a proper point of view, we then lost it, and drew near obliquely, during which we were presented with an agreeable variety of different objects. When the coach stopped, Mr Viner came to hand us out, and expressed his satisfaction easily and politely for the honour we had done him at a time when we must necessarily be much engaged in preparing for our London journey. Our dinner did not consist of a profusion of dishes, but of the best kind, and elegantly dressed; while Mr Viner showed an easy, well-bred attention to all his company. After dinner we were conducted

ducted into the garden ; and, while Sir Robert and my aunt were walking a little fast to see the cascade, we stopped near a seat in the midst of a fine walk, from whence we had a view of an artificial sheet of water, one end of which is hid from the sight, no doubt to give greater play to the fancy, while the margin is fringed on one side with alders, and on the other is over-hung with stately oaks and beeches. The house itself appears here to advantage, half surrounded with shrubbery ; with a statue of Venus de Medicis on one side, and Apollo on the other, with his left hand extended, after shooting his arrow. I could not help expressing my approbation of the whole scene ; and then asked Mr Viner the name of the walk we had entered upon, to which he replied with a smile, that it

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was

was the Lovers Walk, and hoped that I approved of the name; I blushed at first, but soon recovering myself, answered, that I supposed the name was not new, but had been given by some former possessor. Mr Viner then told me, with a modest air, that this was a walk of his own making, and that my first question brought the name into his head: Thrice happy, continued he, should I be in the invention, if you, Madam, would deign to give your sanction to it, and condescend to become the mistress of it, and all that belongs to Manden-house. I am much obliged to you, said I to Mr Viner, for the preference you seem to give me, but am, by no means, prepared to decide upon such an important affair, especially in the absence of my parents, without whose concurrence, I never will engage

gage my affections ; but, at the same time, cannot refuse you my esteem. He bowed, commended much my notions of duty and respect for my parents, and hoped that I would give him leave to write to me in London. This I could not refuse ; but Sir Robert and my aunt coming up to join us, put an end to any further conversation on the subject. Mr Viner had ordered tea to be got ready early ; and immediately after we returned to Wotton-hall, where we arrived a little after six, the distance being five miles, but a fine road. That very night I wrote to my mother, informing her of what had passed at Manden, adding that I would not then mention my own opinion of Mr Viner, as Sir Robert and my aunt were much better judges of his merit and character. As our stay

here will be at least six weeks, we are resolved to make a proper use of it, and endeavour to see all that can be seen; and, in order that I may have it more in my power to entertain my dear Amanda on my return, I shall keep a journal of my proceedings. Pray write to me soon, as that, never can fail to increase the happiness of, yours sincerely,

MELINDA HARLEY.

London, }
Feb. 20. 1776. }

LETTER X.

TO Miss HARLEY.

I Was made very happy last Monday, by my dear Melinda's letter from London, where if you enjoy as much happiness
as

as I wish, you will surely get your inclinations sufficiently gratified. On Tuesday I paid a visit at Dalberry, and before dinner your mother and I had some conversation about your late jaunt and visit to Manden-house. She then asked if I knew Mr Viner; to which I answered, that I had accidentally been in his company once or twice, and that I had heard him spoke of as a very pretty gentleman; upon this some company came into the room, which put a stop to any farther ecclaircissement on the subject. Amongst the rest we had at dinner a Mr Ask, who has been a Bristol merchant, and very successful in trade, having made at least a fortune of L. 60,000, some call it much more. According to the custom of the world, you may be sure great attention was paid to him. He bears the

character of a very honest man, but at the same time seems to have a pretty high notion of his own importance, nor has he, in my opinion, sacrificed sufficiently to the graces, without which a man may be rich indeed, but never can be agreeable. I heard him enquire particularly about you, and what stay you proposed to make in London ; probably as he has purchased an estate in this neighbourhood, he now intends to commence Mr Viner's rival, without knowing it, and to be your humble admirer. If so, and that you are persuaded to give him your hand, pray make him first subscribe to his own fallibility, and that he must not exercise his dominion contrary to your privileges within doors. You see what a loose I give to my pen in writing to you ; pray forgive all this nonsense,

but

but should he in reality make proposals, I scarce think that the bait held out will be sufficient to make you swallow it, tho' fixed on a golden hook. I make no doubt, before this reaches, that you will have heard from your mother. Please to present my best respects to Sir Robert and Lady Wandle, and believe me to be, with unfeigned attachment, your's.

AMANDA BEAUFORT.

P. S. I had almost forgot to tell you that the sermon, which you were kind enough to send me, is in general much liked. My mother declares that she will have it printed, if she can get Mr Randolph's consent; his notions of religion are I think free and liberal, tending to eradicate the narrow notions of superstitious and bigotted Christians.

For

For modes of faith let graceless zealots fight,
His can't be wrong, whose life is in the right.

POPE.

LETTER XI.

To Miss BEAUFORT.

I AM afraid that my dear Amanda will think me so much engrossed with the pleasures of London, as to be less mindful of her friends than usual ; but alas, I have far different causes for this alteration in my conduct. Much of my time has been taken up in writing to my father, mother, and to Mr Venir. My father, in particular, speaks much of my cautious and dutiful conduct at Mandenhouse,

house, commends me for not engaging my affections ; and hopes that I will now reap the fruits of my own prudence and propriety of behaviour. After these compliments, he proceeds to acquaint me, that I now have it in my power to be the partner of a man of very good character, and possessed of an ample fortune. Neither he nor my mother mentions his name, but content themselves with saying, that he had seen me several times at York, when I staid there with my cousin Harriot. I suppose this must be the very Mr Ask you mention, but I really remember very little about him, as it is some years ago, probably he was not a man of that weight and consequence then ; but, from what I can recollect, he had nothing genteel or striking in his appearance. In my answer to
my

my parents, I have assured them that I never will give my hand to any man without their consent. That I hope they will rest satisfied with this declaration, until I return home. Mr Viner's letter was couched in the most polite and respectful terms ; and concludes with hoping, that my stay in London will not be longer than was at first intended. In my answer, I again professed my esteem, but gave him no further hopes than I had done before at Manden-house. So much, with regard to myself ; but, O heavens, what a scene am I now to disclose to you. On Tuesday last I received a card, wrote as follows : “ If Miss
 “ Harley has not quite forgot the unhappy Julia Finchley, and will deign to
 “ pay her one visit, before it is too late,
 “ please to follow the bearer.” It was
 just

just after breakfast when I got the card, and I lost no time in ordering a chair, after which I was conducted to Mary la Bon, where I found the unfortunate girl; but, good God, how shall I describe her situation and appearance. She was sitting on a bed, in a mean wretched apartment, her eyes sunk in her head, while every thing around manifested the house of mourning in all its variety. She was scarce able to rise, and began to beg pardon for the trouble she had given me; I replied, that I was extremely sorry to see her in such a situation, and that if I could do any thing to promote her ease or relief, that she might freely command me, as it would be the greatest happiness in my life. How kind are you, my dear Miss Harley, said she, to take such notice of so great a criminal.

criminal. I begged of her to desist from accusing herself, being convinced that her sufferings would fully atone for her offences ; and then requested that she would tell me her story in as few words as possible, that she might not be too much fatigued by the recital : Accordingly she proceeded to acquaint me, that her seducer, after repeated promises of marriage, had prevailed upon her to elope from her father's house, as he had particular reasons for not marrying in the country ; but assured her, that the ceremony should be performed immediately on their arrival in London, and letters should be sent to all their friends to acquaint them of it, when he made not the least doubt but a happy reconciliation would take place immediately. In this manner he imposed on my foolish credulity,

credulity, until we arrived in London, where he at first hired genteel lodging in Brompton-row, for the benefit of the air ; but (as she afterwards found) his money running short, he pretended that, on account of some particular business, he had hired the present lodgings only for a short time. She then told him, that if he performed his promise in marrying her immediately, she could put up with any inconveniency for a time ; but he artfully found one pretence after another, to postpone the ceremony, until seeing my health visibly decline, and finding me often in tears upon his return home, he appeared somewhat moved, and went so far as to name some day next month for the marriage-day. Alas, cried she, I had, by this time, gained so much knowledge of my betrayer,

that I could see little or no appearance of happiness even then. How often did I reflect, with anguish of mind, on the happy and peaceful scenes that I had quitted, when living under the roof of innocence, and under the protection of the best of parents, whose goodness I had thus abused, and whose enjoyments must be embittered by my undutiful behaviour. My dear Miss Harley will excuse my thus wandering from the narrative, to indulge a few gloomy reflexions, which burst in upon the thread of my story. Behold then the sequel: Last week he supped with some of his companions at a tavern in the city, (from whence indeed he never returned sober); and when they were all heated with wine, one of them reproached him with his base conduct, in bringing such misery,

ry upon an unhappy family ; and, after some warm altercation, they both started up, drew their swords in a moment, and, before the rest of the company could interfere, Captain Brian received a mortal wound in the left breast, by his antagonist Mr Billers, who immediately fled. A surgeon was sent for directly, by the master of the tavern or some of the company ; but all his efforts proved ineffectual, grim death had claimed the unhappy man for his prey ; and he, Captain Brian, died next morning, sincerely owning that he had got the due reward of an ill spent life, and requesting the surgeon to acquaint me, that he died a real penitent, imploring my forgiveness. Here she stopped, and wept bitterly, lamenting her own unhappy fate, and the misery which she must have

brought upon her worthy parents. I begged her to take comfort, and insisted on her drinking a glass of wine to support her spirits, until I sent for a physician. Alas, said she, your kindness is in vain, death now can only be my physician ; for though the spirit of man may sustain his infirmities, yet a wounded spirit who can bear ? Still, if I could see my father, said she, and obtain his forgiveness, I should be perfectly resigned, hoping that my example may prove of lasting benefit to many others, and that providence has permitted this for wise ends ; but does my dear Miss Harley think, that an offended parent will condescend to visit so guilty a child. At this my heart overflowed with tenderness, and, after dispatching a servant for a physician, I proceeded to assure her
that

that I made not the least doubt of her father's forgiveness, and if she pleased that I would send an express off immediately for him to come : To this she consented with great satisfaction. I then wrote the following short letter, and having hired an express, sent it off in less than half an hour.

“ Dear Sir,

“ I am just now sitting with your unfortunate daughter Julia, who is very
 “ ill, and begs for God's sake to see you.
 “ Captain Brian is dead. I need say no
 “ more to a man of your sense and humanity.

“ MELINDA HARLEY.”

After this, with great difficulty, I prevailed on Miss Finchley to accept of the

small sum of ten guineas until her father came. We did not wait long for the physician, who seemed to be a man of great humanity ; but, on our going out together, he candidly owned that he had very little hopes, as he suspected that her disorder was far beyond the reach of medicine, but that he should visit her every day, and do all that he possibly could for her recovery : In the mean time he advised a nurse tender to be hired, which was instantly done at the recommendation of the landlady, who promised to attend herself as much as she possibly could, and to see that the patient wanted for nothing. Upon my return home, you may easily guess how much Sir Robert and Lady Wandle were affected with the story, and ever after this, during my visits to Miss Finchley, were
 very

very impatient for my return home to give them an account of my poor patient. On the fifth day the landlady of the house told me, on going in, that she was much weaker, and had twice fainted away the preceding night, which alarmed them so much that she had ventured to send for the physician in the middle of the night, who gave her some cordial which seemed to revive her spirits a little, but that he thought her fast going, and wished that her father might arrive in time : Just when the landlady was giving me this account a chaise stopped at the door, and Mr Finchley stepped out with fear and grief painted in his countenance. I took him into another room, and, as far as I was able, prepared him gradually for the worst ; then, calling for glass of wine, I went up before him

to

to announce his arrival, which seemed to give her new life. A languid joy sparkled in her eyes, and, upon his entering the room, she rose up to receive him—While he caught her in his arms with these words.—O my Julia.—And can you forgive your Julia, said she?—And does my mother forgive me?—And shall I, do you think, find pardon at the throne of mercy?—To all which questions being answered in the affirmative by the good old man, then said she, with a faltering voice, I die content. May you receive as much comfort from each of your other children as you have received pain from me. She then sunk down upon her bed, held out her hand to me, said something about my kindness, which I could not distinctly understand, and soon after expired. Mr Finchley

ley fainted, and we got him removed to another room, where he lay insensible for some time, and, upon recovering his senses, called out,—Thy will be done O God, sanctify those sufferings unto me. Next day Sir Robert waited on him in his carriage, and insisted on taking him home to his house, which the good old man readily consented to, after that Sir Robert had given the necessary orders for a decent burial. May I never have occasion to write to my dear Amanda so melancholy a letter again. My spirits are quite sunk in spite of all Lady Wandle's kind efforts to cheer them. Adieu.

MELINDA HARLEY.

L E T.

LETTER XII.

To Miss HARLEY.

HOW very affecting has my dear Melinda's letter been, and how kind and sympathising have you shown yourself to the unfortunate. Your tender compassion seems to have carried you out of yourself altogether, yet it must have been a sort of pleasing anguish, that sweetly melts the mind towards the unhappy, and will of course terminate in a self approving joy. God has formed us for a social state, as the best security against the ills of life, and the better to enjoy its comforts, and by means of both our nature no doubt attains to its highest degree of improvement and perfection. It is exercise which gives health and
strength

strength to the body ; so nothing tends
 to refine the moral taste so much as the
 cultivating of moral sentiment by choice
 books and choice company ; but above
 all, by repeated acts of humanity, po-
 liteness and hospitality. And I believe,
 it is a great inducement to the exercise
 of benevolence, to view human nature
 in a fair light, and to put the best con-
 struction on one another's actions. Our
 passions are the rude materials of our
 virtue, which kind heaven has given us
 to work up, to polish and refine into a
 divine piece of workmanship. They
 furnish out the whole machinery, the
 calms and storms, the lights and shades
 of life. They give virtue its struggles
 and its triumphs : To conduct them well,
 is merit : To misapply them, is demerit.
 After this train of moralizing, which
your

your last letter insensibly led me into, I must now endeavour to divert your attention, by an account of a very singular affair which happened in our vicinage a few days ago, betwixt Tom Rawley and Rob Waters. They happened both to sup at Mr Robinson's, when the conversation happened to turn upon politics, and the unhappy contest between Great Britain and her Colonies. Mr Robinson very modestly said, that he could not help approving of Sir Robert Walpole's opinion, which was to tax the Americans, by enforcing the navigation-acts, and preserving the monopoly of their trade, which must occasion their wealth and industry to center in Great Britain, without alienating their affections. Mr Waters was very severe against the conduct of the Colonies, and of the Bostonians

nians in particular, spoke warmly of their ingratitude and riotous proceedings. Mr Robinson allowed, that no man in his senses could vindicate the tea-riot, their tarring and feathering of custom-house officers, &c. acts of insolence destructive of that very liberty, for the sake of which they had taken up arms ; yet it might be a question how far their punishment, which involved the innocent with the guilty, did exceed the bounds of moderation ; and whether an entire conquest of them would compensate for the decay of their trade, and the alienation of their affections. We are told, said he, that Solon the famous law-giver at Athens, having heard from some of his friends, that his laws were thought deficient in some respects, and leaning too

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much

much towards the popular prejudices : True, replied he, but they are as good as they can bear. Yet continued Mr Robinson, there is one circumstance which must give every man pleasure, who is a real friend to this country, which is, that we must, by this time, have convinced them by the brisk sale of our manufactures, since their non-importation agreement took place, that we can subsist without them. This being done, he now sincerely wished for such a peace and reconciliation, as would firmly establish the constitutional authority of the mother-country over every part of the empire, and, at the same time, preserve the liberties of America. Most of the company seemed to acquiesce in those moderate sentiments, except Mr Waters, and he expressed himself
 very

very warmly against his friend Tom Rawley, for laughing at the great heat which he seemed agitated with: Upon this, some of the company gave a new turn to the discourse, and the subject of America was not once spoke off again, during that night. Next morning, however, Mr Waters waited upon Tom, and told him that he had used him last night very unlike an old friend, by treating his opinion with so much ridicule, therefore demanded satisfaction. In vain did Mr Rawley assure him, that he was by no means an enemy to his opinion in general, and only thought him wrong in the manner with which he conducted the dispute, especially as Mr Robinson had shown so much moderation on his side, and that it would be ridiculous for two friends to quarrel about such a trifle.

That no doubt there were, as in the time of Charles the first, good people on both sides of the question, who viewed the matters in different points of light, which should induce every well bred man to express himself calmly and politely, so as not to disturb the peace and harmony of the company. This by no means satisfied Mr Waters, who still insisted on satisfaction, or that he would brand him with cowardice : That was too much for any man of spirit to bear. Accordingly they both went out, repaired to the place agreed upon, where, having settled the distance and other preliminaries, Mr Rawley received the first fire which grazed his hat ; then standing firm like a true hero, he called out, Fire your second pistol, Mr Waters. What do you mean, replied the other, when

when I have not received your first fire. No matter for that, cried Tom, you are welcome to fire again, for as yet I feel no inclination, on my side, to take away the life of a friend. This had the desired effect. Mr Waters threw down his pistol, crying out, O Tom forgive my petulance and folly, I am ashamed of my own conduct thus contrasted with yours, how much have you shown yourself superior to me in true courage! Then having both embraced, they returned home in great good humour. Tom has gained immortal renown, every mouth is open in his praise, and I think with reason. Let me know when you are to leave London.

Adieu my dear friend,

AMANDA BEAUFORT.

LETTER XIII.

To Miss BEAUFORT.

MY dear Amanda's last kind letter, and Lady Wandle's constant attention towards me, has helped much to recover my spirits, though good Mr Finchley's situation claimed from us all a far superior regard. Indeed nothing has been wanting that could in the least degree be conducive to his health and recovery ; he kept his bed for some days, during which time Sir Robert's own physician constantly attended him once a day at least. He is now much better, and goes regularly out in the carriage with Sir Robert to take the air. The Supreme Being has, my dear friend, thought

thought proper to blend, in the whole of things here, a vast variety of discordant and contrary principles ; light and darkness, pleasure and pain, good and evil, that we, seeing nothing but imperfection and want of complete happiness in this sublunary state, may be led to seek for it in a future. How much then have they to answer for who seek to violate this last refuge of the miserable, and to remove from the eye of the afflicted this most pleasing hope, this glorious pillar, which support the weakness of humanity, and without which existence would be given to many of the human species, rather as a curse than as a blessing from the hands of our benevolent Creator. Mr Finchley bears his late trial with that degree of fortitude which is equally distant from rashness and cowardice,

ardice, and, though it does not hinder him from feeling, yet prevents him from shrinking under the stroke.—*The Lord giveth, the Lord taketh away; blessed be the name of the Lord*, was the language of the good old man.—Your account of the late duel has entertained us very much; Sir Robert and Mr Finchley are both in raptures with Mr Rawley's conduct; indeed we all think that he behaved nobly, and are glad that his antagonist became so sensible of his own folly; for, next to the doing of a good action, the candid acknowledgment of a fault claims our approbation. Indeed, my dear, I have always thought those quarrelsome wretches to be the pests of society. They are for the most part capacious men, who seek to screen the infamy of their lives under some honourable quarrel.

quarrel. The brave man only can forgive. Cowards have done good actions: Cowards have sometimes fought, and even conquered, but a coward cannot forgive. Mr Finchley says that a proper stigma or degree of ignominy, inflicted on the person of the challenger, would have a much better effect than as the law stands at present. Severe laws are seldom executed, so the guilty escape with impunity; whereas fines and degradations, exacted before Courts of honour, such as are held in Sweden, would have a much better effect in checking those subverters of peace and established order, who not only violate the laws of God and man, but expose the long list of their friends and connections to unspeakable anguish and distress. I believe we shall all set out very soon for the country again,

again, and, as my stay at Wotton-hall will be short, before I go home shall flatter myself with the approaching happiness of seeing my dear Amanda in a week or two at most.

Adieu my dear friend,

MELINDA HARLEY.

London,
April 5th. — }

LETTER XIV.

To Miss BEAUFORT.

WE all arrived in good health at Wotton-hall on the 15th, having in our company a Mr Lanton, who is a relation of Sir Robert's, and lately returned

returned from the East Indies, with a genteel easy fortune, gained at no expence of character, guiltless of rapine and depredation ; he is chearful, frank, and open, gives a fine character of Mr Haskins the present governor, and says that he has done all that a man could do to re-establish the Company's finances under proper management and œconomy ; and at the same time to protect the poor natives from being any longer oppressed by their cruel task-masters, which had occasioned the depopulation of a great part of that once happy country, so deservedly named by Aurengzebe the Paradise of nations. What a reproach to Englishmen, so jealous of their own liberties, thus to have made so wanton an use of their power over the defenceless inhabitants ! This, my dear Amanda,

da,

da, is the dire effects of luxury, which brings along with it an insatiable thirst after riches, which, in the general opinion of the world now, seems to supply the want of every virtue. Poverty alone may be supportable ; but when taxed as it is, with infamy, some of the wisest and best of men have difficulty enough to bear up under this additional pressure. Individuals have amassed ministerial fortunes, while the public is poor, and left to shift for itself ; but death, says our political writers, is just as unavoidable to the political, as to the animal frame. Beggary is the consequence of slavery in some countries, and probably slavery will be the consequence of beggary in ours. Corruption has been long, not only established, but openly avowed ; while the rage of a false and squandering

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ing policy must (if some remedy is not soon applied) bring our liberties into more real, though less apparent danger, than during the reign of prerogative. Mr Lanton likewise informed us, that just before he left Bengal, a gentleman of his acquaintance had, when dying, given positive orders to burn his body, according to the Gentoo fashion, which was done accordingly: Happily for his wife, she was not of the Gentoo religion, to burn along with him. We asked, what could be the origin of so barbarous a custom; to which Mr Lanton replied, that, in the Bedang or Gentoo bible, there is this remarkable expression, *viz.* “The woman who dies with her husband, shall enjoy eternal felicity with him in the next world.”—Besides, though they are not forced by violence

to burn, they are, says he, in a manner forced by custom ; and shame, the greatest of all evils in this life, would be their portion, if they refused. Thus stimulated by the fear of shame in this world, and by the hopes of happiness in the next, it is no great wonder that the voice of nature is stifled, and common sense set at defiance. In every thing else, he says, that their religion inculcates the purest morals ; when old people, past all hopes of recovery, and lingering under cruel pains, are carried down to the Ganges, and delivered over to the god of that river. Their humanity to the brute creation is so great, that most of their sects live on milk, rice and vegetables. They believe in transmigration, and that after certain periods of expiation, according to their different offences, they will

will all be made happy in the fruition of the Deity, who cannot delight in the continued misery of his creatures, nor would he have created but to bless. After this, Mr Lanton surpris'd us by his account of the savage ferocity of the tygers in that country, who frequently swim from the banks of the river, and destroy the unhappy boat-men drowned in sleep. They are such firm predestinarians, says he, that they will not be at the pains to set a watch; for when awake, they have a particular cry, which they use, called the *tyger cry*, which effectually frightens him away. It is an undeniable fact, that when a Dandy or common rower is carried off by a tyger, his companions place a small stick on the opposite bank, in the shape of an oar, while a small rudder is placed on the

like fatal accident happening to the Mangy or pilot, thus denoting the accident to others passing that way. Yesterday, a few hours after our arrival, we had a visit from Mr Viner. I thought that he looked much graver than usual. None but Lady Wandle and I were in the drawing-room ; and, upon her being called out for some time, he told me that he was much afraid, that a more rich and perhaps a more fortunate rival had got already my parents consent, and only hoped that no persuasions would induce me to give my hand in barter for a shining fortune, unless that I thought him every way besides worthy of my regard and esteem. I assured him that he had little cause to be uneasy on account of that gentleman, who never would be a dangerous rival to him : That

I hoped my parents would pay a greater regard to realities than appearances ; and that as happiness was the object of all our pursuits, I could not suppose that they would sacrifice the substance for the shadow. Finally, my dear Amanda, I consented never to bestow my affections upon any other man, frankly owning that he, Mr Viner, had acquired the highest place of regard and esteem in my breast. At the utterance of these last words, he seemed quite transported from the depth of fear and doubt, to an excess of hope and joy. He said, that, after so gracious a declaration, he would not allow himself to harbour any future suspicion of my conduct, as contrary to his happiness ; nor would he even suppose, that my parents would persist in recommending any man contrary to my

own choice. He then suddenly snatched a kiss from my hand, crying out, let this then be the seal of our mutual constancy. Soon after, Lady Wandle entered the room again, and, in a little time, we were joined by Sir Robert, Mr Finchley and Mr Lanton. Never did I see Mr Viner to such advantage: To real modesty he joined a polite easy assurance: The graces surrounded him, and lent him all their assistance, so that he expressed himself with the utmost propriety and perspicuity on every subject that was introduced; while, at the same time, he listened with a well bred attention to every one else as they spoke: In short, we spent the evening in the most agreeable manner, even Mr Finchley seemed to forget his late misfortune, and gave way to his natural cheerfulness

ness and good humour. After supper, the conversation turned upon land and new leases, when Mr Viner informed Sir Robert, that his leases being to expire next year, he had sent for his tenants, and told them, that, after the most impartial inquiry and mature deliberation, he found that his estate could bear an advanced rent of L. 150 a-year, without the least oppression: That if they chose to continue in possession, they might consider upon it; and if the proposal was reasonable, they had no more ado than to proportion the new rise to their respective farms. They unanimously agreed to the proposal, and have since, he added, laid on the proportion to the satisfaction of all concerned. Early next morning, Mr Viner left us; and, before dinner, my father arrived,
and

and told me that my mother was impatient for my return home, as she had been indisposed for some time with a severe cold ; so we set off to-morrow for Dalberry. I shall not close my letter until I get there.

Wotton-hall, }
 April 16. — }

Yesterday, my dear Amanda, I got safe to Dalberry, where I found the face of nature all smiling, the meadows crowned with verdure, and the trees putting forth their leaves, rejoicing in the beams of the sun ; but alas I cannot participate in the general joy. My mother and all the servants seemed extremely happy at my return, and asked me a thousand questions about my jaunt to London. After dinner my mother took me into
 her

her closet, and then began by telling me what a fine prospect I had, in consequence of the proposal made by Mr Ash, and how happy both she and my father were at the prudent and cautious conduct which I had shown at Mandenhouse, the owner of which had too small a fortune to be any temptation to me ; and concluded by saying, that she made no doubt but I would agree in thinking that such an offer was too good to be rejected, especially as he, Mr Ash, had at the same time an irreproachable character. To all this I only answered, that I never considered riches as the chief ingredient in the scale of happiness, and that it was of too much consequence to my future welfare to decide hastily upon. My mother appeared to be surprized at the coldness of my answer, but observed,

at

at the same time, that neither she nor my father had any intentions to hurry the affair on too fast, though she was persuaded that all our friends would think it the most extravagant madness to refuse such an advantageous offer. Thus, my dear friend, you see what opposition I have reason to expect in the completion of my wishes. Pray come and stay with me some days, as I want much to see you. I find that next week Mr Ash intends me the honour of a visit; he has already sent a card to my father to enquire after my health. Remember me kindly to your mother, and believe me,
Yours most sincerely.

MELINDA HARLEY.

Dalberry, }
April 17. — }

L. E. T.

LETTER XV.

To Miss HARLEY.

YESTERDAY your servant brought me your kind, entertaining letter, which I delayed to answer until this morning, having desired John to tell you that I would send my own servant with it. I have been a good deal fatigued for some days past in attending my mother, who has been very ill with an Erysipelas in her face, and a degree of fever at the same time, owing, I believe, to her catching cold. She is now better, and desires me to thank you kindly, in her name, for your attention towards her; I do not know but it is well for you that she is not somewhat younger, otherways she might become a dangerous

rous

rous rival to you. She dined one day lately at Mr Robinson's, in company with Mr Viner, and she has been raving about him ever since, as the most engaging, attentive, well bred man, that she has seen of a long time. *A propos*, have you heard that Miss Amely, second daughter to Mr Robinson, has made a very foolish marriage with a Mr Thornberry, contrary to her father and mother's express desire and intreaty. The man has made money by farming, and makes a tolerable appearance when he comes abroad. He is allowed to be an honest man in his dealings, but is very deficient in his temper to those who live with him, and are anyways dependent upon him. I hear that she has already requested of her father not to pay up her portion, which is L. 1000, but to reserve it for her future maintenance,

maintenance, as she thinks it impossible to live with him. I have not yet learned all the particulars, only I understand that it will be difficult for her father to get this accomplished, unless that Mr Thornberry gives his consent. Thus, poor woman, does she reap the fruits of her own folly and obstinacy. She was indeed past the prime of youth, but surely marriage is not essential to happiness ; and I know nothing that can render a woman more despicable than this notion of marriage, being absolutely necessary ; besides, it is the very way to prevent it, and experience shows, that many women have passed through life in a very happy, easy, and respectable manner, without entering into the matrimonial state. Thank God that the place of my nativity was not amongst those Gentoos you mention,

I

and

and that I run no risk of being burnt. A death that I abhor as much as Falstaff abhorred to drown ! But, jesting apart, what reason have we to be thankful, my dear Melinda, for having our lot cast in such an enlightened age, and in a country so justly renowned for arts and sciences, but above all for civil and religious liberty. May kind heaven long preserve those invaluable blessings to us ; and may our rulers be guided by a sincere love for their country, and never led aside by a spirit of avarice, or by the blind impulses of ungovernable passion. I love and admire the character of Mr Hastings the present governor of Bengal—May he meet with a reward equal to his merits. I commend your frank and sincere conduct towards Mr Viner, and I still hope to see you both happy, in spite of those

unfavourable

unfavourable circumstances that you mention. Pray keep up your spirits, for all will yet end well. If possible I will see you to-morrow, though I can make no stay with you at present. I will now conclude by advising you strictly to adhere to your own maxim, which is never to marry any man contrary to your parents consent, and far less to give your hand to a man whom you can neither love nor esteem. Nothing but the most indigent circumstances, joined to the probability of being highly useful to a set of deserving relations, can, in my opinion, tempt any reasonable woman to make such a sacrifice of herself, nor even then, unless he be a man of a fair character. Your parents are too fond of you to persist in recommending any man contrary to your own inclinations ; and

you are too dutiful, and have too just a sense of your own dignity, to think of any man who is not entitled to the approbation and esteem of the good and virtuous part of mankind, and every way qualified to make you happy. Thus circumstanced, you will agree in time, to take comfort from your unalterable friend,

AMANDA BEAUFORT.

L E T.

LETTER XVI.

To Miss BEAUFORT.

HOW sorry am I that your stay here was so short. Never did I stand more in need of my dear Amanda's presence, to whom I can with safety unbo-
 som myself at any time. Since you left me, Mr Ash has been here again : You know that he had, in his first visit, satisfied himself with paying me a particular attention, without any declarations of love. At his second visit, my father proposed that we should all take a walk in the garden before dinner, as the weather was so inviting. After some time the rest of the company fell behind, and turned round to another walk, Mr Ash then

began, in a decent enough manner, to acquaint me of his intentions, hoped that I did not take amiss his first mentioning it to my parents, especially as I was then in London. That he was very happy in obtaining their approbation, and hoped that this circumstance would induce me to lend a favourable ear to his proposals, especially as he understood that my affections were not otherwise engaged. I sincerely thanked him for the honour he had done me, and professed to retain a grateful sense of the preference which he was so kind as to bestow upon me ; that nevertheless I should no longer deserve his esteem, if I did not candidly own that my affections were so far engaged to another man, that I could not in honour betray his interest and happiness. I assured him, at the same time, that I did
not

not harbour the smallest resentment at his (Mr Ash's) conduct in having signified his intentions to my parents first, and that I sincerely wished him happy in a better choice. He seemed much surprized, and expressed his disapprobation of my father's conduct (by giving him so much encouragement) in a manner that I thought was not altogether genteel ; I then undertook to justify my father, by assuring him that neither he or my mother were then acquainted with all the circumstances, so could not mean to deceive him ; but, on the contrary, were warmly attached to his interest. He then requested to know if he might take the liberty to enquire the name of his rival ; I frankly named Mr Viner. Mr Viner, Madam, said he, surely you do not intend to throw yourself
away

away upon a man of his small fortune ! I don't know, Sir, replied I, what you mean by throwing myself away, as Mr Viner has an easy competency of his own, and I think the qualities of his mind abundantly supply the deficiency of his fortune. Madam, replied he, with a kind of stately air, I beg pardon, and just as he had finished these words, a servant came to inform us that dinner was ready. We all walked in, but in spite of the great attention shown to Mr Ash during the time of dinner, he appeared disconcerted and out of humour, destitute of that sweetness of temper and complacency of behaviour, the fruits of a liberal education, he appears to measure his regard for people, according to the weight of their purses, or to a ready compliance with his will. Very soon
after

after dinner, he ordered his carriage to be got ready, and then took his leave. My father followed him out, and I observed from the window of my room that they conversed for some time together. After Mr Ash was gone, my father came into my room, with a severity of countenance new to me. He began by upbraiding me in sharp terms for my dissingenuous conduct, in writing from Wotton-hall such assurances of not having engaged my affections, when I knew the contrary, and of giving Mr Ash such a reception at present as to make him depart in anger. I begged of my father to command his temper, and again assured him that I never would give my hand to Mr Viner, or to any man without his consent; but hoped, that he would show the same regard for
my

my peace in not forcing my choice : In short, I said every thing that I could think of to mollify him, but all in vain. He left me abruptly in a passion, though he saw me all in tears ; soon after, my mother appeared, and the same mortifying scene was repeated, adding, that if Mr Harley or she had encouraged a man advanced in years, or a man of weak parts, who could not acquit himself in company with propriety, that in this case, great allowances would be made for such an act of disobedience ; but, in the present situation, it must appear to every body as downright obstinacy ; especially, as I had confessed before I went to London, that my affections were not engaged. What could I say, my dear Amanda, to parents otherwise good and tender, but at present blinded by prejudice

prejudice

prejudice and false appearances. The voice of reason was ineffectual. I fell at my mother's feet, and besought her compassion and intercession with my father; she seemed to be moved and softened for a little; then frankly owned, that if she undertook my defence, she was much afraid that it would provoke my father to a greater degree; and besides, says my mother, with what face, Melinda, could I undertake to argue against myself, for I was always of the same opinion with your father in this affair, and we scarce doubted of your ready acquiescence, after your last letter from Wotton-hall: I beg, therefore, that you would again take your own conduct into consideration, and, after the many proofs that we have shown of our tender affection for you, do not force your
 parents

parents to an alteration of their conduct towards you, by persevering in obstinacy, and manifesting a total disregard to their wishes and desires, which terminate in your welfare. I am persuaded, added she, that, after mature deliberation, you will of yourself come to a more reasonable way of thinking, and see your own interest in a proper point of view. After this, she rose and left me to my own thoughts; but how shall I describe the pain and anguish which I suffered all that evening. I began to be afraid, that I could not long bear up my spirits under the frowns and displeasure of those to whom I owed my birth, education, and all the happiness that I had hitherto enjoyed. On the other hand, I detested the thoughts of betraying my engagements to one of the most deserving men,

who

who had no other fault but that of a small fortune, in comparifon to his rival. In this dilemma, I determined in my own mind to continue as I am, fingle, without changing my condition ; and furely my parents will, I hope, be at leaft fatisfied, and require no more of an unhappy child. I did not clofe my eyes all night. Adieu, my dear Amanda, and, if poffible, come and ftay with me fome days : There is no body at prefent, that I wifh fo much to fee.

MELÍNDÁ HARLEY.

P. S. This moment I have a card from Mr Viner, to enquire after my health, and to inform me of his intentions to pay us a vifit to-morrow. I have excufed myfelf at prefent, as being

K indisposed,

indisposed, and have desired him to postpone his visit until Wednesday. Of this I immediately acquainted my mother, being determined to act openly.

M. H.

LETTER XVII.

To the same.

THE reasons given by my dear Amanda, for delaying her visit, are too just for me to find fault with, and as you give me hopes of being here on Saturday next, I shall endeavour to curb my impatience as well as I can. On Wednesday, as expected, we had a visit from Mr Viner: He has bought a new carriage, and his dress was elegant, but not gaudy, his whole behaviour and appearance was so much like a man of taste, that

that my mother, in spite of her prejudice, could not refuse her approbation of it : After all, my dear, he found but a cold and formal reception from my parents ; but as he knew the reason, and was well acquainted with my sentiments, he seemed not so much mortified as one might have expected. Before he went away, he found an opportunity to tell me, that he had accidentally met with Mr Ash, at the house of Squire Philips, on Monday last, where he, Mr Ash, behaved in a haughty and insolent manner towards him : That, however, nothing had passed which could be called a real affront, and that he, Mr Viner, satisfied himself, with opposing his rival's opinion oftner than he otherwise would have done, purely to mortify his arrogance ; in the doing of which he, Mr Viner,

was very happy in the thoughts of having commanded his temper, and to have delivered his sentiments in such a manner, as to procure a majority of the company upon his side of the argument; and that he attributed his own cool behaviour and presence of mind, to what had in effect happened to Mr Ash at our house, which he shrewdly suspected then from his rival's apparent peevishness, and want of temper. After a dish of tea, Mr Viner took his leave in a polite easy manner, giving us to understand that he was engaged to pass the evening at Mr Robinson's. My father still continues in his former notions, and in his strong prejudice in favour of Mr Ash; and though my mother does not express herself so warmly, yet she always concurs with him in opinion, still
 expecting

expecting that I will (as they call it) see my own interest and advantage at last. Alas, my dear friend, how few seem inclined to follow the plain dictates of reason ; and though possessed of every thing necessary for real happiness, yet by creating artificial wants, and endeavouring to grasp at a shadow, while they neglect the substance, thus disquiet and torment their own minds, and live more to other people than to themselves. My spirits are so low that I can proceed no farther, so must now lay down the pen.

Farewell, my dear Amanda,

Yours, &c.

MELINDA HARLEY.

LETTER XVIII.

To the same.

O My dear Amanda, to what new scenes of distress am I reserved! Two days after you left us, I had another visit from Mr Ash. He came in a coach and four, attended by three servants in livery. After the usual compliments were over, and that some time had been spent in conversation about the weather, politics, &c. my father and mother left the room, one after the other, no doubt by design. Mr Ash then began, by paying me some very flattering compliments, and concluded, by expressing his hopes, that I would at last be propitious, and yield to the joint entreaties of himself and my own parents,

whose

whose goodness and tenderness I had always done justice to before, and who could have no other view but my happiness and prosperity: Finally, that nothing was wanted but my smiles and approbation to make him the happiest of men. I answered, that I was entirely satisfied with his good intentions, as well as those of my beloved parents; yet thought myself in some measure a judge of what so nearly concerned me, and hoped that my former conduct would be justified in the end: That he Mr Ash was no doubt worthy of a better partner: That I was much obliged to him; but never would alter my mind while Mr Viner lived; therefore requested of him as a man of honour, that he would no longer persist in a fruitless pursuit, which could answer no other end but to give us a great deal
of

of uneasiness. He still persevered, notwithstanding, (no doubt emboldened by the interest that he held with my parents) and I continued to refuse in as well bred a manner as I could, but at the same time with firmness of mind. In this manner we spent an hour at least, when I was happily relieved by one of the servants opening the door, to acquaint us that dinner was upon the table. Our appearance in the dinning-room, was accompanied with such an air of silence and solemnity ; that, had a stranger pop'd in upon us, he would have been very apt to take us for a small knot of quakers waiting for the spirit to move us. Happy should I be if nothing worse had ensued after Mr Ash left us ; but the inclosed letters which I received on the very day following, will serve to give you a proper notion

tion of that dreadful state of anxiety to which my mind is reduced. They have increased my love and esteem for Mr Viner, and of course my fears for his safety. He has, indeed, with Roman fortitude, declined the mad thoughts of going out of his way to fight a duel; but should they meet, good God! my soul shudders at the horrid consequences! O my dear, that reasonable creatures, and those too, professing a religion which breathes nothing so much as peace, love, and even the forgiveness of injuries, should, in those enlightened times, continue to follow this Gothic custom, founded upon ignorance and barbarity. Never did I spend such another night as the last. I dreamed of nothing but naked swords and ghastly wounds; I thought that Mr Viner appeared to me with a
pale

pale and languid look, yet did he utter the following words: Fear not, my charmer, said he, for we still shall be happy. Have you any faith in dreams! and if you have, what can this mean? Does the prediction relate to this or a future state? I am weary of conjectures! and shall now lay down my pen, trusting that kind providence will interpose to avert the impending danger.

Adieu, my dear Amanda,

MELINDA HARLEY.

P. S. I really think that my parents are softened, since they read the following letters.

L E T.

LETTER XIX.

TO MR VINER.

“ SIR,

“ **Y**OU cannot surely be ignorant of
 “ the insuperable difficulties that
 “ lie in your way. Mr and Mrs Harley
 “ are determined against you, and the
 “ beauteous prize herself declares that
 “ she never will be yours without their
 “ consent. Cease then from a vain pur-
 “ suit ; or let the fate of arms decide.
 “ If you prefer this last alternative, I do
 “ expect that you will prove yourself a
 “ man of honour, by meeting me any day
 “ you please to mention next week, at
 “ the Crown and Anchor Tavern in
 “ London, where the time and place
 “ shall

“ shall be agreed upon ; because, for
 “ many reasons, I think it would be pro-
 “ per to remove from the country be-
 “ fore hand.

“ None but the brave deserve the fair!

“ I am, SIR,

“ Your most humble servant,

“ R. A S H.”

L E T.

LETTER XX.

To Mr A S H.

SIR,

“ I Am juſt now favoured with your
 “ I card, and ſhall loſe no time in an-
 “ ſwering it. Know then, haughty Sir,
 “ that my principles are againſt duelling,
 “ both as a wicked and a fooliſh cuſtom.
 “ I hold it to be a crime to go out of
 “ my way for that purpoſe, and to de-
 “ ſert the ſtation wherein providence has
 “ placed me. True courage, in my
 “ opinion, does not conſiſt ſo much in
 “ expoſing our lives wantonly, as in per-
 “ ſevering in the diſcharge of our duty,
 “ and in not trembling at the breath of
 “ fools. Of the three laws, *viz.* That
 “ of God, of politic Societies, and of
 “ Faſhions, I cannot, without renoun-
 L “ cing

“ cing my common sense, allow the two
 “ first to give way to the last. You call
 “ upon me to prove myself a man of ho-
 “ nour ; to which I answer, that I never
 “ can have any notion of honour as di-
 “ stinct from virtue ; and accordingly,
 “ when Marcellus built the temple of
 “ Honour at Rome, the way into it was
 “ only through the temple of Virtue.
 “ Such notions as separate the man of
 “ honour from the man of virtue, must
 “ be pernicious to society ; nor can in-
 “ decencies be cured by them : But,
 “ pray Sir, do not presume that this
 “ kind of philosophy takes its rise at pre-
 “ sent from any fear of you. I shall
 “ continue my visits to Dalberry, and
 “ shall probably meet you at public pla-
 “ ces oftner than usual ; you know my
 “ road. I shall take care to be provided
 “ with

“ with the means of defence, and if you
 “ should pretend to obstruct my passage,
 “ I do expect to make you pay the price
 “ of your temerity. The prize in dis-
 “ pute is of too much estimation in my
 “ eyes ever to give up, but at her own
 “ express desire ; and while she herself
 “ continues to favour me with her e-
 “ steem, I trust that, by the help of God,
 “ I shall overcome all other difficulties.

“ I am, SIR,

“ Your most humble servant.

“ HENRY VINER.”

LETTER XXI.

To Miss HARLEY.

MADAM,

I Have taken the most early opportunity to send you inclosed a copy of Mr Ash's letter to me, and my answer to it. Happy shall I be, if my conduct in this affair shall meet with your approbation, which I make no great doubt of, from my previous knowledge of your sentiments on the subject of duelling.

I am,

MADAM, with respect,

Your most obedient servant.

HENRY VINER.

L E T-

LETTER XXII.

To Mr VINER.

SIR,

YOU can be no stranger to my opinion of duelling, and, had you acted otherwise than you have done, it would have given me much more uneasiness; nor could I, contrary to my judgment, have preserved the same degree of esteem for you that I have hitherto professed. Continue, Sir, to act up to the dictates of your own conscience, and be persuaded that your conduct will be approved of, at least by all the wise and virtuous part of mankind. I have no more to add, but my assurance that your safety and welfare is dear to me.

I am, SIR,

Your most humble servant.

MELINDA HARLEY.

LETTER XXIII.

To Miss HARLEY.

HOW much am I indebted to my dear Melinda for the pains she has taken to inform me of every circumstance relative to her present situation, and for the confidence she is pleased to put in me, which never shall be abused! You will, perhaps, before this reaches to hand, have heard of the strange accident which has happened to Mr Ash, and of Mr Viner's noble behaviour upon that occasion; but as some of the circumstances may not be told you, and others may be misrepresented, I shall now endeavour to give you as clear and concise an account of the whole as I can recollect,

lect, having received my information from one of the gentlemen who was upon the hunting party that day. Mr Viner, it seems, had not intended to have been of the party, but, hearing that Mr Ash was to be there, he postponed some business, and threw himself in the way, to convince Mr Ash, no doubt, that he was determined to act up to that line of conduct which he had expressed in his answer to the challenge. They were both well mounted in pursuit of a stag; but the chace was long, and Mr Ash being a heavy man, his horse was fatigued so, that in jumping a ditch he missed the leap, and fell in upon his rider. Mr Viner, who happened to be at a small distance, saw the accident, claped spurs to his horse, and instantly flew to his relief. When he came to the side of the ditch

ditch he dismounted, and having with great difficulty, raised the horse, so as to squeeze in a piece of wood below him, he then, by degrees, after repeated efforts, drew out the body of Mr Ash, who was at first quite insensible ; Mr Viner's servant coming up soon after, assisted his master to draw up the body, thus bruised and covered with mud, to the edge of the bank, where, after applying a smelling bottle to his nose for some time, and chaffing his temples, he was so far restored to his senses as to know the person who had taken such care of him. O Mr Viner, said he, with a low voice, I have not deserved such kind service from you.—I am very sorry, replied Mr Viner, for this unlucky accident, but am so far happy, at the same time, that I was near enough to be of some use to you. Mr Ash

Ash gave his hand to Mr Viner, expressed a warm sense of gratitude, but added, that he believed it was all over, as he suspected that some blood vessel had burst within. In the mean time Mr Viner's servant galloped off to a chaise within sight, and having advised the company within of the accident, they immediately came out, and ordered the driver to fly off to Mr Ash, and to carry him home. Mr Viner then went with him, and supported him in the chaise, having next sent away his servant for a surgeon, who arrived at Newhall (the name of Mr Ash's house) soon after the chaise. Mr Ash was immediately bled, but continued to complain much of his head, and of a great weight and oppression in his breast. A new express was sent off to York for a physician and an attorney,

and

and before night Mr Ash had settled all his affairs. Mr Viner, and my dear Melinda are among the legatees, and are each of you to receive L. 5000. He spent the night in great agony, and died early next morning. Mr Viner, I hear, has caught cold, owing to the great heat that he had put himself to in relieving Mr Ash from under his horse, and then sitting by him for some time afterwards exposed to a cold north wind before the chaise arrived ; but I hope that he will soon get the better of it. Be sure to write to me soon, and believe me to remain with inviolable attachment,
Yours,

AMANDA BEAUFORT.

L E T.

LETTER XXIV.

To Miss BEAUFORT.

WE had indeed heard some confused and indistinct accounts of the melancholy accident which had befallen Mr Ash ; but my dear Amanda's letter has cleared all our doubts. The testimony that you say Mr Ash has given of his regard for me, is much beyond what I had any title to expect from him. To how many fatal accidents are we subjected to in this short transitory state. Your letter has brought the following passage into my mind from Mr Young's Night Thoughts.

In human breast what bolder thoughts can rise,
Than man's presumption on to-morrow's dawn,

&c.

You

You will, no doubt, however, in the midst of this gloomy scene, allow, that I must necessarily derive great comfort, when I tell you, that the whole of Mr Viner's conduct of late is much admired by my parents. They have consented frankly that I should send off my servant early in the morning to enquire after his health. I am unalterably yours,

MELINDA HARLEY.

LET-

LETTER XXV.

To the same.

ALAS my dear Amanda ! the servant is returned and brings word that Mr Viner is confined to bed with a fever; his sister is arrived to take care of him. She writes that he was very warm and uneasy all night, but seemed very happy at the receipt of my card, and desired her to write, that he hoped in a day or two, to answer my kind enquiries with his own hand ; however, they have, by the surgeon's desire, sent for a physician. I do not like those appearances. My spirits are much agitated.

Adieu, my dear Amanda,

MELINDA HARLEY.

M

LET.

LETTER XXVI.

To the same.

GOOD God! To what a painful task am I reduced, the day after I wrote to my dear Amanda last, Mr Viner continued much the same, but since that, the fever is increased. Last night he was delirious, and in his ravings often mentioned my name. My mind is on the rack. O join with me in prayers for his recovery.

Adieu, Adieu,

MELINDA HARLEY.

LET-

LETTER XXVII.

To the same.

WE are much obliged to Miss Beaufort for her kind enquiries, ~~my~~ dear child begs me to write for her, as she cannot support her spirits sufficiently to take up a pen. She is still in bed, and has taken nothing all this day, but one glass of wine; Mr Harley and I are using every means to give her comfort, and to support her spirits. We have assured her, that if God shall please to restore Mr Viner to health again, no body else shall be allowed to interfere in giving the least interruption to their mutual happiness. The servant is returned from Manden-house, and brings word, that Mr Viner is indeed very bad, but that Mr

Manley his physician, had not yet given up all hopes of his recovery, and that the crisis of the fever was now expected. May kind heaven pity and relieve us all with better news to-morrow; for should he die, Mr Harley and I dread the consequence. For God's sake come over and comfort my dearest child, if you possibly can leave your mother. Melinda often mentions her dream, and seems distracted betwixt hope and fear. In what a dreadful state of anxiety and suspense must we continue for some time yet; but still hope, the sweetest passion of the mind, and given to us by our kind Creator to supply the absence of every other enjoyment, comes often to my relief, and bids me not despair.

Adieu,

DEBORAH HARLEY.

LET.

LETTER XXVIII.

To the same.

REJOICE my dear Miss Beaufort with your friends at Dalberry. Last night Mr Viner fell into a profuse sweat, and then drop'd into a sweet slumber for four hours, at the end of which he awak'd pretty cool and easy ; I have not delayed one minute to give you this early intelligence, well knowing how much you will share in the general joy, especially as Mr Manley the phyfician thinks that he is almost out of danger. My dear child is quite transported with the joyful tidings, though now and then she checks herself, and allows a tranfient cloud of fear to step in for a time, and to shade the sunshine of her hope and joy ; but this soon

vanishes again, and gives way to more pleasing sensations. Mr Harley is set off himself to see Mr Viner, and to bring more certain intelligence. May the angel of peace, health and harmony, now dwell among us, and may our future cares be to increase the mutual happiness of one another.

Adieu,

DEBORAH HARLEY.

L E T-

LETTER XXIX.

To the same.

ALL is safe, my dear. Mr Harley is returned, and says, that Mr Viner is now quite free of the fever, and as his spirits are good, Mr Manley has no doubt but his strength will soon return, especially as a letter from my dear Melinda was delivered to him by Mr Harley's own hand, which has dispelled all his doubts, and has made him, as he says himself, the happiest of men. After some private conversation, he told my husband, that he would now give him a strong proof of his daughter's prudence and tender affection for her parents; though, by doing so, he run some risk of lessening himself in their esteem. He then opened

ed his cabinet, and gave Mr Harley two letters, the copies of which I now send to you, as follows :

TO MISS HARLEY.

MADAM,

“ I AM well informed that my rival has succeeded so far with your parents, that a scheme is concerted to carry you off to London, and, after making you drink deep of the pleasures and amusements in that great city, they hope to make you forget an unhappy, though unalterable lover, left to ruminate upon his loss, and to creep out of the world with as little notice as he came into it, and to go off with no other degree of credit, than that of adding a single unit
to

to the bills of mortality. If you have any pity, then, still left for me, and fortitude enough, at the same time, to shake off your fetters, please to meet me at two in the morning, near the East corner of the garden-wall, where you will find the means of escape, unless you choose to remain and console yourself: "That for the lack of gold you left me." Fear not your parents resentment; it cannot continue long, especially as Sir Robert and Lady Wandle will most assuredly act as mediators. I am, Madam, with the most unfeigned respect and esteem, yours to command,

H. VINER."

To

To Mr VINER.

SIR,

“ I CANNOT allow myself to think that my parents have agreed to any such scheme as what you suspect, and I still hope, that a little time will remove their prejudices ; but I never can consent to fly off like a thief in the night, and so to wound the hearts of those to whom I owe my birth and education. They have been good and kind to me, and have, in my tender years, sacrificed much of their time and rest for my happiness and welfare. I am persuaded that they still mean to pursue the same plan, and have only, at this time, (unhappily indeed for us both), mistaken the road. Let us then fortify our minds with patience. I hope, in time, to gain my mother

ther over to our interest, and that my father will be softened, by hearing from all quarters, that Mr Viner is a man of sense, and of such a character, as will, in all human probability, give him no cause to repent of such an alliance. In the mean time, rest assured and satisfied, that the lack of gold shall never diminish my regard and esteem for you, nor shall I ever break the promise that I made to you at Wotton-hall, of banishing every other man from my heart. I remain,

S I R,

Your most humble servant,

MELINDA HARLEY."

Miss Beaufort will not wonder that the value of our dearest child should now be much enhanced in our eyes, after

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ter such a proof of her dutiful regard and attention to our peace and quiet. We now wait only for Mr Viner's recovery, in order to fix the happy day. As your mother is now so much better, we shall expect you both next week at Dalberry. In the mean time, remember me kindly to her, and believe me to remain, with sincere esteem, yours,

DEBORAH HARLEY.

A FEW days after this, Mr Viner was so far recovered, as to ride out every foernoon: He then wrote to Miss Harley, that he expected to have the superlative happiness of waiting up-
on

on her at Dalberry, on a day agreed upon betwixt Mr Harley and himself; accordingly, on that day, May the 15th, he set out after breakfast from Mandenhough with his sister, and arrived at Dalberry before dinner, where he found a small select party come to share in the joys of that happy day. Miss Harley had requested of her parents to invite only a few of their nearest friends. Accordingly, cards were sent to Sir Robert and Lady Wandle, Mr Lanton and the benevolent Mr Randolph, and one or two more of their most intimate acquaintance. Mrs and Miss Beaufort had been there some days before. It would be difficult to find words to express the general and unfeigned joy of that chosen company, especially of the happy pair. When Mr Viner entered the room, a

sweet crimson blush overspread the countenance of the lovely Melinda ; and tho' it was difficult for them both to suppress the vast emotions and overflowings of the heart, yet they had such perfect command of themselves, as to behave with so much easy decency and propriety of conduct, as to increase the pleasure of their friends, who all admired them. After dinner, the nuptial ceremony was performed by the good Mr Randolph, who had lately been preferred to a vicarage of L. 300 a-year.

— ; The earth
 Gave sign of gratulation, and each hill ;
 Joyous the birds ; fresh gales and gentle airs
 Whisper'd it to the woods, and from their wings
 Flung rose, flung odours from the spicy-shrub,
 Disporting till the amorous bird of night
 Sung spousal, and bid haste the evening star
 On his hill-top to light the bridal lamp.

Thus,

Thus, (gentle reader), have I told thee
all their state, and brought their story to
the sum of earthly blifs.

Miss Harley was just then 19 years of
age, and Mr Viner 26.

The evening was spent in decent mirth
and chearful conversation. After supper
Melinda retired, and not long after a
hint was given to Mr Viner by Sir Ro-
bert, that his health might suffer after
so late an illness, were he to sit up any
longer with the company; accordingly,
he wished them all a good night, and fol-
lowed to feast in the virtuous conversa-
tion and embraces of his charmer.

Why not, indulgent reader? For
Grace was in all her steps, heaven in her eye,
In every gesture dignity and love.

After Mr Viner had spent some weeks
at Dalberry, the happy pair now prepar-

ed for Manden-house. Mr and Mrs Harley, (who now wondered how they could be so long blind to Mr Viner's merit,) persuaded them to stay one other week, after which they all set out together, Mr and Mrs Harley having promised to stay a fortnight with their daughter and son-in-law, during which time, Sir Robert and Lady Wandle, Mrs and Miss Beaufort, &c. paid their first visits to the new married pair, who now live respected and admired by all the vicinage. Scarce a day passes without their doing some good, for which end they both agreed to live considerably within their income, well knowing that frugality is the fountain of liberality, and that parade and vain ostentation shut up the avenues of humanity and true generosity. Mrs Viner often visits the house
of

of mourning, not for its own sake, but because it is fruitful in virtue. Mr Viner is a most useful Justice of Peace, and by the help of Blackstone's Commentaries and his own good disposition, he is enabled often to accommodate petty differences, and to prevent law-suits among his neighbours. In their amusements, they study an agreeable variety, the food of taste and sentiment. Mr Viner says, that though he loves order and method, yet, deviations from established rules and customs, he thinks, are friendly to thought and original sentiment, provided they are kept within due bounds ; in which case they serve to animate the dull scenes of life, and agreeably to stir the passions, which are apt to stagnate, and to breed ill humours in a continued calm. In short, every day

brings new and real pleasure to this happy couple ; that love for one another increases and consolidates, into that kind of friendship which is the union of two souls by means of virtue. They are both frank, open and affable, and though they detest slander and calumny, yet they are strangers to that species of worldly prudence and hypocrisy, which makes a secret of every thing, a talent, which people of mean genius and cold hearts are fittest to excel in. Mr Viner is sometimes a little quick, but he never incorporates anger, and by a wise flexibility of temper, gives such proofs of his candour and good nature, that his servants and tenants love and respect him. He candidly owns that his natural temper was too quick and hasty when a boy ; but his parents were at the utmost pains to

to rectify this defect, for which he cannot be grateful enough. Education, says he, is the ruling motive that governs most of our actions in life. We are more or less tractable, as we have been more or less cultivated in youth. When taught early to bend our tempers, and to accommodate our wills to those of others, it grows into a custom; but, if we are allowed blindly to follow our own humours and caprices, we are apt to increase in impertinence as we grow up in years. Mrs Viner is mild, gentle, and affable; and if she meets with a pleasurable anecdote, takes delight in communicating it. In about a twelvemonth, Mr and Mrs Viner received an additional happiness, by the birth of a fine boy, who was nursed by his mother, Mrs Viner being fully convinced that no other milk could

could be so useful to the child as her own. Miss Beaufort and the good Mr Randolph spend much of their spare time at Manden-house. Mr Harley having a detached farm contiguous to Mr Viner's estate, which was lately set in lease for L. 350 a-year, has given the absolute disposal of it to Mr Viner in the meantime, and, at his (Mr Harley's) decease, has settled his whole estate, L. 1250 a-year, upon the eldest son of the marriage. Mr Viner, in consequence, has settled his own estate upon the second son, and allows Mrs Viner to reserve the L. 10,000 left by Mr Ash for the use of their daughters, in such proportions as she may think proper. Thus circumstanced, and surrounded with ease and affluence, they both look upon themselves as heaven's trustees, for the relief of misery and distress.

distress. When the eye sees them, it blesses them, and when the ear hears them, it gives witness unto them; the blessings of him that was ready to perish comes upon them, and they have caused the widow's heart to sing for joy. In less than three years Mrs Viner was the mother of a beautiful girl, who, as she grew up, discovered all the good qualities necessary to form an accomplished woman, and became the admiration of all around her: And now the fond parents, reflecting on the vicissitude of human affairs, and that some of their children at least might be left in want of a guide to conduct them in their entrance into the world; they, by repeated intreaties prevailed on the good Mr Randolph to commit a few directions to paper, for the benefit and advantage of both the
sex.

sex. May all parents take example by them in their laudable ambition, for rearing the minds of their young ones ; for justly does Solomon observe, “ Train
 “ up a child in the way he should walk,
 “ and when he is old he will not depart
 “ from it.”

F I N I S.



A
S E 'R M O N

B Y

Mr R A N D O L P H.



M O W I S

W O W H S

A

S E R M O N.

GALATIANS ii. 16.

Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Christ, &c.

A Popular enough text, my brethren ; but, in explaining it, you must not expect that I will endeavour so much to gratify or please any of my hearers in their prejudices, as carefully and critically to investigate the real truth of it according to the Apostle's meaning ; and this is not to be done, unless we

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consider the cause of that expression, and the general scope of his writings. The neglect of this, joined to the great partiality which people in all ages have entertained for their own particular opinions, has occasioned many fierce contentions, and divided Christians into so many different sects. In all the Scripture our Saviour does not impose on us the belief of one modern creed ; and, had our learned men, instead of taking up their time to form creeds and confessions, endeavoured, with a true Christian spirit, to enforce the practice of virtue, and that meek and holy religion so well calculated, by our blessed Saviour, for our own happiness both here and hereafter ; I say, had they acted in this manner, and were men only disposed to be more modest and circumspect in their
speculative

speculative opinions, keeping up the exercise of love and charity to one another; then difference of opinion could be attended with no bad consequences; but, on the contrary, would appear like so many different roads leading to the same happy place: But alas! it has been too much the custom of people in all ages, instead of endeavouring to raise themselves up to the true standard of religion, to bring down this or that system to answer their own corrupt inclinations, and to favour sometimes their most absurd prejudices. Some teachers, instead of enforcing the plain doctrines of morality contained in the gospel, have endeavoured to make religion an intricate science. New tenets have been adopted, and every method practised on the credulity of the people, that best suits the disorderly

affections of the human frame ; thereby running after popularity, instead of securing to themselves that popularity which follows the conscientious discharge of a man's duty.

In treating of these words in our text, I shall, by God's assistance, *first*, endeavour to show what is meant by the faith here mentioned. *Secondly*, What is meant by the works of the law ; and then, shall conclude with some observations and encouragements to such a faith as must evidently lead to holiness of life.

First, then, to show what is meant by the faith here mentioned. I hope there are none of you who entertain such a superficial view of faith, as to think it can
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be conferred by baptism, or any outward profession of the Christian religion : No surely, true faith can never consist merely in giving your assent to the truths of the gospel. They are so well attested by the different Apostles and Disciples of our Lord Jesus Christ, and even their testimony, corroborated in many principal facts, by profane authors themselves, that they are no more to be doubted of in point of history, than that Julius Cæsar, or William the Conqueror, invaded Britain ; but, were it otherwise, and that the principal facts of the gospel were involved in such obscurity or uncertainty as to contradict that reason given us by God himself, in order to determine us in our choice ; in that case again it would be no longer a real but an affectation of belief, brought on, either by the preju-

dice of education, a partial use of our reason, or a mean denial of our understandings : So that we see, my friends, in whatever way we take faith as an assent only to such and such truths or propositions, there can ensue no degree of merit from bare opinions or abstruse speculations on the subject. The faith then here mentioned, must go farther. It surely means, besides this assent, an inward trust and confidence, which banishes all immoderate fear and anxiety from the mind, and teaches it to repose itself, with a sweet composure and serenity, on the goodness of God, in the various dispensations of his providence towards us, though they sometimes fall out contrary to our wishes and expectations ; for we are very incompetent judges of what may be good for us. Thus we
see

see our Saviour rebuking his disciples for want of that faith or trust: Matth. viii. 26. *And he saith unto them, Why are ye fearful, O ye of little faith? Then he arose and rebuked the winds and the sea, and there was a great calm.*

This temper of-mind, or righteousness of faith, will entertain such habitual and just views of spiritual things, as must naturally lead to holiness of life, and to the practice of the social and moral duties so much enjoined by our Saviour in the whole scope of his doctrine. This is the same kind of faith which this very Apostle speaks of, Gal. v. 6. *For neither circumcision nor uncircumcision availeth any thing, but faith which worketh by love.* In short an attentive reader will easily see, that in all those places where the Apostle prefers faith to works,

works, he speaks of the works of the law, the ritual law of Moses, and not the works of the gospel law, which is quite different : The reason is plain ; the Jewish proselytes were striving to bring the Gentile converts under circumcision, and of course to subject them to the whole of their ceremonial law. Peter and some others of the Apostles seemed inclined to favour the prejudice of the Jews in this particular, which the Apostle Paul thought would be attended with bad consequences ; and accordingly, he combats this notion of the Jews with the whole force of his reasoning. “ If righteousness came by the law,” says he, “ then Christ is dead in vain ;” but whenever he has occasion to mention faith with charity, and the works of the gospel law, then he shews faith to be inferior, 1 Cor.

xiii.

xiii. 1. *Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, though I have faith to remove mountains ; yet if I have not charity, I am as sounding brass or as a tinkling cymbal ; and in the last verse of the same chapter, he says : And now abideth faith, hope and charity ; but the greatest of these is charity.* By charity, here, he doth not confine himself to the mere giving of alms ; for he tells you plainly : *Though I gave all my goods to feed the poor, and my body to be burnt ; yet without charity it profiteth nothing.*

By this kind of charity, man is enabled to love man, to show a warm and compassionate sympathy for the woes and distresses of his fellow creatures, and to do those little kind offices to one another, which proceed from the warm effusions of an honest and benevolent heart :

heart: A man of this turn cannot fail to give likewise, if his circumstances will allow of it; but if they will not, his disposition towards it will be equally acceptable in the sight of God, who searcheth the hearts and tryeth the reins of the children of men: In short, my brethren, true saving faith lies not in the literal, but in the experimental knowledge, Jews, Gentiles and Christians are all saved by this kind of faith; they feel the virtue and the power of it, and it is inwardly communicated to every good man, let him be of any nation or country whatsoever, Acts x. 34. *Of a truth, says Peter, I perceive God is no respecter of persons; but, in every nation, he that feareth God and worketh righteousness, is accepted of by him.* John vii. 31. *And many of the people believed on him, and said,*
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when Christ cometh will he do more miracles than those which this man doth. They were ignorant at the time that it was Christ himself, but they felt inwardly the virtue and power of what he had said and done ; so were resolved to live according to the divine word.

I come now to the *second* head, namely, What is meant by the works of the law, and, in so doing, hope to make it plainly appear, that the Apostle did not mean to set us free from the moral law, or to lessen our obligations, in the least, towards the practice of morality : No, my friends, this same Apostle tells us, Rom. xii. 20. *Therefore if thine enemy hunger, feed him ; if he thirst give him drink ;* and in the next chapter, ver. 7, 8, 9. *Render therefore to all their dues :*
Owe

Owe no man any thing, but to love one another ; for this cause, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not kill, Thou shalt not steal, nor bear false witness ; and if there be any other commandment, it is briefly comprehended in this, Love thy neighbour as thyself.

I have already mentioned, that the Apostle had good reason to combat this prejudice of the Jews in favour of their ritual law, and to convince them that their justification could not come by the most strict observance of it.

It would appear that God had not given them this law, until he found them falling into idolatry, nor was it till after the worship of the golden calf that most of it was made necessary to be observed, Ezek. xx. 25. *Therefore I gave them also*
sta-

statutes that were not good, and judgments whereby they should not live, &c.

The learned allow two reasons, then, for its being imposed on them. *First*, That it might occupy their minds so as to prevent them from falling into the opposite ceremonies of the heathens; and *secondly*, To commemorate those signal deliverances and services conferred on them by God, such as passing over their first-born, and carrying them safe thro' the Red sea, &c. but in reality there could be little merit in shedding the blood of bullocks or lambs, or eating unleavened bread. The Apostle, therefore, at great length, shows how ineffectual those things would be, and how little essential to a disciple of Jesus Christ, who had established the pure and holy religion of the heart, instead of rites and ceremonies. *God is a Spirit*, says our

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Saviour,

Saviour, *and must be worshipped in spirit and in truth.* I shall now make some observations on the subject.

As the main foundation of piety is to entertain right notions and apprehensions of God, so we ought to be very careful how we represent him as harsh, partial or injurious, as some people do, who raise up a God after their own tempers and dispositions, instead of the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ; such notions, instead of producing a ready and chearful obedience, influenced by love and gratitude, tend to create narrow prejudices, and to cast a gloom and slavish dread on the mind. He sent his Son into the world, not to condemn the world, but to save it; and our Saviour is said to be the propitiation not for our sins only, but for the sins of the whole world: Let us not, however,
 continue

continue in sin, that grace may abound? God forbid ; on the contrary, it is expected, that we should practise better than those nations who have only the light of nature to conduct them : *That servant*, says our Saviour, *that knoweth his master's will, and doeth it not, shall be beaten with many stripes ; but he that knoweth it not, and doeth things worthy of stripes, shall be beaten with few stripes ; for he to whom much is given, of him much will be required.* If any of you live in the wilful practice of any known sin, or in the neglect of any known duty, and think to make atonement by running a great way to sermons and sacraments. Remember those words of the great God, by the mouth of his Prophet Isaiah, directed to the Jews ; you will find them in the first chapter, beginning at the 13th verse : “ Bring no more vain oblations,

“ incense is an abomination to me, the
 “ new moons and sabbaths, the calling
 “ of assemblies I cannot away with, it is
 “ iniquity, even the solemn meeting.
 “ Your new-moons, and your appointed
 “ feasts, my soul hateth: They are a
 “ trouble unto me, I am weary to bear
 “ them. Cease to do evil, learn to do
 “ well, seek judgment, relieve the op-
 “ pressed, judge the fatherless, plead
 “ for the widow,” &c. But it may be
 asked, Are we then to be justified by
 our own works in this sinful and imper-
 fect state? I confess freely, that no me-
 rit of our own can ever draw justifica-
 tion as a debt from God due unto us:
 Eternal life is and must be the reward
 of his free grace. The law indeed came
 by Moses, but grace and truth came by
 Jesus Christ: Yet though we are not jus-
 tified for our good works, we are justi-
 fied

fied in them, as *causa sine qua non*, or the cause without which we cannot be justified. *Except ye repent*, says our Saviour, *ye cannot be saved*: The works of the law are far inferior, and quite different, my friends, from the works of the gospel; and though Christ died a sacrifice for sins past, yet from the moment a person declares himself a Christian, he is bound to the obedience of the Christian duties, without which his faith is of no effect. It is true, after all we can do, we must still be unprofitable servants, that is, unprofitable to God, but very profitable to ourselves. He, it is true, is altogether independent of us, nor stands he in any need of the services of his creatures. The rules, therefore, that he hath given us for regulating our conduct, are all calculated to promote our own happiness

and to render us fit for enjoying his presence hereafter. The kingdom of heaven must take root here within us, otherwise we should be incapable of enjoying a heavenly state hereafter. Follow virtue, for her ways are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace. The pleasures of bad men are superficial and transitory, and subjected to the humours of men; but the good man is satisfied from himself. In the exercise of every virtue, there follows a reward even in this life: Thus temperance begets health; diligence a competency; truth, justice and humanity, the love and esteem of mankind. True indeed, virtue is not always prosperous here, if so, where would be our state of trial and probation; yet her present portion is such as to show that providence is engaged on her side.

Observe,

Observe, though that virtue, in relation to piety, cannot be complete without it ; for where the latter is wanting, there cannot be the same constancy or uniformity of mind : A just sense of the unmerited goodness of God cannot fail to excite in the mind, warm sentiments of love and gratitude to our Creator and bountiful benefactor, and this will serve to keep the mind steady in the paths of virtue.

Living well, is the best, and, I may say, the only evidence of believing well. The Apostle James says, *Show me thy faith without thy works, and I will shew thee my faith by my works. Thou believest there is one God ; the devils also believe and tremble ; but wilt thou know, O vain man, that faith without works is dead.* Believe me, the glory and honour of God is best consulted in promoting

ing the happiness of mankind. Take care of bad company. A man's first thoughts are naturally just and honest, and it is the influence of ill example which changes him. All the necessary truths in the Bible are so plain, that he who runs may read them. Religion never was intended by our Saviour to be an intricate science : No, my friends, the kingdom of heaven is said to be revealed to babes and sucklings : And James tells us, that pure religion and undefiled, is *to visit the fatherless and widow, and to keep ourselves unspotted from the world.* Religion and virtue must consist in doing good actions, or in a disposition to do them. *Hereby, says our Saviour, shall it be known that ye are my disciples, or that ye believe in me, if ye do my will :* And again, *Not every one that saith to me, Lord, Lord,*

Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of God ; but he that doeth the will of my Father who is in heaven. The Jews built their confidence in being descended from Abraham, and thought that if a Jew was guilty of all crimes, yet his death would be reckoned a sufficient expiation, and he would be entitled to his share of glory and happiness. Beware lest a like confidence in the merits of our Saviour does not encourage some of you to lead careless or dissolute lives. This is downright Antinomianism, only changing Abraham for Jesus Christ, by whose death and sufferings, though we are admitted into his kingdom, yet we are by no means out of the jurisdiction of God Almighty. We should try, if possible, to live peaceably with all men, and remember, that the true characteristic of a Christian is to forgive injuries : *Vengeance is mine, saith the*

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the Lord. We are told, my brethren, of a noble instance of moderation in that great man the Emperor Saladine ; it was, I think, in the 12th century, when that religious fury and enthusiastic madness possessed the princes of Christendom, to send, and sometimes march themselves, at the head of Croisades, into the holy land : They had taken Jerufalem, and committed shameful barbarities. Saladine marches and retakes it ; but, instead of retaliating such cruelties, which are a disgrace to human nature, he generously set them free. When he found himself dying, he ordered all his money to be equally divided amongst Jews, Saracens, and Christians ; thereby declaring, that he looked on them as the children of one common Father, and that God was not only the God of a particular

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lar set of people, but the Father and Preserver of all mankind.

To conclude, my brethren, read carefully the 25th chap. of Matthew, where you will see everlasting separation denounced against the wicked ; why, not because they were of this or that persuasion, Papists, and not Protestants, of the Church of England, and not of the Kirk of Scotland, Seceders, or Methodists ; but, *because I was hungry and ye gave me no meat, &c.* What, then, must become of those who defraud or oppress their fellow-creatures, instead of doing those kind offices here required. Be but sincere in your endeavours, and you have a merciful God to deal with. It is recorded of that great and good man Socrates, just before he drank the poison, that he thus addressed his friends
 who

who were standing by ; “ I cannot be
 “ sure, says he, that God has always
 “ approved of my actions, but I have
 “ always made it my endeavour to please
 “ him ; so am in great hopes that those
 “ my endeavours will be accepted of by
 “ him.”

May the spirit of God dwell in us,
 and enable us to choose the good, and
 avoid the evil ; and may we sincerely
 endeavour to add to our faith, virtue, to
 virtue, knowledge, brotherly love and
 kindness ; that those things being in us,
 and abounding, we may be neither bar-
 ren nor unfruitful in the works of the
 Lord, &c.

F I N I S.



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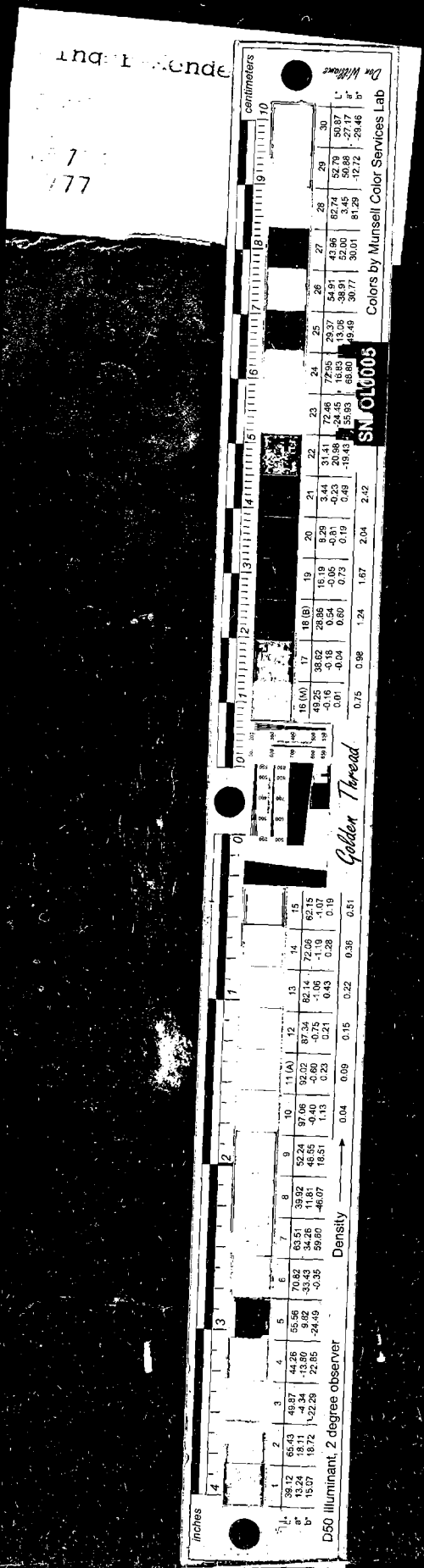
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