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Letters On The Study And Use Of History

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[Letter II]. Of the true use of retirement and study.

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[189]

OF THE
TRUE USE
OF
RETIREMENT and STUDY:

To the Right Honorable
Lord BATHURST.

LETTER II.

SINCE my last to your lordship, this is the first favourable opportunity I have had of keeping the promise I made you. I will avoid prolixity, as much as I can, in a first draught of my thoughts; but I must give you them as they rise in my mind, without staying to marshal them in close order.

As proud as we are of human reason, nothing can be more absurd than the general system of human life, and human know-

knowledge. This faculty of distinguishing true from false, right from wrong, and what is agreeable, from what is repugnant, to nature, either by one act, or by a longer process of intuition, has not been given with so sparing an hand, as many appearances would make us apt to believe. If it was cultivated, therefore, as early, and as carefully as it might be, and if the exercise of it was left generally as free as it ought to be, our common notions and opinions would be more consonant to truth than they are: and, truth being but one, they would be more uniform likewise.

BUT this rightful mistress of human life and knowledge, whose proper office it is to preside over both, and to direct us in the conduct of one and the pursuit of the other, becomes degraded in the intellectual oeconomy. She is reduced to a mean and servile state, to the vile drudgery of conniving at principles, defending opinions, and confirming habits, that are none
of

of hers. They, who do her most honor, who consult her oftenest, and obey her too very often, are still guilty of limiting her authority according to maxims, and rules, and schemes, that chance, or ignorance, or interest, first devised, and that custom sanctifies: custom, that result of the passions and prejudices of many, and of the designs of a few: that ape of reason, who usurps her seat, exercises her power, and is obeyed by mankind in her stead. Men find it easy, and government makes it profitable, to concur in established systems of speculation, and practice: and the whole turn of education prepares them to live upon credit all their lives. Much pains are taken, and time bestowed, to teach us what to think, but little or none of either, to instruct us how to think. The magazine of the memory is stored and stuffed betimes; but the conduct of the understanding is all along neglected, and the free exercise of it is, in effect, forbid in all places, and in terms in some.

THERE

THERE is a strange distrust of human reason in every human institution: this distrust is so apparent, that an habitual submission to some authority, or other, is forming in us from our cradles; that principles of reasoning, and matters of fact, are inculcated in our tender minds, before we are able to exercise that reason; and that, when we are able to exercise it, we are either forbid, or frightened from doing so, even on things that are themselves the proper objects of reason, or that are delivered to us upon an authority whose sufficiency or insufficiency is so most evidently.

ON many subjects, such as the general laws of natural religion, and the general rules of society and good policy, men of all countries and languages, who cultivate their reason, judge alike. The same premisses have led them to the same conclusions, and so, following the same guide, they

they have trod in the same path : at least, the differences are small, easily reconciled, and such as could not, of themselves, contradistinguish nation from nation, religion from religion, and sect from sect. How comes it then that there are other points, on which the most opposite opinions are entertained, and some of these with so much heat, and fury, that the men on one side of the hedge will die for the affirmative, and the men on the other for the negative ? “ *Toute opinion est assez forte pour se faire épouser au prix de la vie,*” says MONTAGNE, whom I often quote, as I do SENECA, rather for the smartness of expression, than the weight of matter. Look narrowly into it, and you will find that the points agreed on, and the points disputed, are not proportionable to the common sense and general reason of mankind. Nature and truth are the same every where, and reason shews them every where alike. But the accidental and other causes, which give rise and growth

to opinions, both in speculation and practice, are of infinite variety; and where ever these opinions are once confirmed by custom and propagated by education, various, inconsistent, contradictory as they are, they all pretend (and all their pretences are backed by pride, by passion, and by interest) to have reason, or revelation, or both, on their side; tho neither reason nor revelation can be possibly on the side of more than one, and may be possibly on the side of none.

Thus it happens that the people of Tibet are Tartars and Idolaters, that they are Turks and Mahometans at Constantinople, Italians and Papists at Rome; and how much soever education may be less confined, and the means of knowledge more attainable, in France and our own country, yet thus it happens in great measure that Frenchmen and Roman Catholics are bred at Paris, and Englishmen and Protestants at London. For men, indeed, properly

properly speaking, are bred no where : every one thinks the system, as he speaks the language, of his country ; at least there are few that think, and none that act, in any country, according to the dictates of pure unbiassed reason ; unless they may be said to do so, when reason directs them to speak and act according to the system of their country, or sect, at the same time as she leads them to think according to that of nature and truth.

THUS the far greatest part of mankind appears reduced to a lower state than other animals, in that very respect, on account of which we claim so great superiority over them ; because instinct, that has it's due effect, is preferable to reason that has not. I suppose in this place, with philosophers, and the vulgar, that which I am in no wise ready to affirm, that other animals have no share of human reason : for, let me say by the way, it is much more likely other animals should share the hu-

man, which is denied, than that man should share the divine reason, which is affirmed. But, supposing our monopoly of reason, would not your lordship chuse to walk upon four legs, to wear a long tail, and to be called a beast, with the advantage of being determined by irresistible and unerring instinct to those truths that are necessary to your well-being; rather than to walk on two legs, to wear no tail, and to be honored with the title of man, at the expence of deviating from them perpetually? Instinct acts spontaneously whenever it's action is necessary, and directs the animal according to the purpose for which it was implanted in him. Reason is a nobler and more extensive faculty; for it extends to the unnecessary as well as necessary, and to satisfy our curiosity as well as our wants: but reason must be excited, or she will remain unactive; she must be left free, or she will conduct us wrong, and carry us farther astray from her own precincts than we should go without

without her help: in the first case, we have no sufficient guide; and in the second, the more we employ our reason, the more unreasonable we are.

Now if all this be so, if reason has so little, and ignorance, passion, interest, and custom so much to do, in forming our opinions and our habits, and in directing the whole conduct of human life; is it not a thing desirable by every thinking man, to have the opportunity, indulged to so few by the course of accidents, the opportunity "*secum esse, et secum vivere,*" of living some years at least to ourselves, and for ourselves, in a state of freedom, under the laws of reason, instead of passing our whole time in a state of vassalage under those of authority and custom? Is it not worth our while to contemplate ourselves, and others, and all the things of this world, once before we leave them, through the medium of pure, and, if I may say so, of undefiled reason? Is it not

O 3 worth

worth our while to approve or condemn, on our own authority, what we receive in the beginning of life on the authority of other men, who were not then better able to judge for us, than we are now to judge for ourselves?

THAT this may be done, and has been done to some degree, by men who remained much more mingled than I design to be for the future, in the company and business of the world, I shall not deny: but still it is better done in retreat and with greater ease and pleasure. Whilst we remain in the world, we are all fettered down, more or less, to one common level, and have neither all the leisure nor all the means and advantages, to soar above it, which we may procure to ourselves by breaking these fetters in retreat. To talk of abstracting ourselves from matter, laying aside body, and being resolved, as it were, into pure intellect, is proud, metaphysical, unmeaning jargon: but to abstract

abstract

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abstract ourselves from the prejudices, and habits, and pleasures, and business of the world, is no more than many are, tho all are not, capable of doing. They who can do this, may elevate their souls in retreat to an higher station, and may take from thence such a view of the world, as the second SCIPIO took in his dream, from the seats of the blessed, when the whole earth appeared so little to him, that he could scarce discern that speck of dirt, the Roman empire. Such a view as this will encrease our knowledge by shewing us our ignorance; will distinguish every degree of probability from the lowest to the highest, and mark the distance between that and certainty; will dispel the intoxicating fumes of philosophical presumption, and teach us to establish our peace of mind, where alone it can rest securely, in resignation: in short, such a view will render life more agreeable, and death less terrible. Is not this business, my lord? Is not this pleasure too, the highest pleasure? The

world can afford us none such; we must retire from the world to taste it with a full gust; but we shall taste it the better for having been in the world. The share of sensual pleasures, that a man of my age can promise himself, is hardly worth attention: he should be sated, he will be soon disabled; and very little reflection surely will suffice, to make his habits of this kind lose their power over him, in proportion at least as his power of indulging them diminishes. Besides, your lordship knows that my scheme of retirement excludes none of these pleasures that can be taken with decency and conveniency; and to say the truth, I believe that I allow myself more in speculation, than I shall find I want in practice. As to the habits of business, they can have no hold on one who has been so long tired with it. You may object, that tho a man has discarded these habits, and has not even the embers of ambition about him to revive them, yet he cannot renounce all public business

as

as absolutely as I seem to do; because a better principle, a principle of duty, may summon him to the service of his country. I will answer you with great sincerity. No man has higher notions of this duty than I have. I think that scarce any age, or circumstances, can discharge us entirely from it; no, not my own. But as we are apt to take the impulse of our own passions, for a call to the performance of this duty; so when these passions impel us no longer, the call that puts us upon action must be real, and loud too. Add to this, that there are different methods, proportioned to different circumstances and situations, of performing the same duty. In the midst of retreat, where ever it may be fixed, I may contribute to defend and preserve the British constitution of government: and you, my lord, may depend upon me, that whenever I can, I will. Should any one ask you, in this case, from whom I expect my reward? Answer him by declaring to whom I pay this service;

“ Deo

“Deo immortali, qui me non accipere
“modo haec a majoribus voluit, sed etiam
“posteris prodere.”

BUT, to lead the life I propose with satisfaction and profit, renouncing the pleasures and business of the world, and breaking the habits of both, is not sufficient: the supine creature whose understanding is superficially employed, through life, about a few general notions, and is never bent to a close and steady pursuit of truth, may renounce the pleasures and business of the world, for even in the business of the world we see such creatures often employed, and may break the habits; nay he may retire and drone away life in solitude, like a monk, or like him over the door of whose house, as if his house had been his tomb, somebody writ, “Here lies such an one.” But no such man will be able to make the true use of retirement. The employment of his mind, that would have been agreeable and easy if he had

Indignus a te asilum hominum ad ac-

accustomed himself to it early, will be unpleasant and impracticable late: such men lose their intellectual powers for want of exerting them, and, having trifled away youth, are reduced to the necessity of trifling away age. It fares with the mind just as it does with the body. He who was born, with a texture of brain as strong as that of NEWTON, may become unable to perform the common rules of arithmetic: just as he who has the same elasticity in his muscles, the same suppleness in his joints, and all his nerves and sinews as well braced as JACOB HALL, may become a fat unwieldy sluggard. Yet farther, the implicit creature, who has thought it all his life needless, or unlawful, to examine the principles or facts that he took originally on trust, will be as little able as the other, to improve his solitude to any good purpose: unless we call it a good purpose, for that sometimes happens, to confirm and exalt his prejudices, so that he may live and die in one continued delirium. The confirmed prejudices of a thoughtful

life

life are as hard to change as the confirmed habits of an indolent life : and as some must trifle away age because they have trifled away youth, others must labour on in a maze of error, because they have wandered there too long to find their way out.

THERE is a prejudice in China in favour of little feet, and therefore the feet of girls are swathed and bound up from the cradle, so that the women of that country are unable to walk without tottering and stumbling all their lives. Among the savages of America, there are some who hold flat heads and long ears in great esteem, and therefore press the one, and draw down the others so hard from their infancy, that they destroy irrecoverably the true proportions of nature, and continue all their lives ridiculous to every sight but their own. Just so, the first of these characters cannot make any progress, and the second will not attempt to make any,
in

of RETIREMENT and STUDY. 205
in an impartial search after real knowledge.

To set about acquiring the habits of meditation and study late in life, is like getting into a go-cart with a grey beard, and learning to walk when we have lost the use of our legs. In general, the foundations of an happy old age must be laid in youth: and in particular, he who has not cultivated his reason young, will be utterly unable to improve it old.

“Manent ingenia senibus, modo permanent studium & industria.”

Not only a love of study, and a desire of knowledge, must have grown up with us, but such an industrious application likewise, as requires the whole vigour of the mind to be exerted in the pursuit of truth, through long trains of ideas, and all those dark recesses wherein man, not God, has hid it.

THIS

THIS love and this desire I have felt all my life, and I am not quite a stranger to this industry and application. There has been something always ready to whisper in my ear, whilst I ran the course of pleasure and of business, "Solve senescentem
"mature sanus equum."

BUT my Genius, unlike the demon of SOCRATES, whispered so softly, that very often I heard him not, in the hurry of those passions by which I was transported. Some calmer hours there were: in them I hearkened to him. Reflection had often it's turn, and the love of study and the desire of knowledge have never quite abandoned me. I am not therefore entirely unprepared for the life I will lead, and it is not without reason that I promise myself more satisfaction in the latter part of it, than I ever knew in the former.

YOUR

YOUR lordship may think this perhaps a little too sanguine, for one who has lost so much time already: you may put me in mind, that human life has no second spring, no second summer: you may ask me what I mean by sowing in autumn, and whether I hope to reap in winter? My answer will be, that I think very differently from most men, of the time we have to pass, and the business we have to do in this world. I think we have more of one, and less of the other, than is commonly supposed. Our want of time, and the shortness of human life, are some of the principal common-place complaints, which we prefer against the established order of things: they are the grumblings of the vulgar, and the pathetic lamentations of the philosopher; but they are impertinent and impious in both. The man of business despises the man of pleasure, for squandering his time away; the man of pleasure pities or laughs at the
man

man of business, for the same thing : and yet both concur superciliously and absurdly to find fault with the Supreme Being, for having given them so little time. The philosopher, who mispends it very often as much as the others, joins in the same cry, and authorises this impiety. THEOPHRASTUS thought it extremely hard to die at ninety, and to go out of the world when he had just learned how to live in it. His master ARISTOTLE found fault with nature, for treating man in this respect worse than several other animals: both very unphilosophically ! and I love SENECA the better for his quarrel with the Stagirite on this head. We see, in so many instances, a just proportion of things, according to their several relations to one another ; that philosophy should lead us to conclude this proportion preserved, even where we cannot discern it ; instead of leading us to conclude that it is not preserved where we do not discern it ; or where we think that we see the contrary.

To

To conclude otherwise, is shocking presumption. It is to presume, that the system of the universe would have been more wisely contrived, if creatures of our low rank among intellectual natures had been called to the councils of the Most High; or that the Creator ought to mend his work by the advice of the creature. That life which seems to our self-love so short, when we compare it with the ideas we frame of eternity, or even with the duration of some other beings, will appear sufficient, upon a less partial view, to all the ends of our creation, and of a just proportion in the successive course of generations. The term itself is long: we render it short; and the want we complain of flows from our profusion, not from our poverty. We are all arrant spendthrifts; some of us dissipate our estates on the trifles, some on the superfluities, and then we all complain that we want the necessities, of life. The much greatest part never reclaim, but die bankrupts to God

and man. Others reclaim late, and they are apt to imagine, when they make up their accounts and see how their fund is diminished, that they have not enough remaining to live upon, because they have not the whole. But they deceive themselves: they were richer than they thought, and they are not yet poor. If they husband well the remainder, it will be found sufficient for all the necessaries, and for some of the superfluities, and trifles too perhaps, of life: but then the former order of expence must be inverted; and the necessaries of life must be provided, before they put themselves to any cost for the trifles or superfluities.

LET us leave the men of pleasure and of business, who are often candid enough to own that they throw away their time, and thereby to confess that they complain of the Supreme Being for no other reason than this, that he has not proportioned his bounty to their extravagance: let us
con-

consider the scholar and the philosopher; who, far from owning that he throws any time away, reproves others for doing it: that solemn mortal who abstains from the pleasures, and declines the business of the world, that he may dedicate his whole time to the search of truth, and the improvement of knowledge. When such an one complains of the shortness of human life in general, or of his remaining share in particular; might not a man, more reasonable tho less solemn, expostulate thus with him?

“ YOUR complaint is indeed consistent
 “ with your practice; but you would not,
 “ possibly, renew your complaint if you
 “ reviewed your practice. Tho reading
 “ makes a scholar; yet every scholar is not
 “ a philosopher, nor every philosopher a
 “ wise man. It cost you twenty years
 “ to devour all the volumes on one side of
 “ your library: you came out a great critic
 “ in Latin and Greek, in the Oriental
 P 2 “ tongues,

“tongues, in history and chronology ; but
“you was not satisfied : you confessed that
“these were the “*literae nihil sanantes* ;”
“and you wanted more time to acquire
“other knowledge. You have had this
“time : you have passed twenty years
“more on the other side of your library,
“among philosophers, rabbies, commen-
“tators, schoolmen, and whole legions of
“modern doctors. You are extremely
“well versed in all that has been written
“concerning the nature of God, and of
“the soul of man ; about matter and form,
“body and spirit ; and space, and eternal
“essences, and incorporeal substances ;
“and the rest of those profound specula-
“tions. You are a master of the contro-
“versies that have arisen about nature and
“grace, about predestination and free-will,
“and all the other abstruse questions that
“have made so much noise in the schools,
“and done so much hurt in the world.
“You are going on, as fast as the infir-
“mities, you have contracted, will permit,
“in

“ in the same course of study ; but you
 “ begin to foresee that you shall want
 “ time, and you make grievous com-
 “ plaints of the shortness of human life.
 “ Give me leave now to ask you, how
 “ many thousand years God must prolong
 “ your life, in order to reconcile you to
 “ his wisdom and goodness ? It is plain, at
 “ least highly probable, that a life as long
 “ as that of the most aged of the patri-
 “ archs, would be too short to answer your
 “ purposes ; since the researches and dis-
 “ putes in which you are engaged, have
 “ been already for a much longer time
 “ the objects of learned enquiries, and re-
 “ main still as imperfect and undetermined
 “ as they were at first. But let me ask
 “ you again, and deceive neither yourself
 “ nor me ; have you, in the course of these
 “ forty years, once examined the first
 “ principles, and the fundamental facts,
 “ on which all those questions depend,
 “ with an absolute indifference of judg-
 “ ment, and with a scrupulous exactness ?

“ with the same that you have employed
“ in examining the various consequences
“ drawn from them, and the heterodox
“ opinions about them? Have you not
“ taken them for granted, in the whole
“ course of your studies? Or, if you have
“ looked now and then on the state of the
“ proofs brought to maintain them, have
“ you not done it as a mathematician looks
“ over a demonstration formerly made, to
“ refresh his memory, not to satisfy any
“ doubt? If you have thus examined, it
“ may appear marvellous to some, that
“ you have spent so much time in many
“ parts of those studies, which have re-
“ duced you to this hectic condition, of so
“ much heat and weakness. But if you
“ have not thus examined, it must be evi-
“ dent to all, nay to yourself on the least
“ cool reflection, that you are still, not-
“ withstanding all your learning, in a
“ state of ignorance. For knowledge
“ can alone produce knowledge: and
“ without such an examination of axioms
“ and

“and facts, you can have none about in-
“ferences.”

IN this manner one might expostulate very reasonably with many a great scholar, many a profound philosopher, many a dogmatical casuist. And it serves to set the complaints about want of time, and the shortness of human life, in a very ridiculous but a true light. All men are taught their opinions, at least on the most important subjects, by rote; and are bred to defend them with obstinacy. They may be taught true opinions; but whether true or false, the same zeal for them, and the same attachment to them, is every where inspired alike. The Tartar believes as heartily that the soul of Foe inhabits in his DAIRO, as the Christian believes the hypostatic union, or any article in the Athanasian creed. Now this may answer the ends of society in some respects, and do well enough for the vulgar of all ranks: but it is not enough for the man who cultivates his reason, who is able to

P 4

think

think, and who ought to think, for himself. To such a man, every opinion that he has not himself either framed, or examined strictly and then adopted, will pass for nothing more than what it really is, the opinion of other men; which may be true or false for aught he knows. And this is a state of uncertainty, in which no such man can remain, with any peace of mind, concerning those things that are of greatest importance to us here, and may be so hereafter. He will make them therefore the objects of his first and greatest attention. If he has lost time, he will lose no more; and when he has acquired all the knowledge he is capable of acquiring on these subjects, he will be the less concerned whether he has time to acquire any farther. Should he have passed his life in the pleasures or business of the world; whenever he sets about this work, he will soon have the advantage over the learned philosopher. For he will soon have secured what is necessary to his
hap-

happinefs, and may fit down in the peaceful enjoyment of that knowledge : or proceed with greater advantage and fatisfaction to the acquifition of new knowledge; whilft the other continues his fearch after things that are in their nature, to fay the beft of them, hypothetical, precarious, and fuperfluous.

BUT this is not the only rule, by obferving of which we may redeem our time, and have the advantage over thofe who imagine they have fo much in point of knowledge over your lordfhip or me, for inftance, and who defpife our ignorance. The rule I mean is this; to be on our guard againft the common arts of delufion, fpoken of already; which, every one is ready to confeff, have been employed to mislead thofe who differ from him. Let us be diffident of ourfelves, but let us be diffident of others too: our own paffions may lead us to reafon wrong; but the paffions and intereft of others may have the

the same effect. It is in every man's power, who sets about it in good earnest, to prevent the first: and when he has done so, he will have a conscious certainty of it. To prevent the last, there is one, and but one sure method; and that is, to remount, in the survey of our opinions, to the first and even remotest principles on which they are founded. No respect, no habit, no seeming certainty whatever, must divert us from this: any affectation of diverting us from it ought to increase our suspicion: and the more important our examination is, the more important this method of conducting it becomes. Let us not be frightened from it, either by the supposed difficulty or length of such an enquiry; for, on the contrary, this is the easiest and the shortest, as well as the only sure way of arriving at real knowledge; and of being able to place the opinions we examine in the different classes of true, probable, or false, according to the truth, probability, or falshood of the principles
from

from whence they are deduced. If we find these principles false, and that will be the case in many instances, we stop our enquiries on these heads at once; and save an immense deal of time that we should otherwise mispend. The Mussulman who enters on the examination of all the disputes that have arisen between the followers of OMAR and ALI and other doctors of his law, must acquire a thorough knowledge of the whole Mahometan system; and will have as good a right to complain of want of time, and the shortness of human life, as any pagan or Christian divine or philosopher: but without all this time and learning, he might have discovered that MAHOMET was an impostor, and that the Koran is an heap of absurdities.

IN short, my lord, he who retires from the world, with a resolution of employing his leisure, in the first place to re-examine and settle his opinions, is inexcusable if he
does

does not begin with those that are most important to him, and if he does not deal honestly by himself. To deal honestly by himself, he must observe the rule I have insisted upon, and not suffer the delusions of the world to follow him into his retreat. Every man's reason is every man's oracle: this oracle is best consulted in the silence of retirement; and when we have so consulted, whatever the decision be, whether in favour of our prejudices or against them, we must rest satisfied: since nothing can be more certain than this, that he who follows that guide in the search of truth, as that was given him to lead him to it, will have a much better plea to make, whenever or wherever he may be called to account, than he, who has resigned himself, either deliberately or inadvertently, to any authority upon earth.

WHEN we have done this, concerning God, ourselves, and other men; concerning the relations in which we stand to him and to them; the duties that result from these

these relations, and the positive will of the Supreme Being, whether revealed to us in a supernatural, or discovered by the right use of our reason in a natural way — we have done the great business of our lives. Our lives are so sufficient for this, that they afford us time for more, even when we begin late: especially if we proceed in every other enquiry by the same rule. To discover error in axioms, or in first principles grounded on facts, is like the breaking of a charm. The enchanted castle, the steepy rock, the burning lake disappear: and the paths that lead to truth, which we imagined to be so long, so embarrassed, and so difficult, shew as they are, short, open, and easy. When we have secured the necessaries, there may be time to amuse ourselves with the superfluities, and even with the trifles, of life. “Dulce est desipere,” said HORACE: “Vive la bagatelle!” says SWIFT. I oppose neither; not the Epicurean, much less the Christian philosopher: but I insist that a principal
part

part of these amusements be the amusements of study and reflection, of reading and conversation. You know what conversation I mean; for we lose the true advantage of our nature and constitution, if we suffer the mind to come, as it were, to a stand. When the body, instead of acquiring new vigour, and tasting new pleasures, begins to decline, and is sated with pleasures or grown incapable of taking them, the mind may continue still to improve and indulge itself in new enjoyments. Every advance in knowledge opens a new scene of delight; and the joy that we feel in the actual possession of one, will be heightened by that which we expect to find in another: so that, before we can exhaust this fund of successive pleasures, death will come to end our pleasures and our pains at once. “In his studiis laboribus-
“que viventi, non intelligitur quando ob-
“repat senectus: ita sensim sine sensu
“aetas senescit, nec subito frangitur, sed
“diuturnitate extinguitur.”

THIS,

THIS, my lord, is the wisest, and the most agreeable manner in which a man of sense can wind up the thread of life. Happy is he whose situation and circumstances give him the opportunity and means of doing it! Tho he should not have made any great advances in knowledge, and should set about it late, yet the task will not be found difficult, unless he has gone too far out of his way; and unless he continues too long to halt, between the dissipations of the world, and the leisure of a retired life.

—Vivendi recte qui prorogat horam,
Rusticus expectat dum defluat amnis, —

You know the rest. I am sensible, more sensible than any enemy I have, of my natural infirmities, and acquired disadvantages: but I have begun, and I will persist; for he who jogs forward on a battered horse, in the right way, may get to the end
of

of his journey ; which he cannot do, who gallops the fleetest courser of New-Market, out of it.

ADIEU, my dear lord. Tho I have much more to say on this subject, yet I perceive, and I doubt you have long perceived, that I have said too much, at least for a letter, already. The rest shall be reserved for conversation whenever we meet : and then I hope to confirm, under your lordship's eye, my speculations by my practice. In the mean time let me refer you to our friend POPE. He says I made a philosopher of him : I am sure he has contributed very much, and I thank him for it, to the making an hermit of me.