



The Works Of Alexander Pope Esq.

In Nine Volumes Complete. With His Last Corrections, Additions, And Improvements; As they were delivered to the Editor a little before his Death

Containing The First of his Letters

Pope, Alexander

London, 1751

Letters to Several Ladies

Nutzungsbedingungen

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LETTERS

T O

SEVERAL LADIES^a.

LETTER I.

MADAM,

March 1, 1705.

I Send you the book of rudiments of Drawing, which you were pleas'd to command, and think myself obliged to inform you at the same time of one of the many excellencies you possess without knowing of them. You are but too good a Painter already ; and no picture of Raphael's was ever so beautiful, as that which you have form'd in a certain heart of my acquaintance. Indeed it was but just that the finest lines in nature should be drawn upon the

^a Most of these were printed without the Author's Consent, and no doubt are the same upon which the censure is pass'd in the Preface. "That they have too much of a juvenile

"ambition of Wit, and affectation of Gaiety." And it is pleaded in Excuse, "that they were written very young, and the folly was soon over." P.

most

most durable ground, and none could ever be met with, that would so readily receive, or so faithfully retain them, as this Heart. I may boldly say of it, that you will not find its fellow in all the parts of the body in this book. But I must complain to you of my hand, which is an arrant traitor to my heart; for having been copying your picture from thence and from Kneller these three days, it has done all possible injury to the finest face that ever was made, and to the liveliest image that ever was drawn. I have Imagination enough in your absence, to trace some resemblance of you; but I have been so long us'd to lose my Judgment at the sight of you, that 'tis past my power to correct it by the life. Your picture seems least like when placed before your eyes; and, contrary to all other pictures, receives a manifest disadvantage by being set in the fairest light in the world. The Painters are a very vain generation, and have a long time pretended to rival nature; but to own the truth to you, she made such a finish'd piece about three and twenty years ago (I beg your pardon, Madam; I protest, I meant but two and twenty) that 'tis in vain for them any longer to contend with her. I know you indeed made one something like it, betwixt five and six years past: 'Twas a little girl, done with abundance of spirit and life, and wants nothing
from
but

but time to be an admirable piece: but, not to flatter your work, I don't think 'twill ever come up to what your father made. However I would not discourage you; 'tis certain you have a strange happiness, in making fine things of a sudden and at a stroke, with incredible ease and pleasure.

I am, &c.

L E T T E R II.

IT is too much a rule in this town, that when a lady has once done a man a favour, he is to be rude to her ever after. It becomes our sex to take upon us twice as much as yours allow us; by this method I may write to you most impudently, because you once answer'd me modestly; and if you should never do me that honour for the future, I am to think (like a true coxcomb) that your silence gives consent. Perhaps you wonder why this is address'd to you rather than to Mrs. M—, with whom I have the right of an old acquaintance, whereas you are a fine lady, have bright eyes, &c. First, Madam, I make choice of you rather than of your mother, because you are younger than your mother. Secondly, because I fancy you spell better, as having been at school later. Thirdly, because you have nothing to do but

to

to write if you please, and possibly it may keep you from employing yourself worse: it may save some honest neighbouring gentleman from three or four of your pestilent glances. Cast your eyes upon paper, Madam, there you may look innocently: men are seducing, books are dangerous, the amorous ones soften you, and the godly ones give you the spleen: If you look upon trees, they clasp in embraces; birds and beasts make love; the sun is too warm for your blood; the moon melts you into yielding and melancholy. Therefore I say once more, cast your eyes upon paper, and read only such letters as I write, which convey no darts, no flames, but proceed from innocence of soul, and simplicity of heart. Thank God I am an hundred miles off from those eyes! I would sooner trust your hand than them for doing me mischief; and tho' I doubt not some part of the rancour and iniquity of your heart will drop into your pen, yet since it will not attack me on a sudden and unprepar'd, since I may have time while I break open your letter to cross myself and say a Pater-noster, I hope Providence will protect me from all you can attempt at this distance. I am told you are at this hour as handsome as an angel; for my part I have forgot your face since two winters. You may be grown to a giantess for all I know. I can't tell

tell in any respect what sort of creature you are, only that you are a very mischievous one, whom I shall ever pray to be defended from. But when your Minister sends me word you have the small-pox, a good many freckles, or are very pale, I will desire him to give thanks for it in your parish church; which as soon as he shall inform me he has done, I will make you a visit without armour: I will eat any thing you give me without suspicion of poison, take you by the hand without gloves, nay venture to follow you into an arbour without calling the company. This, Madam, is the top of my wishes, but how differently are our desires inclined! You sigh out, in the ardour of your heart, Oh play-houses, parks, opera's, assemblies, London! I cry with rapture, Oh woods, gardens, rookeries, fish-ponds, arbours! Mrs. M——.

L E T T E R III.

T O a L A D Y.

Written on one column of a Letter, while Lady M. wrote to the Lady's Husband on the other.

THE wits would say, that this must needs be a dull letter because it is a married one. I am afraid indeed you will find, what spirit there

there is, must be on the side of the wife, and the husband's part, as usual, will prove the dullest. What an unequal pair are put together in this sheet? in which, tho' we sin, it is you must do penance. When you look on both sides of this paper, you may fancy that our words (according to a Scripture expression) are as a two-edg'd sword, whereof lady M. is the shining blade, and I only the handle. But I can't proceed without so far mortifying Sir Robert as to tell him, that she writes this purely in obedience to me, and that it is but one of those honours a husband receives for the sake of his wife.

It is making court but ill to one fine woman to shew her the regard we have for another; and yet I must own there is not a period of this epistle but squints towards another over-against it. It will be in vain to dissemble: your penetrating eyes cannot but discover, how all the letters that compose these words lean forward after lady M's. letters, which seem to bend as much from mine, and fly from them as fast as they are able. Ungrateful letters that they are! which give themselves to another man, in the very presence of him who will yield to no mortal, in knowing how to value them.

You will think I forget myself, and am not writing to you; but, let me tell you, 'tis you forget
forget

forget yourself in that thought, for you are almost the only woman to whom one can safely address the praises of another. Besides, can you imagine a man of my importance so stupid, as to say fine things to you before your husband? Let us see how far Lady M. herself dares do any thing like it, with all the wit and address she is mistress of. If Sir Robert can be so ignorant (now he is left to himself in the country) to imagine any such matter, let him know from me, that here in town every thing that lady says, is taken for satire. For my part, every body knows it is my constant practice to speak truth, and I never do it more than when I call myself

Your, &c.

LETTER IV.

YOU have put me into so much gayety of temper, that there will not be a serious word in this day's letter. No more, you'll say, there would, if I told you the whole serious business of the town. All last night I continued with you, tho' your unreasonable regularity drove me out of your doors at three a clock. I dreamed all over the evening's conversation, and saw the little bed in spite of you. In the morning

morning I waked, very angry at your phantom for leaving me so abruptly.—I know you delight in my mortification. I dined with an old Beauty; she appear'd at the table like a Death's head enamell'd. The Egyptians, you know, had such things at their entertainments; but do you think they painted and patched them? However, the last of these objections was soon remov'd; for the lady had so violent an appetite for a salmon, that she quickly eat all the patches off her face. She divided the fish into three parts; not equal, God knows; for she helped Gay to the head, me to the middle, and making the rest much the largest part took it herself, and cried very naively, I'll be content with my own tail.

My supper was as singular as my dinner. It was with a great Poet and Ode-maker (that is, a great poet out of his wits, or out of his way.) He came to me very hungry; not for want of a dinner (for that I should make no jest of) but, having forgot to dine. He fell most furiously on the broil'd relics of a shoulder of mutton, commonly call'd a blade-bone: he profess'd he never tasted so exquisite a thing! begged me to tell him what joint it was; wondered he had never heard the name of this joint, or seen it at other tables; and desir'd to know how he might direct his butcher to cut out the same

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for

for the future? And yet this man, so ignorant in modern butchery, has cut up half an hundred heroes, and quartered five or six miserable lovers in every tragedy he has written. I have nothing more to tell you to day.

LETTER V.

The Answer.

YOU should have my Day too, Sir, but indeed I slept it out, and so I'll give you all that was left, my last Night's entertainment. You know the company. I went in late, in order to be better received; but unluckily came in, as Deuce-ace was flinging (Lord H. would say I came in the Nick.) The Lady colour'd, and the men took the name of the Lord in vain: No body spoke to me, and I sat down disappointed; then affecting a careless air, gap'd, and cried seven or eight times, *D'ye win or lose?* I could safely say at that moment I had no temptation to any one of the seven, lively sins; and in the innocent way I was, happy had it been for me if I had died! Moralizing sat I by the hazard-table; I looked upon the uncertainty of riches, the decay of beauty, and the crash of worlds with as much contempt as ever

M

Plato

Plato did. But ah! the frailty of human nature! some ridiculous thought came into my head, wakened my passions, which burst forth into a violent laughter: I rose from my seat, and not considering the just resentments of the losing gamesters, hurl'd a ball of paper cross the table, which stop'd the dice, and turn'd up seven instead of five. Curs'd on all sides, and not knowing where to fly, I threw myself into a chair, which I demolish'd and never spoke a word after. We went to supper, and a lady said, *Miss G. looks prodigiously like a Tree.* Every body agreed to it, and I had not curiosity to ask the meaning of that sprightly fancy: Find it out, and let me know. Adieu, 'tis time to dress, and begin the business of the day.

L E T T E R VI.

In the Style of a Lady.

PRAY what is your opinion of *Fate*? for I must confess I am one of those that believe in Fate and Predestination.—No, I can't go so far as that, but I own I am of opinion one's stars may incline, tho' not compel one; and that is a sort of free-will; for we may be able to resist inclination, but not compulsion.

Don't

Don't you think they have got into the most preposterous fashion this winter that ever was, of flouncing the petticoat so very deep, that it looks like an entire coat of lutestring?

It is a little cool indeed for this time of year, but then, my dear, you'll allow it has an extreme clean pretty look.

Ay, so has my muslin apron; but I would not chuse to make it a winter suit of cloaths.

Well now I'll swear, child, you have put me in mind of a very pretty dress; let me die if I don't think a muslin flounce, made very full, would give one a very agreeable *Flirtation-air*.

Well, I swear it would be charming! and I should like it of all things—Do you think there are any such things as *Spirits*?

Do you believe there is any such place as the Elysian Fields? O Gad, that would be charming! I wish I were to go to the Elysian Fields when I die, and then I should not care if I were to leave the world to-morrow: But is one to meet there with what one has lov'd most in this world?

Now you must tell me this positively. To be sure you can, or what do I correspond with you for, if you won't tell me all? you know I abominate Reserve.

L E T T E R V I I .

Bath, 1714.

YOU are to understand, Madam, that my passion for your fair self and your sister, has been divided with the most wonderful regularity in the world. Even from my infancy I have been in love with one after the other of you, week by week, and my journey to Bath fell out in the three hundred seventy-sixth week of the reign of my sovereign lady Sylvia. At the present writing hereof it is the three hundred eighty-ninth week of the reign of your most serene majesty, in whose service I was list'd some weeks before I beheld your sister. This Information will account for my writing to either of you hereafter, as either shall happen to be Queen-regent at that time.

Pray tell your sister, all the good qualities and virtuous inclinations she has, never gave me so much pleasure in her conversation, as that one vice of her obstinacy will give me mortification this month. Ratcliffe commands her to the Bath, and she refuses! indeed if I were in Berkshire I should honour her for this obstinacy, and magnify her no less for disobedience than we do the Barcelonians. But people change with the change of places (as we see

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(see of late) and virtues become vices when they cease to be for one's interest, with me, as with others.

Yet let me tell her, she will never look so finely while she is upon earth, as she would here in the water. It is not here as in most other instances, for those ladies that would please extremely, must go out of their own element. She does not make half so good a figure on horseback as Christina Queen of Sweden; but were she once seen in the Bath, no man would part with her for the best meirmaid in Christendom. You know I have seen you often, I perfectly know how you look in black and in white, I have experienced the utmost you can do in colours; but all your movements, all your graceful steps, deserve not half the glory you might here attain, of a moving and easy behaviour in buckram: Something between swimming and walking, free enough, and more modestly-half-naked than you can appear any where else. You have conquer'd enough already by land; show your ambition, and vanquish also by water. The buckram I mention is a dress particularly useful at this time, when, we are told, they are bringing over the fashion of German ruffs: You ought to use yourselves to some degrees of stiffness beforehand; and when our ladies chins have been

tickled a-while with starched muslin and wire, they may possibly bear the brush of a German beard and whisker.

I could tell you a delightful story of Doctor P, but want room to display it in all its shining circumstances. He had heard it was an excellent cure for love, to kiss the Aunt of the person beloved, who is generally of years and experience enough to damp the fiercest flame: he try'd this course in his passion, and kissed Mrs. E— at Mr. D—'s, but, he says, it will not do, and that he loves you as much as ever.

Your, &c.

L E T T E R VIII.

To the same.

IF you ask how the waters agree with me, I must tell you, so very well, that I question how you and I should agree if we were in a room by ourselves. Mrs.— has honestly assured me, that but for some whims which she can't entirely conquer, she would go and see the world with me in man's cloaths. Even you, Madam, I fancy (if you would not partake in our adventures) would wait our coming in at
the

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the evening with some impatience, and be well enough pleas'd to hear them by the fire-side. That would be better than reading romances, unless lady M. would be our historian. What raises these desires in me, is an acquaintance I am beginning with my lady Sandwich, who has all the spirit of the last age, and all the gay experience of a pleasurable life. It were as scandalous an omission to come to the Bath and not to see my lady Sandwich, as it had formerly been to have travelled to Rome without visiting the Queen of Sweden. She is, in a word, the best thing this country has to boast of; and as she has been all that a woman of spirit could be, so she still continues that easy and independent creature that a sensible woman always will be.

I must tell you a truth, which is not, however, much to my credit. I never thought so much of yourself and your sister, as since I have been fourscore miles distance from you. In the Forest I look'd upon you as good neighbours, at London as pretty kind of women, but here as divinities, angels, goddeses, or what you will. In the same manner I never knew at what rate I valued your life, till you were upon the point of dying. If Mrs. — and you will but fall very sick every season, I shall certainly die for you. Seriously I value you both so much, that I esteem others much the less for your sakes;

M 4

you

you have robb'd me of the pleasure of esteeming a thousand pretty qualities in them, by showing me so many finer in yourselves. There are but two things in the world which could make you indifferent to me, which, I believe, you are not capable of, I mean ill-nature and malice. I have seen enough of you, not to overlook any frailty you could have, and nothing less than a vice can make me like you less. I expect you should discover by my conduct towards you both, that this is true, and that therefore you should pardon a thousand things in me for that one disposition. Expect nothing from me but truth and freedom, and I shall always be thought by you what I always am,

Your, &c.

L E T T E R IX.

To the same.

1714.

I Return'd home as slow and as contemplative after I had parted from you, as my Lord * retired from the Court and glory to his Country seat and wife, a week ago. I found here a dismal desponding letter from the son of another great courtier who expects the same fate, and
who

who tells me the great ones of the earth will now take it very kindly of the mean ones, if they will favour them with a visit by day-light. With what joy would they lay down all their schemes of glory, did they but know you have the generosity to drink their healths once a day, as soon as they are fallen? Thus the unhappy, by the sole merit of their misfortunes, become the care of Heaven and you. I intended to have put this last into verse, but in this age of ingratitude my best friends forsake me, I mean my rhymes.

I desire Mrs. P— to stay her stomach with these half hundred Plays, till I can procure her a Romance big enough to satisfy her great soul with adventures. As for Novels, I fear she can depend upon none from me but that of my Life, which I am still, as I have been, contriving all possible methods to shorten, for the greater ease both of the historian and the reader. May she believe all the passion and tenderness express'd in these Romances to be but a faint image of what I bear her, and may you (who read nothing) take the same truth upon hearing it from me. You will both injure me very much, if you don't think me a truer friend, than ever any romantic lover, or any imitator of their style could be.

The

The days of beauty are as the days of greatness, and so long all the world are your adorers. I am one of those unambitious people, who will love you forty years hence when your eyes begin to twinkle in a retirement, and without the vanity which every one now will take to be thought

Your, &c.

L E T T E R X.

THE more I examine my own mind, the more romantic I find myself. Methinks it is a noble spirit of contradiction to Fate and Fortune, not to give up those that are snatched from us; but to follow them the more, the farther they are remov'd from the sense of it. Sure, Flattery never travelled so far as three thousand miles; it is now only for Truth, which overtakes all things, to reach you at this distance. 'Tis a generous piece of Popery, that pursues even those who are to be eternally absent, into another world; whether you think it right or wrong, you'll own the very extravagance a sort of piety. I can't be satisfied with strowing flowers over you, and barely honouring you as a thing lost: but must consider you as a glorious tho' remote being, and be sending
addresses

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addresses after you. You have carried away so much of me, that what remains is daily languishing and dying over my acquaintance here, and, I believe, in three or four months more I shall think *Aurat Bazar* ^a as good a place as *Covent Garden*. You may imagine this is railery, but I am really so far gone as to take pleasure in reveries of this kind. Let them say I am romantic, so is every one said to be, that either admires a fine thing or does one. On my conscience, as the world goes, 'tis hardly worth any body's while to do one for the honour of it: Glory, the only pay of generous actions, is now as ill paid as other just debts; and neither Mrs. Macfarland for immolating her lover, nor you, for constancy to your lord, must ever hope to be compared to Lucretia or Portia.

I write this in some anger; for having, since you went, frequented those people most, who seemed most in your favour, I heard nothing that concerned you talked of so often, as that you went away in a black full-bottom'd wig; which I did but assert to be a bob, and was answered, *Love is blind*. I am persuaded your wig had never suffered this criticism, but on the score of your head, and the two eyes that are in it.

^a At Constantinople.

Pray

Pray when you write to me, talk of yourself; there is nothing I so much desire to hear of: talk a great deal of yourself; that she who I always thought talked best, may speak upon the best subject. The shrines and reliques you tell me of, no way engage my curiosity; I had ten times rather go on pilgrimage to see one such face as yours, than both St. John Baptist's heads. I wish (since you are grown so covetous of golden things) you had not only all the fine statues you talk of, but even the golden image which Nebuchadnezzar set up, provided you were to travel no farther than you could carry it.

The court of Vienna is very edifying. The ladies, with respect to their husbands, seem to understand that text literally, that commands to *bear one another's burthens*: but, I fancy, many a man there is like *Jissachar*, an *afs* between *two burthens*. I shall look upon you no more as a Christian, when you pass from that charitable court to the land of jealousy. I expect to hear an exact account how, and at what places, you leave one of the thirty-nine articles after another, as you approach to the lands of infidelity. Pray how far are you got already? amidst the pomp of a high mass, and the ravishing trills of a Sunday opera, what did you think of the doctrine and discipline of the church of England? had you from your heart a reverence for Stern-
hold

hold and Hopkins? How did your Christian virtues hold out in so long a voyage? you have, it seems (without passing the bounds of Christendom) out-travelled the sin of fornication: in a little time you'll look upon some others with more patience, than the ladies here are capable of. I reckon, you'll time it so well as to make your religion last to the verge of Christendom, that you may discharge your Chaplain (as humanity requires) in a place where he may find some business.

I doubt not but I shall be told (when I come to follow you through those countries) in how pretty a manner you accommodated yourself to the customs of the true Muslemen. They will tell me at what town you practised to sit on the Sopha, at what village you learned to fold a Turbant, where you was bathed and anointed, and where you parted with your black full-bottom. How happy must it be for a gay young woman, to live in a country where it is a part of religious worship to be *giddy-beaded*? I shall hear at Belgrade how the good Bashaw received you with tears of joy, how he was charmed with your agreeable manner of pronouncing the words *Allah* and *Mubamed*; and how earnestly you joined with him in exhorting your friend to embrace that religion. But I think his objection was a just one, that it was attended

with some circumstances under which he could not properly represent his Britannic Majesty.

Lastly, I shall hear how, the first night you lay at Pera, you had a vision of Mahomet's Paradise; and happily awaked without a soul, from which blessed moment the beautiful body was left at full liberty to perform all the agreeable functions it was made for.

I see I have done in this letter as I often have done in your company, talk'd myself into a good humour, when I begun in an ill one; the pleasure of addressing to you makes me run on, and 'tis in your own power to shorten this letter as much as you please, by giving over when you please; so I'll make it no longer by apologies.

L E T T E R X I .

YOU have asked me news a hundred times at the first word you spoke to me, which some would interpret as if you expected nothing better from my lips: and truly 'tis not a sign two lovers are together, when they can be so impertinent as to enquire what the world does? All I mean by this is, that either you or I are not in love with the other: I leave you to guess which of the two is that stupid and insensible creature,

creature, so blind to the other's excellencies and charms?

This then shall be a letter of News; and sure, if you did not think me the humblest creature in the world, you could never imagine a Poet could dwindle to a brother of Dawks and Dyer, from a rival of Tate and Brady.

The Earl of Oxford has behaved so bravely, that in this act at least he might seem above man, if he had not just now voided a stone to prove him subject to human infirmities. The utmost weight of affliction from ministerial power and popular hatred, were almost worth bearing, for the glory of such a dauntless conduct as he has shewn under it.

You may soon have your wish, to enjoy the gallant fights of armies, incampments, standards waving over your brother's corn-fields, and the pretty windings of the Thames stained with the blood of men. Your barbarity, which I have heard so long exclaim'd against in town and country, may have its fill of destruction. I would not add one circumstance usual in all descriptions of calamity, that of the many rapes committed, or to be committed upon those unfortunate women that *delight in war*. But God forgive me—in this martial age, if I could, I would buy a regiment for your sake and Mrs.

P—'s

P——'s and some others, whom, I have cause to fear, no fair means will prevail upon.

Those eyes, that care not how much mischief is done, or how great slaughter committed, so they have but a fine show; those very female eyes, will be infinitely delighted with the camp which is speedily to be formed in Hyde-park. The tents are carried thither this morning, new regiments with new cloaths and furniture (far exceeding the late cloth and linen designed by his Grace for the soldiery.) The sight of so many gallant fellows, with all the pomp and glare of war yet undeform'd by battles, those scenes which England has for many years only beheld on stages, may possibly invite your curiosity to this place.

By our latest account from Dukestreet, Westminster, the conversion of T. G. Esq. is reported in a manner somewhat more particular. That upon the seizure of his Flanders mares, he seem'd more than ordinarily disturbed for some hours, sent for his ghostly father, and resolv'd to bear his loss like a Christian; till about the hours of seven or eight the coaches and horses of several of the Nobility passing by his window towards Hyde-park, he could no longer endure the disappointment, but instantly went out, took the oath of Abjuration, and recover'd his dear horses, which carry'd him in
triumph

triumph to the Ring. The poor distressed Roman Catholicks, now un-hors'd and unchariot-ed, cry out with the Psalmist, *Some in Chariots and some in Horses, but we will invoke the name of the Lord.*

I am, &c.

L E T T E R XII.

THE weather is too fine for any one that loves the country to leave it at this season; when every smile of the sun, like the smile of a coy lady, is as dear as it is uncommon: and I am so much in the taste of rural pleasures, I had rather see the sun than any thing he can shew me, except yourself. I despise every fine thing in town, not excepting your new gown, till I see you dress'd in it, (which by the way I don't like the better for the red; the leaves, I think, are very pretty.) I am growing fit, I hope, for a better world, of which the light of the sun is but a shadow: for I doubt not but God's works here, are what come nearest to his works there; and that a true relish of the beauties of nature is the most easy preparation and gentlest transition to an enjoyment of those of heaven: as on the contrary, a true town-life of hurry, confusion,

N

noise,

noise, slander, and dissension, is a sort of apprenticeship to hell and its furies. I'm endeavouring to put my mind into as quiet a situation as I can, to be ready to receive that stroke which, I believe, is coming upon me, and have fully resign'd myself to yield to it. The separation of my soul and body is what I could think of with less pain; for I am very sure he that made it will take care of it, and in whatever state he pleases it shall be, that state must be right: But I cannot think without tears of being separated from my friends, when their condition is so doubtful, that they may want even such assistance as mine. Sure, it is more merciful to take from us after death all memory of what we lov'd or pursued here: for else what a torment would it be to a spirit, still to love those creatures it is quite divided from? Unless we suppose, that in a more exalted life, all that we esteem'd in this imperfect state will affect us no more, than what we lov'd in our infancy concerns us now.

This is an odd way of writing to a lady, and, I'm sensible, would throw me under a great deal of ridicule, were you to show this letter among your acquaintance. But perhaps you may not yourself be quite a stranger to this way of thinking. I heartily wish your life may be so long and so happy, as never to let you think
quite

quite so far as I am now led to do ; but, to think *a little towards it*, is what will make you the happier, and the easier at all times.

There are no pleasures or amusements that I don't wish you, and therefore 'tis no small grief to me that I shall for the future be less able to partake with you in them. But let fortune do her worst, whatever she makes us lose, as long as she never makes us lose our honesty and our independance ; I despise from my heart whoever parts with the first, and I pity from my soul whoever quits the latter.

I am grieved at Mr. G—'s condition in this last respect of dependance. He has Merit, Good-nature, and Integrity, three qualities, that I fear are too often lost upon great men ; or at least are not all three a match for that one which is oppos'd to them, Flattery. I wish it may not soon or late displace him from the favour he now possesses, and seems to like. I'm sure his late action deserves eternal favour and esteem : Lord Bathurst was charm'd with it, who came hither to see me before his journey. He ask'd and spoke very particularly of you. To-morrow Mr. Fortescue comes to me from London about B—'s suit in *forma pauperis*. That poor man looks starved : he tells me you have been charitable to him. Indeed 'tis wanted ; the poor creature can scarce stir or speak ; and

I apprehend he will die, just as he gets something to live upon. Adieu.

L E T T E R X I I I .

THIS is a day of wishes for you, and I hope you have long known, there is not one good one which I do not form in your behalf. Every year that passes, I wish some things more for my friends, and some things less for myself. Yet were I to tell you what I wish for you in particular, it would be only to repeat in prose, what I told you last year in rhyme (so sincere is my poetry :) I can only add, that as I then wish'd you a friend^a, I now wish that friend were Mrs. —

Absence is a short kind of death; and in either, one can only wish, that the friends we are separated from, may be happy with those that are left them. I am therefore very solicitous that you may pass much agreeable time together: I am sorry to say I envy you no other companion; tho' I hope you have others that you like; and I am always pleas'd in that hope, when it is not attended with any fears on your own account.

^a *To Mrs. — on her Birth-day.*

“ O be thou blest with all that heav'n can send,

“ Long health, long life, long pleasure, and a *friend*.”

I was

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I was troubled to leave you both, just as I fancy'd we should begin to live together in the country. 'Twas a little like dying the moment one had got all one desir'd in this world. Yet I go away with one generous sort of satisfaction, that what I part with, you are to inherit.

I know you would both be pleas'd to hear some certain news of a friend departed; to have the adventures of his passage, and the new regions thro' which he travell'd, described; and, upon the whole, to know, that he is as happy where he now is, as while he liv'd among you. But indeed I (like many a poor unprepar'd soul) have seen nothing I like so well as what I left: No scenes of Paradise, no happy bowers, equal to those on the banks of the Thames. Wherever I wander, one reflection strikes me: I wish you were as free as I; or at least had a tye as tender, and as reasonable as mine, to a relation that as well deserved your constant thought, and to whom you would be always pull'd back (in such a manner as I am) by the heart-string. I have never been well since I set out: but don't tell my mother so; it will trouble her too much: And as probably the same reason may prevent her sending a true account of her health to me, I must desire you to acquaint me. I would gladly hear the country air improves

your own ; but don't flatter me when you are ill, that I may be the better satisfy'd when you say you are well : for these are things in which one may be sincerer to a reasonable friend, than to a fond and partial parent. Adieu.

L E T T E R X I V .

YOU can't be surpriz'd to find him a dull correspondent whom you have known so long for a dull companion. And tho' I am pretty sensible, that, if I have any wit, I may as well write to show it, as not ; yet I'll content myself with giving you as plain a history of my pilgrimage, as Purchas himself, or as John Bunyan could do of his *walking through the wilderness of this world, &c.*

First then I went by water to Hampton-Court, unattended by all but my own virtues ; which were not of so modest a nature as to keep themselves, or me, conceal'd : For I met the Prince with all his ladies on horseback, coming from hunting. Mrs. B* and Mrs. L* took me into protection (contrary to the laws against harbouring Papists) and gave me a dinner, with something I liked better, an opportunity of conversation with Mrs. H*. We all agreed that the life of a Maid of honour was of all things the

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the most miserable: and wish'd that every woman who envy'd it, had a specimen of it. To eat Westphalia-ham in a morning, ride over hedges and ditches on borrowed hacks, come home in the heat of the day with a fever, and (what is worse a hundred times) with a red mark in the forehead from an uneasy hat; all this may qualify them to make excellent wives for fox-hunters, and bear abundance of ruddy complexion'd children. As soon as they can wipe off the sweat of the day, they must simper an hour and catch cold, in the Princess's apartment: from thence (as Shakespear has it) to dinner, *with what appetite they may*—and after that, till midnight, walk, work, or think, which they please. I can easily believe, no lighthouse in Wales, with a mountain and a rookery, is more contemplative than this Court; and as a proof of it I need only tell you, Mrs. L* walk'd with me three or four hours by moonlight, and we met no creature of any quality but the King, who gave audience to the vice-chamberlain, all alone, under the garden-wall.

In short, I heard of no ball, assembly, basket-table, or any place where two or three were gathered together, except Madam Kilmansegg's, to which I had the honour to be invited, and the grace to stay away.

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I was heartily tired, and posted to — park: there we had an excellent discourse of quackery; Dr. S* was mentioned with honour. Lady — walked a whole hour abroad without dying after it, at least in the time I stay'd, tho' she seem'd to be fainting, and had convulsive motions several times in her head.

I arrived in the forest by Tuesday noon, having fled from the face (I wish I could say the horned face) of Moses, who dined in the mid-way thither. I pass'd the rest of the day in those woods where I have so often enjoy'd a book and a friend; I made a Hymn as I pass'd thro', which ended with a sigh, that I will not tell you the meaning of.

Your Doctor is gone the way of all his patients, and was hard put to it how to dispose of an estate miserably unwieldly, and splendidly unuseful to him. Sir Samuel Garth says, that for Ratcliffe to leave a library, was as if a Eunuch should found a Seraglio. Dr. S— lately told a lady, he wonder'd she could be alive after him: she made answer, she wonder'd at it for two reasons, because Dr. Ratcliffe was dead, and because Dr. S— was living. I am

Your, &c.

L E T T E R

LETTER XV.

Nothing could have more of that melancholy which once used to please me, than my last day's journey; for after having pass'd through my favourite woods in the forest, with a thousand reveries of past pleasures, I rid over hanging hills, whose tops were edged with groves, and whose feet water'd with winding rivers, listening to the falls of cataracts below, and the murmuring of the winds above: The gloomy verdure of Stonor succeeded to these; and then the shades of the evening overtook me. The moon rose in the clearest sky I ever saw, by whose solemn light I paced on slowly, without company, or any interruption to the range of my thoughts. About a mile before I reach'd Oxford, all the bells toll'd in different notes; the clocks of every college answered one another, and sounded forth (some in a deeper, some a softer tone) that it was eleven at night. All this was no ill preparation to the life I have led since, among those old walls, venerable galleries, stone portico's, studious walks, and solitary scenes of the University. I wanted nothing but a black gown and a salary, to be as mere a bookworm as any there. I conform'd myself to the college hours, was roll'd up in
books,

books, lay in one of the most ancient, dusky parts of the University, and was as dead to the world as any hermit of the desert. If any thing was alive or awake in me, it was a little vanity, such as even those good men us'd to entertain, when the monks of *their own order* extoll'd their piety and abstraction. For I found myself receiv'd with a sort of respect, which this idle part of mankind, the Learned, pay to their own species; who are as considerable here, as the busy, the gay, and the ambitious are in your world.

Indeed I was treated in such a manner, that I could not but sometimes ask myself in my mind, what college I was founder of, or what library I had built? Methinks, I do very ill to return to the world again, to leave the only place where I make a figure, and, from seeing myself seated with dignity on the most conspicuous shelves of a library, put myself into the abject posture of lying at a lady's feet in St. James's square.

I will not deny, but that, like Alexander, in the midst of my glory I am wounded, and find myself a mere man. To tell you from whence the dart comes, is to no purpose, since neither of you will take the tender care to draw it out of my heart, and suck the poison with your lips.

Here,

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Here, at my Lord H——'s, I see a creature nearer an angel than a woman (tho' a woman be very near as good as an angel;) I think you have formerly heard me mention Mrs. T— as a credit to the Maker of angels; she is a relation of his lordship's, and he gravely propos'd her to me for a wife; being tender of her interests, and knowing (what is a shame to Providence) that she is less indebted to fortune than I. I told him, 'twas what he could never have thought of, if it had not been his misfortune to be blind; and what I never could think of, while I had eyes to see both her and myself.

I must not conclude without telling you, that I will do the utmost in the affair you desire. It would be an inexpressible joy to me if I could serve you, and I will always do all I can to give myself pleasure. I wish as well for you as for myself; I am in love with you both, as much as I am with myself, for I find myself most so with either, when I least suspect it.

L E T T E R X V I.

THE chief cause I have to repent my leaving the town, is the uncertainty I am in every day of your sister's state of health. I real-

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ly

ly expected by every post to have heard of her recovery, but on the contrary each letter has been a new awakening to my apprehensions, and I have ever since suffer'd alarms upon alarms on her account. No one can be more sensibly touch'd at this than I; nor any danger of any I love could affect me with more uneasiness. I have felt some weakneses of a tender kind, which I would not be free from; and I am glad to find my value for people so rightly placed, as to perceive them on this occasion.

I cannot be so good a Christian as to be willing to resign my own happiness here, for hers in another life. I do more than wish for her safety, for every wish I make I find immediately changed into a prayer, and a more fervent one than I had learn'd to make till now.

May her life be longer and happier than perhaps herself may desire, that is, as long and as happy as you can wish: May her beauty be as great as possible, that is, as it always was, or as yours is. But whatever ravages a merciless distemper may commit, I dare promise her boldly, what few (if any) of her makers of visits and compliments dare to do: she shall have one man as much her admirer as ever. As for your part, Madam, you have me so more than ever, since I have been a witness to the generous tenderness you have shewn upon this occasion.

Your, &c.

L E T T E R

LETTER XVII.

I Am not at all concern'd to think that this letter may be less entertaining than some I have sent: I know you are a friend that will think a kind letter as good as a diverting one. He that gives you his mirth makes a much less present than he that gives you his heart; and true friends would rather see such thoughts as they communicate only to one another, than what they squander about to all the world. They who can set a right value upon any thing, will prize one tender, well-meant word, above all that ever made them laugh in their lives. If I did not think so of you, I should never have taken much pains to endeavour to please you, by writing, or any thing else. Wit, I am sure, I want; at least in the degree that I see others have it, who would at all seasons alike be entertaining; but I would willingly have some qualities that may be (at some seasons) of more comfort to myself, and of more service to my friends. I would cut off my own head, if it had nothing better than wit in it; and tear out my own heart, if it had no better dispositions than to love only myself, and laugh at all my neighbours.

I know you'll think it an agreeable thing to hear that I have done a great deal of Homer.

If

If it be tolerable, the world may thank you for it: for if I could have seen you every day, and imagin'd my company could have every day pleas'd you, I should scarce have thought it worth my while to please the world. How many verses could I gladly have left unfinish'd, and turn'd into it, for people to say what they would of, had I been permitted to pass all those hours more pleasingly? Whatever some may think, Fame is a thing I am much less covetous of, than your Friendship; for that, I hope, will last all my life; the other I cannot answer for. What if they should both grow greater after my death? alas! they would both be of no advantage to me! Therefore think upon it, and love me as well as ever you can, while I live.

Now I talk of fame, I send you my Temple of Fame, which is just come out: but my sentiments about it you will see better by this Epigram.

*What's Fame with Men, by custom of the Nation,
Is call'd in Women only Reputation:
About them both why keep we such a potter?
Part you with one, and I'll renounce the other.*

LETTER XVIII.

ALL the pleasure or use of familiar letters, is to give us the assurance of a friend's welfare; at least 'tis all I know, who am a mortal enemy and despiser of what they call fine letters. In this view, I promise you, it will always be a satisfaction to me to write letters and to receive them from you; because I unfeignedly have your good at my heart, and am that thing, which many people make only a subject to display their fine sentiments upon, a Friend: which is a character that admits of little to be said, till something may be done. Now let me fairly tell you, I don't like your style: 'tis very pretty, therefore I don't like it; and if you writ as well as Voiture, I would not give a farthing for such letters, unless I were to sell them to be printed. Methinks I have lost the Mrs. L* I formerly knew, who writ and talked like other people (and sometimes better.) You must allow me to say, you have not said a sensible word in all your letter, except where you speak of shewing kindness and expecting it in return: but the addition you make about your being but two and twenty, is again in the style of wit and abomination. To shew you how very unsatisfactorily you
write,

write, in all your letters you've never told me how you do. Indeed I see 'twas absolutely necessary for me to write to you, before you continued to take more notice of me, for I ought to tell you what you are to expect; that is to say, Kindness, which I never fail'd (I hope) to return; and not Wit, which if I want, I am not much concerned, because Judgment is a better thing; and if I had, I would make use of it rather to play upon those I despised, than to trifle with those I loved. You see, in short, after what manner you may most agreeably write to me: tell me you are my friend, and you can be no more at a loss about that article. As I have open'd my mind upon this to you, it may also serve for Mr. H—, who will see by it what manner of letters he must expect if he corresponds with me. As I am too seriously yours and his servant to put turns upon you instead of good wishes, so in return I should have nothing but honest plain How-d'ye's and Pray remember me's; which not being fit to be shown to any body for wit, may be a proof we correspond only for ourselves, in mere friendliness; as doth, God is my witness,

Your very, &c.

L E T T E R

LETTER XIX.

IT is with infinite satisfaction I am made acquainted that your brother will at last prove your relation, and has entertained such sentiments as become him in your concern. I have been prepared for this by degrees, having several times received from Mrs. * that which is one of the greatest pleasures, the knowledge that others entered into my own sentiments concerning you. I ever was of opinion that you wanted no more to be vindicated than to be known. As I have often condoled with you in your adversities, so I have a right, which but few can pretend to, of congratulating on the prospect of your better fortunes: and I hope, for the future, to have the concern I have felt for you overpaid in your felicities. Tho' you modestly say the world has left you, yet, I verily believe, it is coming to you again as fast as it can: for, to give the world its due, it is always very fond of Merit when 'tis past its power to oppose it. Therefore, if you can, take it into favour again upon its repentance, and continue in it. But if you are resolved in revenge to rob the world of so much example as you may afford it, I believe, your design will be vain; for even in a monastery your devotions cannot car-

ry you so far toward the next world as to make this lose the sight of you; but you'll be like a star, that, while it is fixed to heaven, shines over all the earth.

Wheresoever Providence shall dispose of the most valuable thing I know, I shall ever follow you with my sincerest wishes, and my best thoughts will be perpetually waiting upon you, when you never hear of me nor them. Your own guardian angels cannot be more constant, nor more silent. I beg you will never cease to think me your friend, that you may not be guilty of that which you never yet knew to commit, an injustice. As I have hitherto been so in spite of the world, so hereafter, if it be possible you should ever be more opposed, and more deserted, I should only be so much the more

Your faithful, &c.

L E T T E R X X .

I Can say little to recommend the letters I shall write to you, but that they will be the most impartial representations of a free heart, and the truest copies you ever saw, tho' of a very mean original. Not a feature will be softened, or any advantageous light employed to make the ugly thing a little less hideous; but

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you

you shall find it in all respects, most horribly like. You will do me an injustice if you look upon any thing I shall say from this instant, as a compliment, either to you or to myself: Whatever I write will be the real thought of that hour; and I know you'll no more expect it of me to persevere till death, in every sentiment or notion I now set down, than you would imagine a man's face should never change when once his picture was drawn.

The freedom I shall use in this manner of *thinking aloud*, may indeed prove me a fool; but it will prove me one of the best sort of fools, the honest ones. And since what folly we have, will infallibly buoy up at one time or other in spite of all our art to keep it down; methinks, 'tis almost foolish to take any pains to conceal it at all, and almost knavish to do it from those that are our friends. If Momus's project had taken, of having windows in our breasts, I should be for carrying it further, and making those windows, casements; that while a man showed his heart to all the world, he might do something more for his friends; even give it them, and trust it to their handling. I think I love you as well as King Herod did Herodias (tho' I never had so much as one dance with you) and would as freely give you my heart in a dish, as he did another's head.

But since Jupiter will not have it so, I must be content to shew my taste in life, as I do my taste in painting, by loving to have as little drapery as possible. Not that I think every body naked altogether so fine a sight, as yourself and a few more would be, but because 'tis good to use people to what they must be acquainted with; and there will certainly come some day of judgment or other, to uncover every soul of us. We shall then see that the Prudes of this world owed all their fine figure only to their being straiter-laced than the rest; and that they are naturally as arrant squabs as those that went more loose, nay as those that never girded their loins at all.—But a particular reason that may engage you to write your thoughts the more freely to me, is, that I am confident no one knows you better; for I find, when others express their thoughts of you, they fall very short of mine, and, I know, at the same time, theirs are such as you would think sufficiently in your favour.

You may easily imagine how desirous I must be of a correspondence with a person, who had taught me long ago that it was as possible to esteem at first sight, as to love: and who has since ruin'd me for all the conversation of one sex, and almost all the friendship of the other. I am but too sensible thro' your means, that the
company

company of men wants a certain softness to commend it, and that of women wants every thing else. How often have I been quietly going to take possession of that tranquillity and indolence I had so long found in the Country; when one evening of your conversation has spoil'd me for a Solitaire! Books have lost their effect upon me, and I was convinced since I saw you, that there is one alive wiser than all the sages. A plague of female wisdom! it makes a man ten times more uneasy than his own. What is very strange, Virtue herself (when you have the dressing her) is too amiable for one's repose. You might have done a world of good in your time, if you had allowed half the fine gentlemen who have seen you, to have conversed with you; they would have been strangely bit, while they thought only to fall in love with a fair lady, and you had bewitch'd them with Reason and Virtue (two beauties that the very fops pretend to no acquaintance with.)

The unhappy distance at which we correspond, removes a great many of those restrictions and punctilious decorums, that oftentimes in nearer conversation prejudice truth, to save good-breeding. I may now hear of my faults, and you of your good qualities, without a blush; we converse upon such unfortunate ge-

nerous terms, as exclude the regards of fear, shame, or design, in either of us. And, methinks it would be as paltry a part, to impose (even in a single thought) upon each other in this state of separation, as for spirits of a different sphere, who have so little intercourse with us, to employ that little (as some would make us think they do) in putting tricks and delusions upon poor mortals.

Let me begin then, Madam, by asking you a question, that may enable me to judge better of my own conduct than most instances of my life. In what manner did I behave in the last hour I saw you? What degree of concern did I discover when I felt a misfortune, which, I hope, you will never feel, that of parting from what one most esteems? for if my parting looked but like that of your common acquaintance, I am the greatest of all the hypocrites that ever decency made.

I never since pass by your house but with the same sort of melancholy that we feel upon seeing the tomb of a friend, which only serves to put us in mind of what we have lost. I reflect upon the circumstances of your departure, which I was there a witness of (your behaviour in what I may call your last moments) and I indulge a gloomy kind of pleasure in thinking that those last moments were given to me.

me. I would fain imagine this was not accidental, but proceeded from a penetration, which, I know, you have, in finding out the truth of people's sentiments; and that you were willing, the last man that *would have* parted from you, should be the last that *did*. I really looked upon you just as the friends of Curtius might have done upon that Hero, at the instant when he was devoting himself to glory, and running to be lost out of generosity: I was obliged to admire your resolution, in as great a degree as I deplored it; and had only to wish, that Heaven would reward so much virtue as was to be taken from us, with all the felicities it could enjoy elsewhere!

I am, &c.

LETTER XXI.

I Can never have too many of your letters. I am angry at every scrap of paper lost, and tho' it is but an odd compliment to compare a fine lady to a Sibyl, your leaves, methinks, like hers, are too good to be committed to the winds; tho' I have no other way of receiving them but by those unfaithful messengers. I have had but three, and I reckon that short one

from D——, which was rather a dying ejaculation than a letter.

You have contrived to say in your last the two things most pleasing to me: The first, that whatever be the fate of your letters, you will continue to write in the discharge of your conscience. The other is, the justice you do me, in taking what I writ to you, in the serious manner it was meant; it is the point upon which I can bear no suspicion, and in which, above all, I desire to be thought serious. It would be vexatious indeed, if you should pretend to take that for wit, which is no more than the natural overflowing of a heart improved by an esteem for you: but since you tell me you believe me, I fancy my expressions have not been entirely unfaithful to my thoughts.

May your faith be encreased in all truths, that are as great as this; and, depend upon it, to whatever degree it may extend, you can never be a bigot.

If you could see the heart I talk of, you would really think it a foolish good kind of thing, with some qualities as well-deserving to be half-laughed at, and half-esteemed, as most hearts in the world.

Its grand *foible* in regard to you, is the most like Reason of any *foible* in nature. Upon my
word

word this heart is not like a great warehouse, stored only with my own goods, or with empty spaces to be supplied as fast as Interest or Ambition can fill them: but is every inch of it lett out into lodgings for its friends, and shall never want a corner where your idea will always lie as warm, and as close, as any idea in Christendom.

If this distance (as you are so kind as to say) enlarges your belief of my friendship, I assure you, it has so extended my notion of your value, that I begin to be impious upon that account, and to wish that even slaughter, ruin, and desolation may interpose between you and the place you design for; and that you were restored to us at the expence of a whole people.

Is there no expedient to return you in peace to the bosom of your country? I hear you are come as far as —: do you only look back to die twice? is Eurydice once more snatched to the shades? If ever mortal had reason to hate the King, it is I, whose particular misfortune it is, to be almost the only innocent person he has made to suffer; both by his Government at home, and his Negotiations abroad.

If you must go from us, I wish at least you might pass to your banishment by the most pleasant way; that all the road might be roses
and

and myrtles, and a thousand objects rise round you, agreeable enough to make England less desirable to you. It is not now my interest to wish England agreeable: It is highly probable it may use me ill enough to drive me from it. Can I think that place my country, where I cannot now call a foot of paternal *Earth* my own? Yet it may seem some alleviation, that when the wisest thing I can do is to leave my country, what was most agreeable in it should first be snatched away from it.

I could overtake you with pleasure in —, and make that tour in your company. Every reasonable entertainment and beautiful view would be doubly engaging when you partook of it. I should at least attend you to the sea coasts, and cast a last look after the sails that transported you. But perhaps I might care as little to stay behind you; and be full as uneasy to live in a country where I saw others persecuted by the rogues of my own religion, as where I was persecuted myself by the rogues of yours. And it is not impossible I might run into Asia in search of liberty; for who would not rather live a freeman among a nation of slaves, than a slave among a nation of freemen?

In good earnest, if I knew your motions, and your exact time; I verily think, I should be once more happy in a sight of you next spring.

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I'll conclude with a wish, God send you with us, or me with you.

LETTER XXII.

YOU will find me more troublesome than ever Brutus did his evil Genius; I shall meet you in more places than one, and often refresh your memory before you arrive at your Philippi. These shadows of me (my letters) will be haunting you from time to time, and putting you in mind of the man who has really suffer'd very much from you, and whom you have robb'd of the most valuable of his enjoyments, your conversation. The advantage of hearing your sentiments by discovering mine, was what I always thought a great one, and even worth the risque I generally run of manifesting my own indiscretion. You then rewarded my trust in you the moment it was given, for you pleas'd or inform'd me the minute you answer'd. I must now be contented with more slow returns. However, 'tis some pleasure, that your thoughts upon paper will be a more lasting possession to me, and that I shall no longer have cause to complain of a loss I have so often regretted, that of any thing you said, which I happen'd to forget. In earnest,
Madam,

Madam, if I were to write to you as often as I think of you, it must be every day of my life. I attend you in spirit thro' all your ways, I follow you through every stage in books of travels, and fear for you thro' whole folio's; you make me shrink at the past dangers of dead travellers; and if I read of a delightful prospect, or agreeable place, I hope it yet subsists to please you. I enquire the roads, the amusements, the company, of every town and country thro' which you pass, with as much diligence, as if I were to set out next week to overtake you. In a word, no one can have you more constantly in mind, not even your Guardian-angel (if you have one) and I am willing to indulge so much Popery as to fancy some Being takes care of you, who knows your value better than you do yourself: I am willing to think that Heaven never gave so much self-neglect and resolution to a woman, to occasion her calamity; but am pious enough to believe those qualities must be intended to conduce to her benefit and her glory.

Your first short letter only serves to show me you are alive: it puts me in mind of the first dove that return'd to Noah, and just made him know it had found no rest abroad.

There is nothing in it that pleases me, but when you tell me you had no sea-sickness. I
beg

beg your next may give me all the pleasure it can, that is, tell me any that you receive. You can make no discoveries that will be half so valuable to me as those of your own mind. Nothing that regards the states or kingdoms you pass thro', will engage so much of my curiosity or concern, as what relates to yourself: Your welfare, to say truth, is more at my heart than that of Christendom.

I am sure I may defend the truth, tho' perhaps not the virtue, of this declaration. One is ignorant, or doubtful at best, of the merits of differing religions and governments: but private virtues one can be sure of. I therefore know what particular Person has desert enough to merit being happier than others, but not what Nation deserves to conquer or oppress another. You will say, I am not *public-spirited*; let it be so, I may have too many tenderneffes, particular regards, or narrow views; but at the same time I am certain that whoever wants these, can never have a Public spirit; for (as a friend of mine says) how is it possible for that man to love twenty thousand people, who never loved one?

I communicated your letter to Mr. C——, he thinks of you and talks of you as he ought, I mean as I do, and one always thinks that to be just as it ought. His health and mine are
now

now so good, that we wish with all our souls you were a witness of it. We never meet but we lament over you: we pay a kind of weekly rites to your memory, where we strow flowers of rhetoric, and offer such libations to your name as it would be profane to call Toasting. The Duke of B——m is sometimes the High Priest of your praises; and upon the whole, I believe there are as few men that are not sorry at your departure, as women that are; for, you know, most of your sex want good sense, and therefore must want generosity: You have so much of both, that, I am sure, you pardon them; for one cannot but forgive whatever one despises. For my part I hate a great many women for your sake, and undervalue all the rest. 'Tis you are to blame, and may God revenge it upon you, with all those blessings and earthly prosperities, which, the Divines tell us, are the cause of our perdition; for if he makes you happy in this world, I dare trust your own virtue to do it in the other. I am

Your, &c.

L E T T E R

LETTER XXIII.

TO MRS. ARABELLA FERMOR.

On her Marriage.

YOU are by this time satisfied how much the tenderness of one man of merit is to be preferred to the addresses of a thousand. And by this time the Gentleman you have made choice of is sensible, how great is the joy of having all those charms and good qualities which have pleased so many, now applied to please one only. It was but just, that the same Virtues which gave you reputation, should give you happiness; and I can wish you no greater, than that you may receive it in as high a degree yourself, as so much good humour must infallibly give it to your husband.

It may be expected, perhaps, that one who has the title of Poet should say something more polite on this occasion: But I am really more a well-wisher to your felicity, than a celebrator of your beauty. Besides, you are now a married woman, and in a way to be a great many better things than a fine lady; such as an excellent wife, a faithful friend, a tender parent, and at last, as the consequence of them all, a saint in heaven. You ought now to hear nothing but that, which was all you ever desired to hear
(whatever

(whatever others may have spoken to you) I mean Truth: and it is with the utmost that I assure you, no friend you have can more rejoice in any good that befalls you, is more sincerely delighted with the prospect of your future happiness, or more unfeignedly desires a long continuance of it.

I hope, you will think it but just, that a man who will certainly be spoken of as your admirer, after he is dead, may have the happiness to be esteemed, while he is living,

Your, &c.